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FUNDED BY THE BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW

ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE'S NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION

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

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

- $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
- 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 for more details on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

Affordable, reliable, high-speed Internet has remained elusive for too long

The "digital divide" refers to the gap between those who have access to high-speed Internet and those who have limited or no access, driven by three key barriers

Access

Many Americans live in areas that are not covered by high-speed Internet service providers or where service is not reliable

Affordability

Many American households cannot afford to pay for the costs of devices or monthly service

Adoption and Digital Literacy

Many Americans are not aware of available service offers or lack the digital skills to participate online

This gap is particularly acute for communities of color, Tribal nations, lower-income areas, and both urban and rural communities

High-speed Internet is important for full participation in the modern world

What is broadband?

- "Broadband" refers to always on, high-speed Internet that is faster than traditional dial-up
- It may use a variety of technologies: fiber-optic, Cable Modem/Hybrid fiber-coaxial, digital subscriber line (DSL), or terrestrial fixed wireless
- Federal Communications Commission defines broadband Internet as having download speeds of 25 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds of 3 Mbps

Why do we need it to be fast?

- Internet speeds are measured by how much data a connection can transfer per second
- Data goes in two directions, so every Internet connection will have download and upload speeds
- Downloading or uploading large files with low network speed may take significant time
- Quality of connection may impact speed of delivery for telemedicine or remote learning

Why do we need Internet?

- Too many Americans have been left out or left behind because they do not have access to affordable, reliable high-speed Internet
- Access to Internet plays a critical and growing role in the ways in which Americans work, play, learn, receive healthcare, participate in democracy, and more

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High-speed Internet gives people freedom to live, work, and learn what they want, when they want

Students will have opportunities to **learn** outside the classroom

American small businesses will be able to fully participate in the **economy**

Patients will have access to **telehealth services** to improve their health

Americans will be more readily connected to **civil services** and resources

Business owners will have freedom to sell their goods to a wide range of buyers

Farmers will access agricultural technology and connections needed to help them thrive

Consumers will have more purchasing options

Americans will be able to access a wide variety of **entertainment** options

Americans will be able to **connect** to more family, friends, and loved ones

Americans will be able to more easily practice their **faith**

People will have access to **good-paying jobs** and opportunities

BEAD program will provide ~$42.45B 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 it to and increase adoption of high-speed Internet.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Entities eligible to apply for this program include:

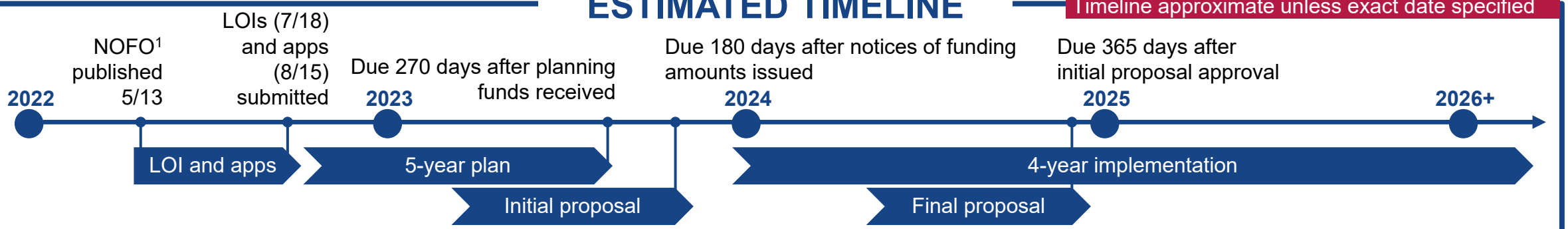
- All 50 States
- The District of Columbia and Puerto Rico
- Other Territories: U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Example eligible uses of funds include:

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

ESTIMATED TIMELINE

Timeline approximate unless exact date specified



1. Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), available here.

Eligible Entities had the option to commit to submitting a Five-Year Action Plan and receive Initial Planning Funds

Eligible Entities that agreed to submit an optional Five-Year Action Plan could receive up to $5M of Initial Planning Funds

NOTE: American Samoa, CNMI, Guam, and USVI were eligible to receive up to $1.25M each.

Example uses for Initial Planning Funds for planning and pre-deployment activities

- Ensure in-office capacity that is adequate to run the program
- Research and data collection
- Development of a preliminary budget for pre-planning activities
- Publications, outreach & communication support
- Providing technical assistance to potential subgrantees
- Training for employees (e.g., eligible entity, stakeholders, etc.)
- Conducting surveys of unserved, underserved, and underrepresented communities
- Local coordination, including capacity building

BEAD will prioritize complete coverage of unserved locations and underserved locations (where funding permits), then CAIs

First, Eligible Entities must serve all unserved locations (incl. serving multi-tenant buildings)

- **Unserved locations** lack reliable Internet with download speeds <25 Mbps, upload speeds <3 Mbps, and latency < 100ms

Second, Eligible Entities must serve all underserved locations

- **Underserved locations** lack reliable Internet with download speeds <100 Mbps, upload speeds <20 Mbps, and latency <100 ms

Next, NTIA strongly urges Eligible Entities to serve Eligible Community Anchor Institutions

- **Eligible Community Anchor Institutions** include schools, libraries, hospitals and entities 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 an Eligible Entity wants to use funds for other eligible uses instead of deploying service to eligible Community Anchor Institutions, then it must provide a strong rationale

The BEAD Program will include a low-cost broadband service option for all Eligible Subscribers

Low-cost option is available to Eligible Subscribers

- **Eligible Subscriber** means any household that qualifies for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) or a successor program

Please see the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) website for more details on the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) (link)

Eligible Entities will define parameters for low-cost plans

Eligible Entities will define the parameters for low-cost plans while considering the following:

- Provider participation in the Affordable Connectivity Program or other household subsidies
- Expected cost to an Eligible Subscriber after subsidies
- Technical performance of the plan (e.g., Internet speed)

Description of an example low-cost plan

- **Cost:** ≤$30 incl. taxes and fees (≤$75 for tribal land residents)
- **Subsidies:** Can apply Affordable Connectivity Benefit subsidies
- **Speed:** ≥100 Mbps for downloads and ≥20 Mbps for uploads
- **Latency:** ≤100 ms
- **Extra fees:** No data caps or surcharges
- **Upgrades:** Can later upgrade to new low-cost offerings at no cost

The BEAD Program helps deliver high-speed Internet access, affordability, and adoption

Access

Increases access for unserved and underserved households to ensure that all Americans have access to high-speed Internet

Ensures Americans have access to **high-quality, high-speed Internet services** to support full participation in the 21st century economy and beyond

Affordability

Supports **affordability** of broadband services, esp. in low-income households

Fosters a system that **promotes long-term, sustainable, affordable solutions**

Adoption and equity

Enables investment in digital skills training to increase the number of households adopting high-speed Internet and narrow adoption disparities

Makes investments to ensure Americans can **participate in economy & society, reducing inequities** across sectors, including healthcare, workforce & education

Digital Equity Act created three programs for 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 to meet their needs and improve their lives.

PROGRAMS 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

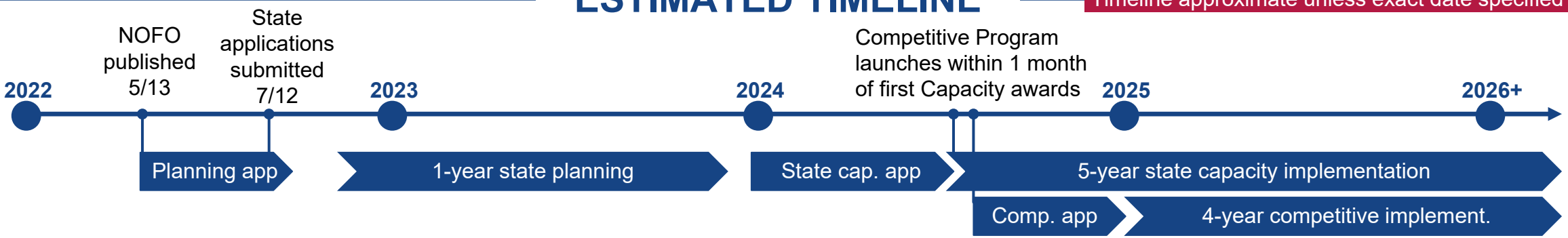
Competitive
- $1.25B to implement digital equity and inclusion activities

Example eligible uses of funds 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

ESTIMATED TIMELINE

Timeline approximate unless exact date specified



Defining Digital Equity and Digital Inclusion

Digital Equity

A condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy.

Digital Inclusion

The activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, have access to and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

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

Covered Populations

Identity groups and communities disproportionally impacted by digital inequity

- Low-income households
- Aging populations
- Incarcerated individuals
- Veterans
- People with disabilities
- People with language barriers
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Rural inhabitants

Planning funds will be used to develop State Digital Equity Plans, which must contain several components

Vision
- Stated **vision** for digital equity

Coordination and Outreach Strategy
- **Description of plan to collaborate** with key stakeholders to achieve its digital equity goals
- **List of organizations** that collaborated on and contributed to digital equity plans

Objectives
- **Measurable objectives**
- Assessment of how those objectives will **impact the State's plans and outcomes**

Implementation
- Implementation **strategy**
- **Timeline**

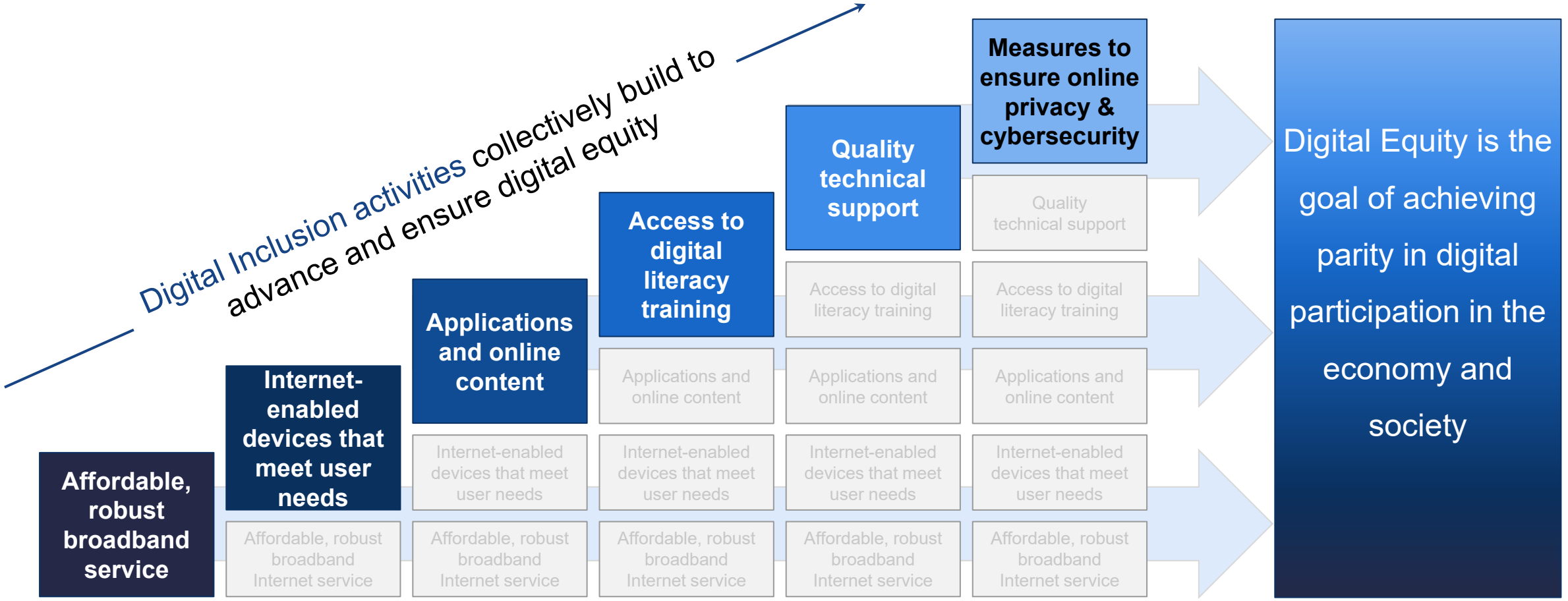
Barriers to Digital Equity
- **Identify barriers** to digital equity
- Include a **digital needs assessment**

Eligible entities are required to engage with key stakeholders as a part of developing digital equity plans

Key stakeholder groups may include:

- Community anchor institutions
- County and municipal governments
- Local educational agencies
- Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, or Native Hawaiian organizations, where applicable
- Nonprofit organizations
- Organizations that represent covered populations
- Civil rights organizations
- Entities that carry out workforce development programs
- State agencies that administer or supervise adult education or literacy activities
- Public housing authorities

The digital inclusion activities planned and implemented under these Programs build towards achieving digital equity



The Programs also support the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's broader goals of improving access, affordability, and adoption

Access

- Promotes the **availability of reliable, high-speed Internet technology** through stakeholder outreach and engagement
- Advances the **online accessibility of public resources** and services

Affordability

- Promotes **awareness of existing programs** (e.g., Affordable Connectivity Program) that **help low-income households afford** high-speed Internet service
- Offers **Internet equipment and software at low or no cost**

Adoption and equity

- **Narrows adoption disparities** across covered populations by engaging with diverse stakeholders
- Implements **digital inclusion programs** that include digital skills and literacy training, technical support, and workforce development

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Every stakeholder plays a role in the Digital Equity programs

Illustrative, non-exhaustive

Telecom provider

- Provide States, other territories, and Tribal / Native entities with background data on their baseline and digital equity needs

Tribal government

- Participate in the Planning Grant Program
- Coordinate with relevant State(s) to develop state-wide Plans

Community anchor institution

- Partner with States, other territories, and Tribal / Native entities to develop State Digital Equity Plans
- Advocate for community interests and needs

Local government

- Collaborate with States, other territories, and Tribal / Native to develop State Digital Equity Plans

Community orgs

- Serve as a thought partner as States, other territories, and Tribal / Native entities design their outreach strategies
- Advocate for community interests and needs

Individual

- Participate in the planning process of your local jurisdiction

Additional resources about the Digital Equity Programs

1. Engage with your State or territory regarding their plans to improve high-speed Internet access and achieve digital equity
2. Submit questions to broadband@bpu.nj.gov
3. Attend future NTIA webinars and events


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