Regional Broadband Partners Program Information Session
October 6, 2022
Today’s Agenda

1. Introductions
   - Technical Logistics & Housekeeping
   - Welcome

2. Overviews
   - Program Details
   - How to Apply

3. Question & Answer

4. Conclusions
   - Next Steps & Reminders
How do we get the most overlap for the most impact?

We go ALL IN!

MCA Funding Sources

ARPA - Capital Project Funds
$129M

ARPA - State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
$21M

Infrastructure Investment, Digital Equity & Jobs
$100-$300M
ALL-IN Goals

1. Everyone who wants a connection can get one by the end of 2024
2. High speed internet must be affordable for everyone
3. Community-driven solutions at a regional scale ensure sustainable investments
4. Scale and Public Benefit through Public Private Partnerships
5. Consistent and clear processes through data driven decision making
Regional Broadband Partners

- Designed and supported by MCA, Maine Broadband Coalition, and National Digital Equity Center
- Open to Non-profit organizations, planning commissions, economic development agencies or organizations, councils of government (COGs), schools, libraries, Indian Tribal governments, or tribal organizations
- Up to two years of funding; application is for year one
- Maximum grant size of $250,000/year, or $500K
- Broad partnerships are encouraged within regions
- No Restrictions for applicants applying to other MCA grant programs such as Get Ready, Connect the Ready
- Program emphasizes peer support, learning, engagement with technical and other support and coordination

Overview: An initiative to build regional capacity to deploy, sustain, and maximize benefits of high speed internet across Maine

Audience: Non profit, government, tribal

Areas: 12-15 partners covering all regions of the state

Key Milestones / Dates:
- Sept: Application launch
- Oct 31: Application deadline
- Early Nov: Grantees notified
- Dec 8 & 9: First Gathering
- Dec ‘22- Nov’23: Grant Period
Program Goals

1. **Support community broadband solutions** that ensure universal access and accelerate adoption

2. **Strengthen and grow the “ecosystem” of partners** engaged in digital equity and inclusion

3. **Strategically align communities and regions** with state goals and planning to ensure collaboration, communication, and engagement
Regional Broadband Partners will be asked to do the following:

- Provide support for communities planning and implementing broadband infrastructure solutions
- Convene and facilitate a broad regional alliance focused on digital inclusion
  - Develop a regional digital inclusion plan
- Participate in the Digital Equity Taskforce and 5-Year Action Planning process
- Support data collection, research, and community engagement
- Identify opportunities for investment in community anchor institutions to expand access to programming, internet, and devices
Suggested Partners

Regional alliances may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Libraries
- Community Action programs/other social service partners
- Veterans organizations
- Healthy aging programs/older adult support organizations
- Hospitals/health care providers
- Educational partners: adult education, K-12, higher ed, CTEs
- Affordable housing partners
- Career centers and workforce training partners
- Organizations supporting people with disabilities
Priorities

- **Experience**: partners who have experience supporting broadband planning or infrastructure, digital equity and inclusion, digital skills building will be prioritized.

- **Ability to Convene Partners**: strongest proposals are those that have a broad range of partners identified and (ideally) committed.

- **Capacity**: partners that have existing capacity and/or a plan to increase capacity for broadband work within the region.

Maine needs broadband and digital inclusion expertise and capacity in every part of Maine to achieve universal access. This program welcomes proposals from organizations that don’t have existing broadband staff or experience and will provide support to regional partners with different levels of expertise and engagement.
How to Apply

One account for all grant funding opportunities:

- Meet with MCA staff prior to 10/31 deadline
- Account creation for one applying entity
- Program application

Links:

Application Portal
Step-by-step Instructions
FAQ
Ineligible Expenses

- Funding can’t be used as match for other MCA grant programs
- Funding won’t be eligible for capital projects unless approved by MCA

*If a recipient has a current Negotiated Indirect Costs Rate Agreement (“NICRA”) established with a Federal cognizant agency responsible for reviewing, negotiating, and approving cost allocation plans or indirect cost proposals, then the recipient may use its current NICRA. Alternatively, if the recipient does not have a NICRA, the recipient may elect to use the de minimis rate of 10 percent of the modified total direct costs pursuant to 2 CFR 200.414(f).*
Things to know ahead of time

Application requires:

- Description of the region served by the applicant
- List of partners & whether they are committed
- Up to five support letters

MCA/Maine Broadband Coalition/NDEC will provide:

- General broadband and digital equity education and learning opportunities
- Group meetings and individual meetings in-region
- Facilitation to develop regional digital inclusion plan
- Information and data sharing
- Outreach support
Research Underway

- **Digital Equity Asset Inventory**
  - University of Maine Center on Aging
  - Complete December

- **Broadband Workforce Analysis**
  - Camoin Associates
  - Complete December

- **Broadband Intelligence Platform**
  - Vetro FiberMap
  - Public Viewer this fall