RECONNECT PROGRAM INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

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PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

+ Overview of the ReConnect Program and the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)

+ Current ReConnect Program Status Update

+ Program Eligibility

+ Program Design

+ Application Evaluation and Scoring

+ Live Questions and Answers (Q&A)

Please note: the information provided during today's workshop is informed by the 2018 FOA. Some of the requirements from this round of funding may change in the next FOA.

INTRODUCING RECONNECT

2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act

$600 million in funding

$550 million in funding

2019 Consolidated Appropriations Act

ReConnect Program
Pilot program that provides loans and grants to extend broadband service to rural areas.

Assist rural areas that do not have sufficient access (10/1) to broadband.

Minimum requirements: 25Mbps down/3Mbps up

	LOAN	COMBO	GRANT
Buildout Speed	25/3 Mbps minimum	25/3 Mbps minimum, incentive for higher speeds	25/3 Mbps minimum, incentive for higher speeds
Terms	Max award: $50 million 2% Interest Rate	Max award: $50 million 50/50 Loan/Grant UST Rate	Max award: $25 million 25% match
Application Review	Open (non-competitive)	Competitive Scoring	Competitive Scoring
Round 1 Federal Funds	$200 million	$100 million grant + $100 million loan	$200 million

RECONNECT PROGRAM UPDATES

+Outreach

+Participation

+What's next

RECONNECT OUTREACH

+ **Six Technical Assistance Workshops**
  + 447 Workshop Participants

+ **13 Technical Assistance Webinars**
  + 2,480 Webinar Participants

+ **Ongoing Help Desk Support**
  + 1,346 inquiries received via the Contact Us on ReConnect website

RECONNECT APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED

- **78 100% Grant applications submitted**
  - $522 million dollars requested
  - Applications represent: 34 U.S. States and 151,000 Households

- **53 50% Grant / 50% Loan applications submitted**
  - 637 million dollars requested in total
    - $342 million dollars for Grant
    - $295 million dollars for Loan
  - Applications represent: 32 U.S. States and 148,000 Households

- **15 100% Loan applications submitted**
  - $258 million dollars requested
  - Applications represent: 22 U.S. States and 165,000 Households and Businesses

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Who Can Apply?	Application Eligibility Factors
States, local governments, or any agency, subdivision, instrumentality, or political subdivision thereof	2 years of historical unqualified, audited financial statements
A territory or possession of the United States	Fully complete application
An Indian tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act)	Financial feasibility and sustainability
For-profit corporations	Timely buildout completion
Limited liability companies	Service areas
Cooperative or mutual organizations	Technical feasibility
Non-profit entities	Project is fully funded

ELIGIBLE PROPOSED SERVICE AREAS

100% Loan Products

+ Proposed funded service area (PFSA) must be located in an area where 90% of **households** do not have sufficient access to broadband

50/50 Loan/Grant Products

+ PFSA must be located in an area where 90% of **households** do not have sufficient access to broadband

100% Grant Products

+ PFSA must be located in an area where 100% of **households** do not have sufficient access to broadband

PROPOSED FUNDED SERVICE AREA (PFSA)

Key Considerations

✦ Current and future applicants may view some factors of ineligibility using the mapping tool available at https://reconnect.usda.gov.

Validations

✦ Once an application is received and reviewers complete first eligibility review, PFSAs will be released for public comment.

✦ USDA will conduct service area validations on applications.

✦ Validations will check for 10/1 service in the PFSA, validate other information submitted in the application, and consider any public notice responses.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

- THE CONSTRUCTION OR IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES, INCLUDING BUILDINGS AND LAND, REQUIRED TO PROVIDE BROADBAND SERVICE

- PRE-APPLICATION EXPENSES (NOT TO EXCEED 5% OF THE TOTAL AWARD). COSTS MUST BE INCURRED AFTER THE PUBLICATION DATE OF THE FOA AND BE DOCUMENTED

- COSTS MUST BE REASONABLE, ALLOCABLE, AND NECESSARY

- APPLICATIONS THAT PROPOSE TO USE ANY PORTION OF THE AWARD OR MATCHING FUNDS FOR ANY INELIGIBLE COST MAY BE REJECTED

FOR 100% LOANS ONLY

THE ACQUISITION OF AN EXISTING SYSTEM THAT DOES NOT CURRENTLY PROVIDE SUFFICIENT ACCESS TO BROADBAND (LIMITED TO 40% OF THE TOTAL LOAN AMOUNT).

APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SCORING

How applications will be evaluated and maximizing points

EVALUATION AND PROCESSING PROCEDURES

+ **100% Loans**
  + Loans are accepted, evaluated, and processed on a rolling basis.
  + Loan applications do not include an evaluation criteria section

+ **50% Loan / 50% Grant Combination and 100% Grants**
  + Combination Loan/Grant applications are evaluated and scored on a competitive process

COMPETITIVE SCORING PROCESS

Scoring Process	Total Points Allowed	Evaluation Criteria
1 point per location for each of the 3 evaluation criteria categories	Up to 15 points	Healthcare Centers, Educational Facilities, Critical Community Facilities
1 point per eligible business pre-subscription form	Up to 15 points	Businesses
1 point per eligible business pre-subscription form	Up to 20 points	Farms
20 points if proposed service is equal to or greater than 100/100 Mbps	Up to 20 points	Performance of service
10 points (State BB Plan), 5 points (no delivery restrictions), and 5 points (expedite right-of-way and environmental requirements)	Up to 20 points	State Broadband Activity (3 Criteria)
25 points for areas with population densities of 6 people or less	25 points	Rurality of Proposed Funded Service Area

WAYS TO MAXIMIZE YOUR SCORE

+ **Rurality:** Points are awarded for serving the least dense rural areas as measured by the population of the area per square mile.

+ **Farms and Businesses:** Applicants receive one point for each farm or business that pre-subscribes for broadband service.

+ **Performance of Service:** 100 Mbps symmetrical certified by a PE (RUS encourages applicants to use the Network Design Certification)

+ **Healthcare, Educational, and Critical Community Facilities:** Each of these premises receives one point if captured in the GIS layer of the application mapping tool.

Please note: Points will not exceed the maximums in each category.

APPLICATION CONSIDERATIONS

Key considerations when preparing for the application process

STARTING YOUR APPLICATION

✚ **Online Applications**
  ✚ Loans All applications are submitted through the online system at https://reconnect.usda.gov.

✚ **System Registration Requirements**
  ✚ Taxpayer ID Number
  ✚ DUNS number
  ✚ SAM.gov registration
  ✚ USDA Level II eAuthentication

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

✚Resources

 ✚ ReConnect website https://reconnect.usda.gov
 ✚ Fact Sheets and FAQs
 ✚ General Field Representatives (GFRs) and RD State Office Staff

✚OneRD Coordination

 ✚ Resources across RD
 ✚ Help Desk
 ✚ Technical Assistance and Support to Applicants