DIGITAL EQUITY ACT PROGRAMS

FUNDED BY THE BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW

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

MAY 2022

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

BEAD
$42.45B

Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment Program

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.

DIGITAL EQUITY
$2.75B

Digital Equity Act

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.

TRIBAL
$2.00B

Tribal Connectivity Technical Amendments

A program to help tribal communities expand high-speed Internet access and adoption on tribal lands.

MIDDLE MILE
$1.00B

Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure

A program to expand middle mile infrastructure, to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas.

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

INTERNET FOR ALL
INTERNETFORALL.GOV

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 to meet their needs and improve their lives.

PROGRAMS HIGHLIGHTS

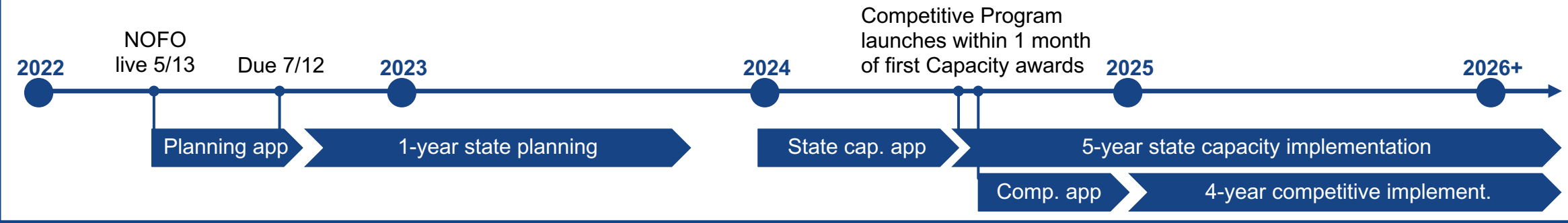### The Digital Equity Act created three programs:

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 across three programs include:

- ☆ Developing digital equity plans; states must develop a plan to be eligible for state capacity grants

- ☆ Implementing digital equity plans and related activities

- ☆ Making awards to other entities to help make digital equity plans

- ☆ Providing digital literacy and digital skills education

- ☆ Improving accessibility and inclusivity of public resources

- ☆ Facilitating the adoption of high-speed Internet

ESTIMATED TIMELINE

Timeline approximate unless exact date specified

Competitive Program launches within 1 month of first Capacity awards

2022 — NOFO live 5/13 — Due 7/12 — **2023** — **2024** — **2025** — **2026+**

- Planning app → 1-year state planning
- State cap. app → 5-year state capacity implementation
- Comp. app → 4-year competitive implement.

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

Vision
- Stated **vision** for digital equity

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

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

Outreach and Engagement
- **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
- Coordination and outreach **strategy**

Integration
- **Asset inventory** of current strategies
- Description of **incorporation of local plans**
- Description of **coordination of use of capacity grant funds with BEAD funds**

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

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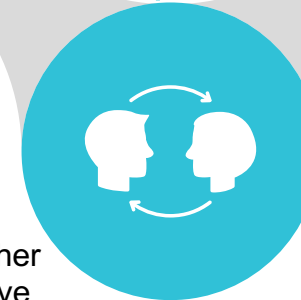
Community anchor institution
- Partner with States, other territories, and Tribal / Native entities to develop State Digital Equity Plans
- Advocate for community interests and needs

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

Tribal government
- Submit a letter of intent to participate in the Planning Grant Program
- Coordinate with relevant State(s) to develop state-wide Plans

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

Individual
- Participate in the planning process of your local jurisdiction

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 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

REQUEST FOR COMMENT

NTIA's Request for Comment on the Digital Equity Act programs is **currently open.**

The Notice and RFC is available [here](). Comments can be submitted at regulations.gov under Docket #NTIA-2023-0002.

The deadline for all comments is: **May 1ˢᵗ, 2023 at 5:00 PM EST**

Additional resources about the Digital Equity Programs

1. Visit the InternetForAll.gov for additional information on federal funding programs

2. Engage with your State or territory regarding their plans to improve high-speed Internet access and achieve digital equity

3. Submit questions to digitalequity@ntia.gov

4. Attend future NTIA webinars, including program-specific application guidance webinars for applicants