

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
HUNTINGDON COUNTY BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The Huntingdon County Commissioners are seeking proposals to provide reliable broadband internet service to certain rural communities in Huntingdon County whose broadband service does not exist or where broadband service is limited.

Portions of Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic due to the lack of available broadband. Poor broadband infrastructure in rural areas has resulted in many individuals and families lacking the opportunity for online studies, teleworking and telemedicine during stay at home orders.

In an effort to respond to, mitigate and facilitate compliance with COVID-19 related health measures, the Huntingdon County Commissioners have established a grant program that aims to provide reliable broadband to rural communities that are currently unserved or underserved. The program is intended to provide financial assistance to construct infrastructure which is necessary to provide broadband service in communities where broadband service does not currently exist and in certain areas where internet service is limited.

Funding for this project is provided by The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act 2020 and Act 24 of 2020. A project funded by this Grant should facilitate distance learning during school closings, as well as improve teleworking and telemedicine capabilities to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions.

Proposals will be awarded on a competitive basis for entities to serve unserved and underserved areas and ensure that Huntingdon County's rural consumers enjoy the same quality and range of broadband services as are available in nonrural communities.

Proposals that are awarded grant money through this project must be operational by **December 30, 2020**. Operational means that the project has actually expanded broadband capacity to a significant extent in order to enable individuals to engage in the online activities of telework and distance learning and that the service is realistically available to and can actually be used by customers or subscribers in the County for those purposes. Only costs relating to the portion of the project that are operational by December 30, 2020 are eligible expenditures.

Proposals may be submitted by any legal entity, including a private corporation, a cooperative or a limited liability company having the legal capacity and authority to own and operate the broadband facilities as proposed, to enter into contracts and to otherwise comply with applicable state statutes and regulations. Proposals may not be submitted by an individual or partnership.

Proposals will consist of several written sections with a number of required worksheets and attachments. The Proposal should be prepared as described in this guide.

All materials used in the construction and completion of the project shall meet safety durability standards and comply with all regulations regarding steel products and any and all other construction materials.

Proposals, addressed as follows, must be postmarked or hand or electronically delivered by **4:30 PM, Friday, September 18, 2020.**

Huntingdon County Commissioner's Office
Attention: Kellie Benson, Grant Writer
233 Penn Street, Bailey Building
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Email: kbenson@huntingdoncounty.net
Phone: 814-643-3091 Extension 211

Proposals not meeting the deadline set forth above will be returned and will not be considered for funding.

The County may choose to grant an entire project, no project, multiple projects or any portion of any project submitted. All entities which are allocated grant funds for any proposed project will have seven (7) days from the notice of fund allocation to accept and execute a Grant Agreement with the County.

ALL APPROVED PROJECTS MUST BE COMPLETED BY DECEMBER 30, 2020.

COMPLETING THE PROPOSAL

This section addresses all of the information that must be submitted in order for a Proposal to be deemed complete and considered for funding. Please make sure that all the necessary information is included in the appropriate section.

- A. Broadband Grant Proposal
- B. Executive Summary of the Project
- C. Scoring Criteria Documentation
- D. System Design
- E. Service Area Map and Demographics
- F. Scope of Work
- G. Financial Information and Sustainability
- H. Statement of Experience

BROADBAND GRANT PROPOSAL

Project Name: _____

Entity Information:

Primary Legal Name: _____

Federal EIN Number: _____

Entity Type: _____

Address:

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Contact Information:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$ _____

Funds from Other Sources: \$ _____

Amount of Grant Money Requested: \$ _____

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Executive Summary of the project is one of the most important parts of the Proposal. It gives the County its first overall view of the area to be served, how the area has been impacted by COVID-19 and how the proposed project will help alleviate those COVID-19 problems. Include other non-COVID-19 benefits and how they may increase quality of life and provide enhanced opportunities for businesses and rural residents. This is an opportunity to discuss the core aspects of the project and to succinctly articulate why the project deserves funding. Be clear and provide convincing links between the project and the benefits to the Proposed Funded Service Area (PFSA). The Executive Summary must provide a general project overview covering the following six categories:

1. A description of the PFSA and why the project is needed including the number of households and businesses served.

2. A description of the entity that includes, but is not limited to, the history of the organization and any past or current projects and community related activities or awards.

3. An explanation of the total Project costs.

4. A general overview of the broadband system to be constructed, including the types of equipment, technologies and facilities that will be used.

5. Documentation describing the procedures used to determine the lack of existing Broadband Service in the PFSA.

At the end of the Executive Summary, please provide a section labeled "Publicly Releasable Project Description" that contains the following information:

1. Title of Project.

2. Proposed Funded Service Area Description.

3. Brief Description of Project.

Any information included in this section may be released to interested parties inquiring about the proposal including news media and the public, so please provide an adequate description of the project, but do not include any information that should not be made available to the public. Clearly denote the section the entity agrees is publicly releasable, including where the releasable description begins AND ends.

SCORING CRITERIA

Proposed projects will be reviewed, compared and weighted based upon a number of scoring criteria. Provide detailed answers to each of the following items, which will be used in scoring proposals. The County reserves the right to use any of the information provided as well as any other scoring criteria that the County deems appropriate when comparing and weighting proposals.

1. Describe how the proposed project would respond to, mitigate and facilitate compliance with COVID-19 related health measures.
2. Provide the City and State of the Entity. Include local office addresses as well as corporate, main office and headquarters.
3. Does the Entity have fewer than 100 employees?
4. Describe the end-user download, upload and latency speeds of the proposed project.
5. Describe the upstream internet, middle-mile, last-mile and customer premise technologies for the proposed project.
6. Does the project primarily include unserved or underserved portions of the county? Describe methods used to determine this.
7. Are the proposed service areas considered low and/or medium income?
8. Describe how the proposed project will support local municipalities within the county.

9. Describe how the proposed project will facilitate distance-learning in connection with school closings.

10. Describe how the proposed project will provide solutions for tele-work, remote office and work from home needs.

11. Describe how the proposed project will provide broadband, technology and/or communication solutions for remote medical, healthcare and/or tele-medicine within the county.

12. Describe how the proposed project will provide broadband, technology and/or communication solutions for police, fire and/or EMS organizations and facilities within the county.

13. Describe how the proposed project may provide increased broadband capacity for county offices to support demand for county workers when required to work remotely.

14. Describe how the proposed project will improve telework capabilities for residents and businesses.

15. Describe how the proposed project may sustain and/or promote tourism within the county.

16. Describe how the proposed project may support economic development within the county.

17. Will the Entity be able to complete the building and construction of the proposed project by December 30, 2020? Include any potential risks and specific conditions that should be considered.

18. Describe how the Entity intends to support, operate and maintain the completed project.

19. Provide any other criteria that the County may deem valuable in comparing proposed projects.

SYSTEM DESIGN

The system design contains all the technical information on the existing (if applicable) and the proposed system.

SERVICE AREA MAP AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Provide maps of the proposed project service areas.

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work must include the following:

1. A description of the specific activities and services to be performed under the project.
2. Who will carry out the activities and services? Indicate whether construction will be performed by in-house or contracted services.
3. A construction build-out schedule and project milestones showing the time frames for accomplishing the Project objectives and activities.
4. A detailed budget of all expenditures related to eligible Grant purposes. The budget should include a descriptive name for each capitalized item or group of items in each category.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Provide a narrative description demonstrating sustainability of the project from the commencement of the construction to completion and beyond the grant period; the sufficiency of resources; and the expertise necessary to undertake and complete the project.

STATEMENT OF EXPERIENCE

Provide a written narrative describing their demonstrated capability and experience, if any, in operating a telecommunications system or any project similar to the proposed project. Include the owner and principal employees' relevant work experience that would ensure the success of the project. If the applicant is seeking to partner with another entity to operate the system, an agreement or draft agreement to do so must be provided with the Proposal. This agreement must address the specific financial terms of this partnership and the specific entity/entities must be identified, along with their qualifications to assist in operating the system. Proposals that rely on such a partnership but do not provide pertinent details will be rejected, as the County cannot determine the technical and financial feasibility of the project lacking such information. The County will consider such a Proposal on the basis of the submitted agreement but may require modifications if an award is ultimately made and any terms of the agreement are found to be unacceptable to the County.