



Introduction to Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) and Digital Equity (DE)



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Introduction to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is a once-in-a-generation investment in infrastructure and competitiveness.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

- \$1.2T bill passed by Congress and signed into law by President Biden on November 15, 2021
- Largest ever investments in high-speed Internet, rail and transit, clean energy, and water
- Allocated funding to over 350 distinct programs across more than a dozen federal departments and agencies

This historic legislation will:

- Deliver clean water to all families and eliminate the nation's lead service lines
- **Ensure every American has access to affordable, reliable, high-speed Internet service**
- Repair and rebuild roads and bridges
- Improve transportation options and reduce greenhouse emissions
- Upgrade our nation's airports and ports to strengthen our supply chains
- Make the largest investment in passenger rail since Amtrak's creation
- Build a national network of electric vehicle chargers
- Upgrade power infrastructure to deliver clean, reliable energy
- Make infrastructure resilient against the impacts of climate change, cyber-attacks, and extreme weather events
- Deliver the largest investment in tackling legacy pollution in US history

Please see [Build.gov](https://www.build.gov) for more details on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

BIL NTIA Broadband Programs

NTIA will administer ~\$48B through four programs that drive high-speed Internet access, affordability, and adoption.

NTIA will administer ~\$48B of funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

**FCC to administer
\$14.2B**
For Affordable Connectivity Program, which replaced the EBB program

**USDA to administer
\$2.0B**
Via the Rural Utilities Service

**Private Activity Bonds
\$0.6B**
Authorizes State and local governments to use private activity bonds for rural broadband

BEAD	DIGITAL EQUITY	TRIBAL	MIDDLE MILE
\$42.45B	\$2.75B	\$2.00B	\$1.00B
<p>Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment Program</p> <p>A program to get all Americans online by funding partnerships between states or territories, communities, and stakeholders to build infrastructure where we need it to and increase adoption of high-speed Internet.</p>	<p>Digital Equity Act</p> <p>Three programs that provide funding to promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all. They aim to ensure that all communities can access and use affordable, reliable high-speed Internet to meet their needs and improve their lives.</p>	<p>Tribal Connectivity Technical Amendments</p> <p>A program to help tribal communities expand high-speed Internet access and adoption on tribal lands.</p>	<p>Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure</p> <p>A program to expand middle mile infrastructure, to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas.</p>



Introduction to Digital Equity

Digital Equity Act Introduction

Digital Equity Act created three programs to promote digital equity and inclusion.

Funding pool
\$2.75B

Three programs that provide funding to promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all. They aim to ensure that all communities can access and use affordable, reliable high-speed Internet service to meet their needs and improve their lives.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Digital Equity Act created three programs:

State Planning

- \$60M formula funding program to develop digital equity plans

State Capacity

- \$1.44B formula funding program to implement plans & promote digital inclusion

Competitive

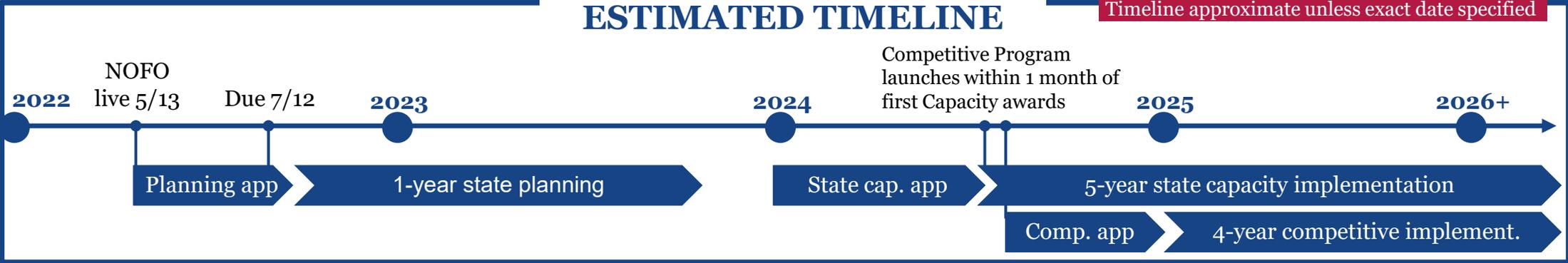
- \$1.25B to implement digital equity and inclusion activities

Example eligible uses of funds by program include:

- ☆ Developing digital equity plans; states must develop a plan to be eligible for state capacity grants
- ☆ Making awards to other entities to help make digital equity plans
- ☆ Improving accessibility and inclusivity of public resources
- ☆ Implementing digital equity plans and related activities
- ☆ Providing digital literacy and digital skills education
- ☆ Facilitating the adoption of high-speed Internet service

ESTIMATED TIMELINE

Timeline approximate unless exact date specified



What is Digital Equity?

Achieving Digital Equity and effectively bridging the digital divide in America relies on sufficient availability, affordability, and adoption of broadband and digital technology.

COMPONENTS OF DIGITAL EQUITY



DIGITAL DIVIDE

The digital divide describes **the gap** between those who have affordable access, skills, and support to effectively engage online and those who do not.



DIGITAL EQUITY

Digital equity is the **condition in which all individuals have the information technology capacity needed** to fully participate in society, democracy, and the economy.



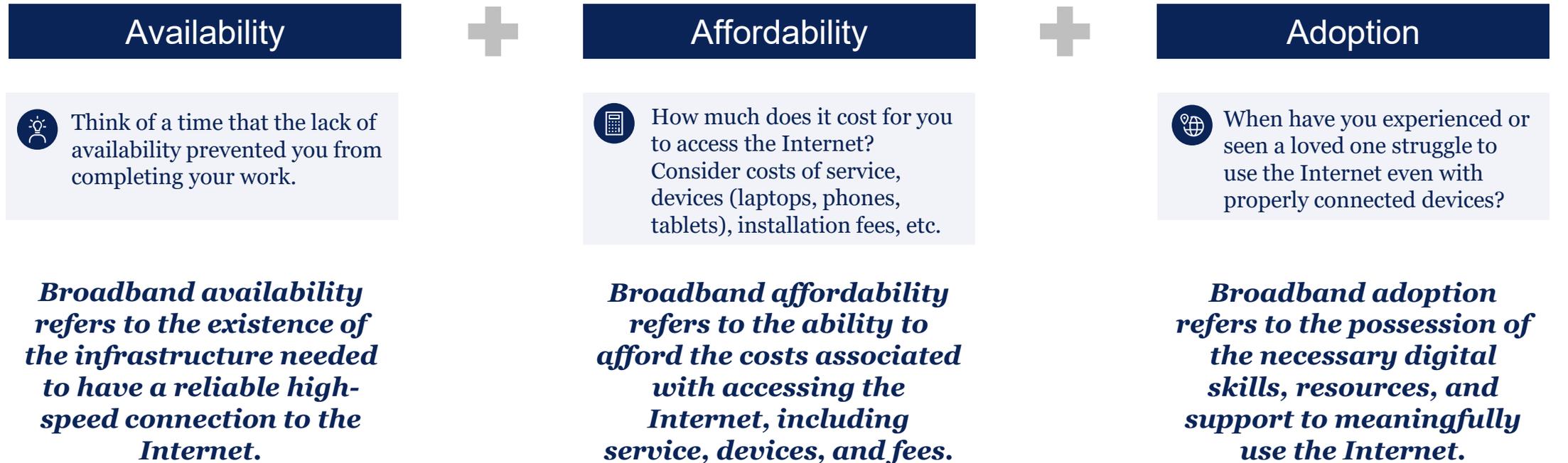
DIGITAL INCLUSION

Digital inclusion refers to the **activities necessary** to ensure all individuals and communities, including the most marginalized, have **access to and use** of information technology.

The Broadband “Equation”



Broadband availability, affordability, and adoption are the key components of achieving digital equity.



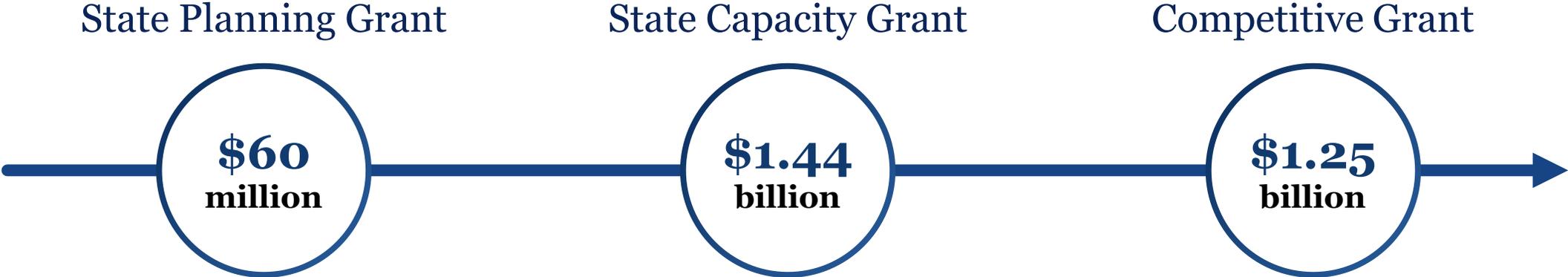
Closing the digital divide requires availability, affordability, and adoption to work in concert.



Digital Equity Grant Programs



There are two state formula grant programs, which are separate but connected, and a third competitive grant program.



Who Open to **U.S. States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico (States)**

Open to U.S. States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, that **completed the State Planning Program**

Open to **certain entities**, such as political subdivisions, Tribal entities, nonprofits, community anchor institutions, local educational agencies, and workforce development orgs

What Grants will be used to **develop a State Digital Equity Plan**

Grants will be used to **implement State Digital Equity Plans**

Grants will be used to **develop and implement digital inclusion activities**



Covered Populations

The Digital Equity Act focuses on addressing the needs of "covered populations" as defined by the statute.

Covered Populations

Identity groups and communities disproportionately impacted by digital inequity



Low-income households



People with disabilities



Aging populations



People with language barriers



Incarcerated individuals



Racial and ethnic minorities



Veterans



Rural inhabitants

Ways for Local Governments to get involved in DE



NTIA emphasizes that localities and groups representing historically excluded communities can and must make their voices heard to ensure that longstanding equity gaps are addressed to advance digital equity.



Specialized Knowledge

Share **specialized local insights on adoption and affordability** into Digital Equity Action (DEA) plans, the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) highlights that it is required of states to include local digital equity plans.



Subgrantees

Apply to be a **subgrantee** soon, if eligible, as defined in the NOFO. Localities can apply through their State/Territory Broadband Office. Subgrantees must use their funds to **assist in the development of the State Digital Equity Plan**.



Connect and Collaborate with your State/Territory Broadband Office

Reach out to your **State/Territory Broadband Office** to collaborate during the planning process, as states must include local digital equity plans. Find contact information by visiting the IFA contact map at <https://www.internetforall.gov/interactive-map>.



Introduction to BEAD

BEAD Program Introduction

BEAD program will provide ~\$42.5B for infrastructure planning and implementation.

Funding pool
\$42.45B

A program to get all Americans online by funding partnerships between states or territories, communities, and stakeholders to build infrastructure where we need to and increase adoption of high-speed Internet service.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Entities eligible to apply for this program include:

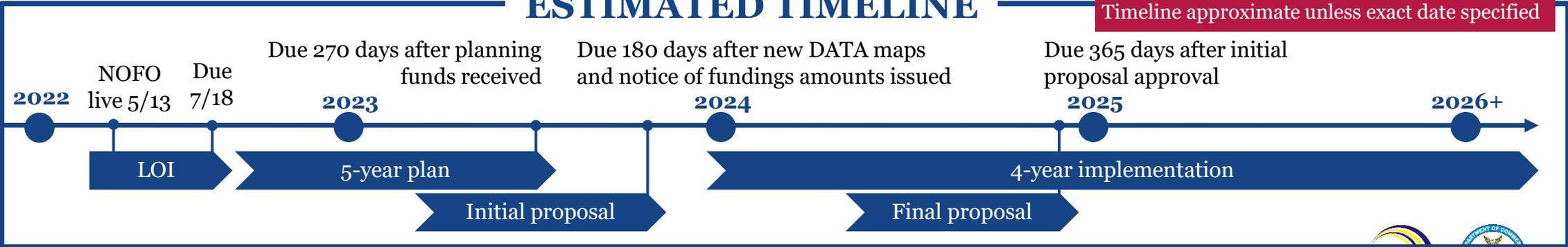
- All 50 States
- The District of Columbia and Puerto Rico
- Other Territories: U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Example eligible uses of funds include:

- ☆ Planning for deployment of the Internet
- ☆ Deploying or upgrading Internet service
- ☆ Installing Internet in multi-tenant buildings
- ☆ Implementing adoption and digital equity programs
- ☆ Workforce and job training

ESTIMATED TIMELINE

Timeline approximate unless exact date specified



BEAD Funding Allocation

Funding is initially based on a minimum allocation with additional funding allocations based on high-cost and unserved areas.



New FCC Broadband DATA Maps will be utilized

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will publish new broadband coverage maps (Broadband DATA Maps)

The Broadband DATA Maps will be used to determine state/territory's total funding allocation



Eligible Entities receive a minimum allocation once proposals are approved

Minimum allocations by entity after proposal approval:

- **\$100M** for each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico
- **\$25M** for American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands



Additional allocation based on unserved locations

Additional allocation is based on the number of **unserved locations in high-cost areas** in the state/territory and the **number of unserved locations** in the state/territory, plus the **high-cost allocation** (dependent on forthcoming definition by NTIA)

Ensuring Complete Coverage

The BEAD Program requires complete coverage of unserved locations and underserved locations (where funding permits)

- ① **States and Territories must serve all unserved locations (including multi-tenant buildings)**
Unserved locations without reliable Internet service and with download speeds <25 Mbps, upload speeds <3 Mbps, and latency <100ms
- ② **States and Territories must serve all underserved locations**
Underserved locations without reliable Internet service and with download speeds <100 Mbps, upload speeds <20 Mbps, and latency <100 ms
- ③ **NTIA strongly urges States and Territories serve Eligible Community Anchor Institutions**
 - *Eligible Community Anchor Institutions are entities (e.g., school, library, hospital) that facilitate greater use of high-speed Internet service by vulnerable populations and have download speed <1 Gbps*
 - *Other eligible uses include affordability programs, cybersecurity training, workforce development, etc.*
 - *If state/territory wants to use funds for other eligible uses instead of eligible Community Anchor Institutions, then it must provide a strong rationale*

Note: If a state/territory has a plan to deploy service to all unserved and underserved locations within its jurisdiction, it may pursue non-deployment initiatives before or while deployment projects are underway

Ways for Local Governments to get involved in BEAD



NTIA encourages local government units get involved in BEAD and collaborate with their State/Territory Broadband Offices to ensure all voices and opinions are heard and incorporated.



Share your State's Current and Future Needs

Share current state and future needs of local broadband availability, infrastructure deployment challenges, and any local regulations which may impact infrastructure deployment.



Advocate for your state's vulnerable communities

Advocate for vulnerable communities to ensure their specific needs are accounted for and addressed.



Apply to Be a Subgrantee

Apply to be a **subgrantee**, if eligible, as defined in the BEAD NOFO. You can apply through your **State/Territory Broadband Office**. Subgrantees may use BEAD funds for both **deployment and non-deployment related activities**.



Connect and Collaborate with your State/Territory Broadband Office

Reach out to your **State/Territory Broadband Office** to get involved with the planning process and stay involved over time.



Introduction to BEAD Challenge Process

What is the BEAD Challenge Process and Why is it Important?

The BEAD Challenge Process will determine the **locations and community anchor institutions** within each jurisdiction that are **eligible for BEAD funding**.



Key step towards achieving BEAD goals

Before the BEAD program can meet the goal of 100% accessible and affordable broadband, all unserved locations, underserved locations, and eligible Community Anchor Institutions must be identified.



Helps ensure accurate results

An evidence-based, fair, transparent, and expeditious BEAD Challenge Process, as outlined in the NOFO and Policy Notice, helps ensure accurate results, an efficient process, and a precise allocation of resources.



Gathers information needed before running the subgrantee selection

The subgrantee selection process cannot be run without first having an accurate and comprehensive list of eligible locations and CAIs.

What is the BEAD Challenge Process and How Does it Differ from the FCC Challenge Process?



The FCC is collecting data from Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and **creating a map to identify unserved locations**. This map will be used as a starting point during the **BEAD challenge process** to identify unserved locations, underserved locations, and CAIs eligible for BEAD funding.

FCC CHALLENGE PROCESS



The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) maintains **new broadband coverage maps** (Broadband DATA Maps) using data collected from Internet Service Providers (ISPs). The FCC accepts challenges on a continuous basis with challenges allowed to both the locations (or fabric) and availability data.



NTIA will use the FCC's Broadband DATA Maps to **determine how much BEAD funding is provided per state or territory**.

BEAD CHALLENGE PROCESS



States and Territories will develop a challenge process for stakeholders to **challenge whether a location or CAI is served, unserved, or underserved**. The BEAD **timelines will be determined by each state/territory** but must comply with NTIA requirements. NTIA requires that the entire challenge process be completed within 90 days per the Policy Notice.



This will **determine the locations and community anchor institutions within each jurisdiction that are eligible for BEAD funding**.



How does the NOFO Describe the BEAD Challenge Process?



The BEAD Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) outlines 4 requirements that state or territory broadband offices must complete to run their BEAD Challenge Process.



BEAD NOFO, Section IV.B.5

IV. Program Structure, Sequencing and Requirements, B. Program Sequencing, 5. Initial Proposal

SPECIFIC NOFO REQUIREMENTS

Requirement 3

Identify existing efforts funded by the federal government or an Eligible Entity within the jurisdiction of the Eligible Entity to deploy broadband and close the digital divide, including in Tribal Lands.

Requirement 5

Identify each unserved location and underserved location under the jurisdiction of the Eligible Entity, including unserved and underserved locations in applicable Tribal Lands, using the **most recently published Broadband DATA Maps** as of the date of submission of the Initial Proposal, and identify the date of publication of the Broadband DATA Maps used for such identification.

Requirement 6

Describe how the Eligible Entity applied the statutory definition of the term “community anchor institution,” **identified all eligible CAIs in its jurisdiction**, identified all eligible CAIs in applicable Tribal Lands, and assessed the needs of eligible CAIs, including the types of CAIs it intends to serve; which institutions, if any, it considered but declined to classify as CAIs; and, if the Eligible Entity proposes service to one or more CAIs in a category not explicitly cited as a type of CAI in Section 60102(a)(2)(E) of the Infrastructure Act, the basis on which the Eligible Entity determined that such category of CAI facilitates greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations.

Requirement 7

Include a **detailed plan to conduct a challenge process** as described in Section IV.B.6.



The Role of States/Territories and NTIA

NTIA and States and Territories will work together to design a BEAD Challenge Process, but only the States and Territories will run the Challenge Process.



NTIA's Role

- ✓ NTIA will **approve and/or send required modifications to states and territories** about their BEAD Challenge process design
- ✗ NTIA will **NOT run the BEAD Challenge process**
- ✓ NTIA will **validate the results of the BEAD Challenge process**



States' and Territories' Role

- ✓ States and territories will **design and get approval of their BEAD Challenge process**
- ✓ States and territories will **run the BEAD Challenge process**
- ✓ States and territories will **send the results of the BEAD Challenge process to NTIA** for approval
- ✓ States and territories will **run their subgrantee selection process.**

The Role of Eligible Challengers

Eligible Challengers are: **(1) Units of local government**, (2) relevant non-profits, and (3) broadband service providers. The Role of Eligible Challengers is outlined below.



Read the Challenge Process instructions and guidance posted by your State or Territory to understand the steps required to submit a challenge.



Gather acceptable evidence, which may include *speed tests*, *screenshots* from a provider website, *service requests*, *letters or emails*, *manufacturer and model number* of residential gateways, providers, and more.



Submit challenge and evidence to your State or Territory's BEAD Challenge website.



Respond to, or check for responses to, your challenge by periodically checking the BEAD Challenge website for updates.

To keep challengers informed:

States and Territories will set up public-facing websites to accept challenges during the BEAD Challenge Process and inform challengers of deadlines.



Websites will include:

Who is making a challenge, basis of the challenge, summary of the challenge, summary of the rebuttals



What Happens After the Challenge Process?

After the BEAD Challenge Process is completed, Eligible Entities send the final determinations of each unserved location, underserved location, and CAIs to NTIA for approval.

WHAT WILL STATES BE DOING?

- After resolving each challenge and at least 60 days before allocating grant funds for network deployment, the state/territory **must provide public notice of the final classification** of each:
 - Unserved location
 - Underserved location
 - Eligible Community Anchor Institution within the jurisdiction of the state/territory
- States and Territories must also **notify NTIA of any modifications to the Initial Proposal** that are necessitated by successful challenges to its initial determinations.

WHAT SHOULD CHALLENGERS BE DOING?

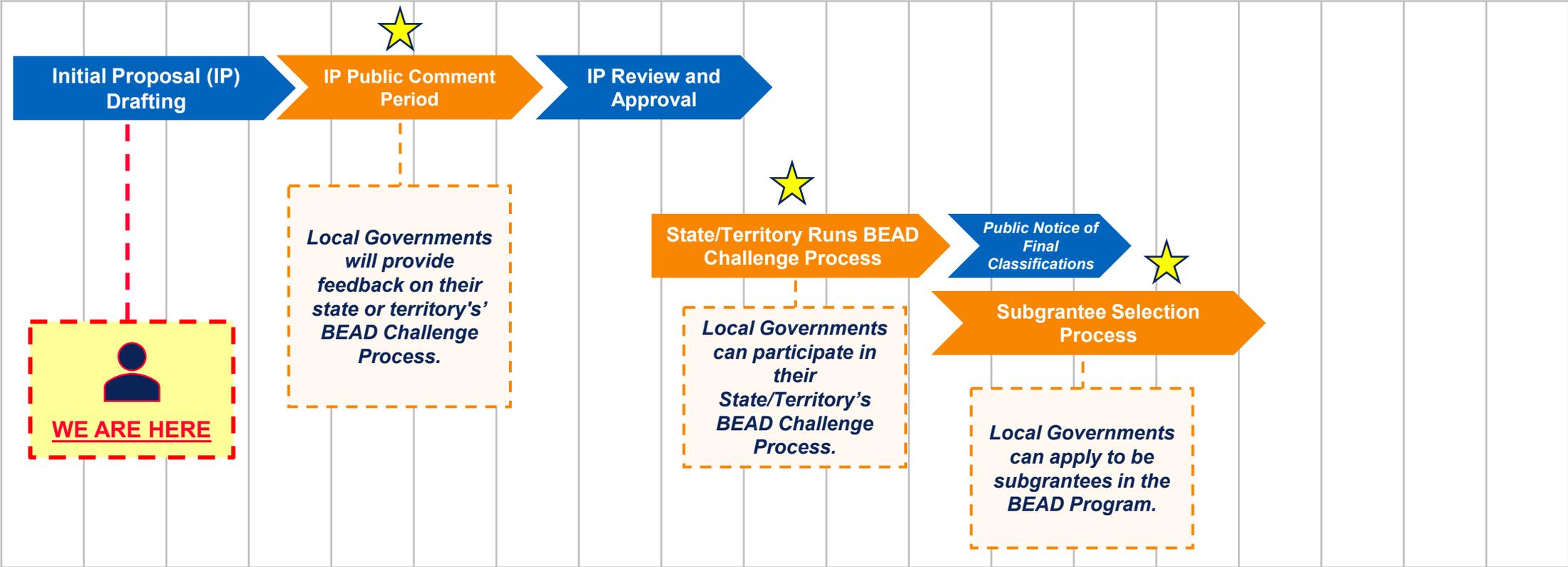
- Eligible Challengers should pay attention to their State/Territory Broadband Office and **be on the lookout for the public notice of final classification.**
- Once Eligible Entities have provided public notice of their final classifications, challengers should **review the published data.**
- This list will be used for the next step in allocating BEAD funds, the **subgrantee selection process.**

WHAT IF I'M NOT A CHALLENGER?

Contact your local government units, non-profits, and eligible broadband service providers.

Timeline of the Initial Proposal for BEAD

Local Governments are involved throughout the entire Initial Proposal timeline, as they will provide public comment on the BEAD Challenge Process and participate in it as well. Note that timelines will be dependent on the Eligible Entity.



Key | ■ State/Territory/SBO Activity ■ Local Government/Organization Activity

Local Government Involvement in the BEAD Challenge Process

There are many ways for local governments to stay involved throughout the process and ensure their communities are served.



Participate in the Challenge Process

Local governments are **one of three eligible challengers**, in addition to non-profits and Internet Service Providers (ISPs), who can participate in the BEAD Challenge process. This is the opportunity for local government units to impact where BEAD funding is directed within their state/territory. Local governments are **encouraged to participate in the BEAD Challenge Process** by submitting challenges to their State/Territory Broadband Office's BEAD Challenge Process.



Participate in the Public Comment Period

Your state/territory broadband office (SBO) will design and implement the BEAD Challenge Process. **Participate in your SBO's Public Comment period** on their Challenge Process and contact them for more information on how to get involved. For contact information visit the IF contact map at <https://www.internetforall.gov/interactive-map>



Represent Individuals

If individuals want to submit a challenge, they must do so by contacting an eligible challenger to submit on their behalf. A **local government could aggregate such challenges and submit these** on the individuals' behalf.



Learn

Register for the Challenge Process Webinar

Local governments can **register for the NTIA Challenge Process public webinar** for more information (date TBD).

Additional Resources

Use the below existing TA resources that can support your office in achieving the Initial Proposal requirements in a timely manner.



Policy Notice

Detailed Instructions

Provides detailed information and instructions regarding the BEAD State Challenge Process.



BEAD NOFO

Reference Document

Information about the Initial Proposal and the Challenge Process can be found in the BEAD NOFO, Section IV.B.5 and Section IV.B.6



FCC Broadband DATA Maps

Maps

Maps created by the FCC that NTIA uses the results from to determine how much BEAD funding is provided per state or territory.



BEAD FAQs

Reference Document

Collection of Frequently Asked Questions that provide insight and additional context into the Initial Proposal and the Challenge Process.



FCC Broadband DATA Collection Help Center

Help Center

Provides additional information and answers questions regarding the FCC Broadband DATA Maps and its collection process.



BEAD 201

Webinar

A more detailed and in-depth look into the BEAD Program and its requirements.

Additional Resources Cont.



Program Progress by State & Territory

Broadband Equity, Access, and Development (BEAD) [dropdown]
Maryland [dropdown]

PROGRAM STATUS
Broadband Equity, Access and Development (BEAD)

STATUS	STATE/TERRITORY
Planning Application Submitted	16
Planning Grant Awarded	11

INTERNET FOR ALL Why Internet Matters Programs News and Media Calendar **Map** [search]

INTERNET FOR ALL INTERACTIVE MAP

<https://internetforall.gov/interactive-map>

Maryland Select a geography on the map to view its state

BEAD Program Status: Planning Grant Awarded | DE Program Status: Planning Grant Awarded | [Additional Details](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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THANK YOU

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