



**ConnectALL**

A Division of Empire State Development

# Affordable Housing Connectivity Program

## Application Information Session

October 22, 2024

# Agenda

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- Program Overview
- Review of Application Evaluation Criteria
- Section 2 Review Process
- Q&A

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM (AHCP) OVERVIEW

AHCP is the **nation's largest program to upgrade broadband infrastructure in affordable housing** properties and connect low-income residents with in-unit internet access.

- **ConnectALL**, in consultation with **NYS Homes and Community Renewal (HCR)**, is granting funds to eligible ISPs and broadband deployment entities to meet this timeline and allow for economies of scale to maximize properties served.
- **ConnectALL will pair eligible applicants with owners of public and affordable housing properties** who have expressed interest in no-cost broadband via an online survey at [broadband.ny.gov](https://broadband.ny.gov).
- **Projects must be substantially completed by 2026.**

## APPLICATION OVERVIEW

Internet service providers and other broadband deployment entities are eligible to apply as individuals or as teams.

### Eligible Applicants

- Owners of broadband infrastructure
- Builders of broadband infrastructure
- Internet Service Providers
- Managed Service Providers

### Eligible Use of Funds

- Fiber or other broadband connections to Property premises
- In-building equipment and wiring retrofits

# TWO STEP APPLICATION PROCESS

## SECTION 1 Experience and Qualifications

Applicants will describe:

- Organizational capacity
- Broadband service quality
- Geographic areas of interest
- Minimum and maximum number of units the organization can serve

Approved Section 1 applicants will be informed of available Portfolios

## SECTION 2 Project Proposals

Applicants will provide property-specific deployment proposals and business plans for each Portfolio they are interested in serving.

Portfolio awards will be based on a combination of scores for Sections 1 and 2.

## FULL APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

<b>Application Criteria Categories</b>	<b>Weighting Section One</b>	<b>Weighting Section Two</b>	<b>Weighting Combined</b>
<b>Respondent Experience and Readiness</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Broadband Service Quality and Price</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Network Quality and Technical Proposal</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Digital Equity Impact, Workforce Development and Diversity Practices</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Cost Reasonableness and Business Plan</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Market Conditions and Impact in Portfolio</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>

## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
Respondent Experience and Readiness	12%	3%	15%

- Demonstrated stable financials, legal responsibility, and managerial capacity
  - (Section 1) Q\_14510 Financial Capability [...] Financial statements should include, but are not limited to:
    1. Annual income and net worth (assets and liabilities), including a breakdown of liquid and non-liquid assets;
    2. Certified Financial Statements;
    3. Balance Sheets;
    4. Income Statements and **three (3) years of past tax returns** (corporate or personal);
    5. Letters of intent from potential partners or sponsors if applicable; and
    6. Letters of recommendation from industry stakeholders.

## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
Respondent Experience and Readiness	12%	3%	15%

- Access to capital
  - (Section 2) Q\_15949 Under the “Questionnaire” tab of this application, [...] please attach supporting financial records referenced in that response. These should include:
    - bank records of cash on hand;
    - bank term sheets; or
    - commitment letters from investors; or
    - a line of credit.



## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
Network Quality and Technical Proposal	8%	12%	20%

### ➤ Privacy & Security

- (Section 1) Q\_14485 What measures and strategies will the Applicant take to safeguard the privacy and cybersecurity of residents and other end-users?
  - *Note: industry standards can be found at [National Institute of Standards and Technology \(NIST\)](#)*

## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
Network Quality and Technical Proposal	8%	12%	20%

- Open access network offering
  - (Section 1) Q\_14478 Specify how prospective AHCP projects will enable open-access, including detailing the type of open-access arrangement and indicating the exact duration during which the Applicant will operate and maintain the infrastructure as open-access
  - (Section 1) Q\_14477 Will the Applicant plan to support the facilitation of open-access to the infrastructure?
    - *Note: The answer should address what additional providers would need to do or invest to enter the building in the future, whether the barrier to that future entry would be low, medium, or high following the ConnectALL investment under the proposed approach.*

## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
Network Quality and Technical Proposal	8%	12%	20%

- Infrastructure types and technology
  - (Section 2) Q\_15967 The following series of questions require a description of the Applicant's plan for connecting the Portfolio of Properties. Briefly describe the infrastructure and technology types to be used, the Applicant's approach to internal wiring in buildings, materials and equipment needed, and whether the Applicant proposes acquisition or new construction of the necessary infrastructure.
    - *Notes:*
      - *If the infrastructure type will not be a direct fiber connection to the building or unit, what is the offsetting benefit?*
      - *Section 2 applications should include costs for backhaul.*

## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
Digital Equity Impact, Workforce Development and Diversity Practices	5%	10%	15%

- Demonstrated history of successful partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs), especially those working with affordable housing residents, tenant associations, or digital equity organizations (for infrastructure partners retaining ownership, describe requirements for potential service providers using the infrastructure)
  - (Section 2) Q\_15953 If available, attach letters of intent from community-based organizations (CBOs), [...] to support adoption and use of the internet service the Applicant proposes to provide.
    - *Note: A plan that references specific partnerships with relevant organizations is an indicator of capacity to gain subscribers in low-income communities.*
    - *Note: Applications can include letters of support from potential partner organizations to demonstrate that plans can be successfully implemented.*
    - *Note: The ConnectALL [Digital Equity Asset Inventory](#) is one way to find potential partners.*

## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
Digital Equity Impact, Workforce Development and Diversity Practices	5%	10%	15%

- Depth of workforce development programs and partnerships
  - (Section 1) Q\_14486 Describe the Applicant's current employee engagement strategy as it relates to ensuring good jobs for the Applicant's employees. Include an overview of compensation and benefits, job security, working conditions, worker engagement, and the organizational culture.
  - (Section 2) Q\_15944 Fill out the AHCP Workforce Development and Salary Schedule Template to provide a plan for a preliminary staff team on the proposed deployment project including job titles, whether these positions will be full-time or part-time or contracted, subcontracted, and the training, certification, licensure requirements, and salary schedule.
  - (Section 2) Q\_16019 Describe plans to maximize use of local or regional workforce.

## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
<b>Cost Reasonableness and Business Plan</b>	--	15%	15%

- Financial offer and soundness of financial assumptions
  - (Section 2) Q\_15985 Describe clearly identified financial assumptions and the methodology for determining the cost estimates in the AHCP Financial Template [...] include design, engineering, permitting, labor and material for construction, electronics, and testing costs.
  - (Section 2) Q\_15948 Fill out the AHCP Financial Template to provide project budget & milestones, the capital investment schedule, and pro forma projections. [...] Complete the Wireline and Wireless tabs as applicable.
    - *Note: The take rate should be reasonable or include a justification*

## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
Cost Reasonableness and Business Plan	--	15%	15%

- Justified cost per unit served Matching funds (may include in-kind contributions or philanthropic commitments for nondeployment activities to increase broadband adoption)
  - (Section 2) Q\_15988 Does the Applicant propose any matching funds, including in-kind contributions, such as digital equity support or free service?
  - (Section 2) Q\_15989 Describe matching funds or in-kind contributions (monetary or service based) proposed in this Application.
    - *Note: Matching funds are not required, but may increase applicant score*

## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
Cost Reasonableness and Business Plan	--	15%	15%

- Pricing for services in project years 6-10
  - (Section 2) Q\_15952 Please include proposed pricing for the time frame between year 5 and December 31, 2034. Note that the price for broadband service under this program may not rise in the first five years of the project and may not rise more than once per year between year 5 and December 31, 2034.
    - *Note: Planned pricing increases are permitted, but may result in a lower score*



## APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA DETAIL

	Weighting Section One	Weighting Section Two	Weighting Combined
Market Conditions and Impact in Portfolio	--	15%	15%

- Introduction of new service option for surrounding area
  - (Section 2) Q\_16258 Will your project offer a new service option for the area surrounding the Portfolio?
  - (Section 2) Q\_16257 Please describe your plan(s) and commitment(s) to offer service to the surrounding area.
    - *Note: A yes answer indicates potential for further private investment and economic development impact beyond the grant project. There is an offsetting consideration for capacity to operate in the market, which is supported by existing service and operations.*

## SECTION 2 REVIEW PROCESS

- ConnectALL plans to begin releasing Section 2 portfolios on a regular cadence with short response deadlines.
- Section 2 applications should address the entire portfolio.
- ConnectALL may present options for backhaul or other resources along with the portfolio for an applicant to consider incorporating into their response.
- Section 2 applications are not meant to be final designs.
- ConnectALL will evaluate Applications based on a combination of Sections 1 & 2.
- ConnectALL may request a refined network design from one or more Applicants. An Applicant may request more information from ConnectALL to complete this request.

## SECTION 2 REVIEW PROCESS (CONTINUED)

- ConnectALL may decide that an Applicant is conditionally eligible for a grant award based on the complete application including a refined network design.
  - A determination of conditional eligibility is preliminary to negotiations over final approach, scope, and budget.
  - Applicants who are requested to refine their network design will have the opportunity to reduce the project scope at that point.
  
- ConnectALL may offer an incentive proposal to a single applicant based on a refined network design or may not proceed to an award.
  - The incentive proposal will include the conditions for an award.
  - Applicants can incur grant-reimbursable costs after the incentive proposal is fully executed. ConnectALL cannot reimburse any costs incurred prior to the incentive proposal being fully executed.

# Q&A

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Please direct questions via email to [AHCP@esd.ny.gov](mailto:AHCP@esd.ny.gov)