

Introduction

The Broadband & E-Commerce Education Center has identified sources of funding for broadband initiatives and compiled them in this document. Some funds are intended specifically for broadband projects, while others are more broadly defined but may be applicable to broadband in some situations. Information regarding use of funds, eligibility, award amounts, application deadlines, stipulations, and relevant contacts has been included where available, though this document is not exhaustive and is subject to change.

This collection has been compiled using the Department of Health and Human Resources' Program Management Office (www.grants.gov), the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (www.cfda.gov), the Federal Register's Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) documents, and the websites of individual departments and agencies. Other federal and state departments in addition to those listed in this document may offer funding opportunities as well. Please consult these resources for more information about each funding opportunity and consider registering for email updates from relevant agencies.

In order to expedite application as loan and grant opportunities are announced, potential applicants can take steps to prepare for funding application proactively. Steps may include, but are not limited to:

- Documenting demand for broadband
- Collecting demographic and economic data
- Researching potential sources of funding and their requirements
- Identifying key partners and priority projects
- Registering appropriately, depending upon funding source requirements

Every attempt has been made to ensure the information contained herein is valid at the time of publication. The UW-Extension Broadband & E-Commerce Education Center reserves the right to make changes, corrections, and/or improvements at any time and without notice. In addition, the Center disclaims any and all liability for damages incurred directly or indirectly as a result of errors, omissions, or discrepancies.

To find the most current version of this document, visit <http://broadband.uwex.edu/resources/funding-2/> or contact WIBroadband@uwex.edu.

Using This Document

The funding opportunities collected in this document are organized by issuing department or agency. To navigate and identify relevant funding opportunities, note the keywords indicating the fund's primary goals; all funding opportunities in this document are assigned one or more of the following keywords:

- Broadband access
- Telecommunications access
- Economic development
- Business development
- Community development
- Education
- Health care
- Public services
- Project planning

Funding Opportunities

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

- Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program/Farm Bill Broadband Loan Program
 - **Keywords: Broadband access; Telecommunications access**
 - Direct and guaranteed loans for improvement, expansion, construction, acquisition and operation to furnish and improve telecommunications and broadband service in rural areas
 - Eligible recipients include entities providing or who may hereafter provide telephone service in rural areas, public bodies, cooperatives, nonprofit, limited dividend or mutual associations. Loans will not be made to individuals
 - Awards generally range from minimum of \$50,000 to tens of millions.
 - Applications are not competitive
 - Status: Infrastructure Loan applications accepted year round. Farm Bill regulations expected in 2015
 - Website: www.rurdev.usda.gov/RUSTelecomPrograms.html
 - Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-infrastructure-loans-loan-guarantees>
 - Farm Bill Broadband Loan:
<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/farm-bill-broadband-loans-loan-guarantees>
Contact: Andre Boening, (608) 846-0210, andre.boening@wdc.usda.gov
 - **Additional notes:** These two funds are the USDA's primary broadband-focused funding opportunities

- Community Connect Grants
 - **Keywords: Broadband access; Community development**
 - Funds for the construction or acquisition of equipment and facilities to provide broadband service to rural communities; the construction, maintenance, acquisition, or expansion of community center facilities including computer access points; bandwidth subsidies to critical community facilities (schools, libraries, health services, etc.)
 - Eligible recipients include local and state governments, tribal organizations, for- and non-profit organizations, cooperatives, and LLCs
 - Intended for communities with lower income and population density
 - Awards range from \$100,000 to \$3,000,000
 - Requires minimum 15% matching funds
 - Status: Currently not accepting applications
 - Website: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/utp_commconnect.html
 - **Additional notes:** Application periods typically offered annually; no Wisconsin applicant has ever received funding from this opportunity

- **Community Facilities Loans and Grants**
 - **Keywords: Community development**
 - Funds for the construction, maintenance, expansion, or refinancing of community facilities for health care, public safety, or public services
 - Eligible recipients include non-profit organizations and local, county, regional, and tribal governments in areas of up to 20,000 population
 - Priority for communities with low population and/or low median household income
 - Awards up to 75% of project costs for grants; lending rates vary for loans
 - Status: Loan and grant applications are accepted year round
 - Website: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program>
- Contact: Brian Deaner, 715-345-7610 ext. 141, brian.deaner@wi.usda.gov
- **Additional notes:** Primarily intended for other utilities projects (e.g., water and gas), though it is possible for a broadband-focused project to receive funding

- **Rural Community Development Initiative**
 - **Keywords: Community development**
 - Grant funds for developing community organizations, including those improving facilities and community and economic development projects
 - Eligible recipients include public, for- and non-profit, and tribal organizations
 - Awards from \$50,000 to \$250,000
 - Requires minimum 100% matching contribution from recipient
 - Status: Currently not accepting applications; regulations expected in late 2015
 - Website: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-community-development-initiative-grants>
 - Contact: Brian Deaner, 715-345-7610 ext. 141, brian.deaner@wi.usda.gov
 - **Additional notes:** Primarily intended for other utilities projects (e.g., water and gas), though it is possible for a broadband-focused project to receive funding

- **Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants and Loans**
 - **Keywords: Education; Health care**
 - Funds for acquisition of physical telecommunications equipment (computers, A/V, etc.), technical assistance with telecommunications equipment, or instructional programming used in education or health care
 - Eligible recipients include local or state governments, for- and non-profit organizations, tribal organizations, and corporations who provide education or medical care using telecommunication
 - Awards from \$50,000 to \$500,000 for grants
 - Requires minimum 15% matching contribution from grant recipients
 - Status: Loan applications accepted year-round; Grant regulations expected in early 2015

- Website: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>
- Contact: Andre Boening, (608)846-0210, andre.boening@wdc.usda.gov
- **Additional notes:** Combination loan/grant applications are accepted

- **Expansion of 911 Access Loan**
 - **Keywords: Public services; Health care**
 - Funds for construction and improvement of telephone service in rural areas; finance of infrastructure responsible for 911 access, homeland security services, transportation safety services, rural location technologies, and integrated commercial, transportation, or emergency services
 - Eligible recipients include local and state governments, tribal organizations, and emergency communications equipment providers where state and local governments are prohibited from acquiring debt
 - Status: Applications accepted year round
 - Website: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/utp_911.html
 - Contact: Andre Boening, (608) 846-0210, andre.boening@wdc.usda.gov
 - **Additional notes:** Apply through Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program (see Page 2)

- **Rural Business Development Grant**
 - **Keywords: Business development**
 - Status: Regulations expected in early 2015
 - Website: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants>
 - Contact: Kristin Peterson, 715-345-7610, kristin.peterson@wi.usda.gov
 - **Additional Notes:** Replaces former Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) and Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG, http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/bcp_rbeg.html); this funding opportunity is brand new and as such, details are scarce at the time of this publication. Though it may be similar to the funding opportunities it replaces, expect more information when regulations are announced in 2015

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- **Rural Opportunity Investment Fund (with White House Rural Council)**
 - **Keywords: Economic development; Business development**
 - Matches loan funds from private investors (e.g., pension funds) to rural infrastructure and business projects through the USDA.
 - Status: To be announced
 - Contact: ruralinvestment@osec.usda.gov

U.S. Department of Commerce

Economic Development Administration

- Investments for Public Works and Economic Development Facilities
 - **Keywords: Economic development; Business development**
 - Grant and loan funds for the construction or maintenance of public infrastructure used to attract or retain private sector jobs and capital, and promote economic competitiveness
 - Eligible recipients include local and state governments, tribal and non-profit organizations, and higher education institutions
 - Awards usually up to 50% of total project costs (some exceptions may be made)
 - Status: Currently not accepting applications; regulations expected Spring 2015
 - Website:
<https://www.cfda.gov/index?s=program&mode=form&tab=step1&id=f860a3b8eeae5e8f25a41e38e511a72c>
 - Contact: Lee Shirley, 312-353-8143 ext. 151, lshirey@eda.gov

- Economic Development Assistance Program
 - **Keywords: Economic development; Business development**
 - Grant and loan funds for the construction of public works projects including telecommunications equipment, with emphasis on job growth, capital investment, and innovation, competition, and creativity in regional economic growth
 - Eligible recipients include local and state governments, tribal and non-profit organizations, and private higher education institutions
 - Intended for economically distressed areas relative to national levels of income and unemployment
 - Status: Currently not accepting applications; regulations expected spring 2015
 - Website: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=248297>
 - Contact: Lee Shirley, 312-353-8143 ext. 151, lshirey@eda.gov

- Planning and Local Technical Assistance Programs
 - **Keywords: Project planning; Economic development**
 - Grant funds for the creation of regional economic development plans aimed to foster economic growth, including broadband infrastructure and services
 - Eligible recipients include local and state governments, tribal and non-profit organizations, and higher education institutions
 - Awards up to \$100,000
 - Status: Applications accepted on a rolling basis

- Website: <http://www.grants.gov/view-opportunity.html?oppld=189193>
- Contact: Lee Shirley, 312-353-8143 ext. 151, lshirey@eda.gov

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

• Telehealth Network Grant

- **Keywords: Health care**
- Funds for telehealth projects that improve health outcomes in medically underserved areas, including operation and evaluation of telehealth service costs and outcomes
- Eligible recipients include public and non-profit organizations that provide telehealth services in rural areas
- Funds may not be used for purchasing telecommunications transmission equipment (e.g., laying cable); no more than 40% of funds may be used for equipment purchases
- Status: Regulations expected early 2016
- Website:
 - <http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/about/telehealth/telehealth.html>
 - <http://www.telehealthresourcecenter.org/>
- Contact: Mark Thomas, 301-945-4172, Mark.Thomas@hrsa.hhs.gov
- **Additional notes:** Priority given to applicants with committed network partners

• Telehealth Resource Center Grant

- **Keywords: Health care**
- Funds for the establishment and expansion of resource centers that provide technical assistance to developing telehealth services
- Eligible recipients include non-profit and tribal organizations
- Average award amount is \$320,000
- Status: Regulations expected early 2016
- Website:
 - <http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/about/telehealth/telehealth.html>
 - <http://www.telehealthresourcecenter.org/>
- Contact: Mark Thomas, 301-945-4172, Mark.Thomas@hrsa.hhs.gov

Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

FCC Universal Service Fund

• Lifeline Program

- **Keywords: Telecommunications access**
- Funds for the reduction of monthly bills for telephone service as well as installation fees

- Eligible recipients include households with income below 135% of the national poverty line, receiving economic assistance from certain state and federal programs (e.g., Medicaid or SNAP benefits), or located in tribal areas participating in tribal assistance programs
 - Status: Applications accepted year round
 - Website:
 - <http://www.fcc.gov/lifeline>
 - <http://www.usac.org/li/>
 - <http://www.lifelinesupport.org/lis/>
 - Contact: Telecommunications Access Policy Division, 202-418-7400 or local telecommunications service providers
- **Connect America Fund (aka High Cost Program)**
 - **Keywords: Telecommunications access**
 - Funds for the construction of voice and broadband networks in rural, high-cost areas, such as fixed or mobile wireless as well as fiber-to-premises service or DSL
 - Eligible recipients include telecommunications service providers
 - Must have state-designated eligibility
 - Must provide telephone service
 - Awards determined in part through competitive bidding
 - Status: To be announced
 - Website:
 - <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/connecting-america>
 - <http://www.usac.org/hc/caf/default.aspx>
 - Contact: Telecommunications Access Policy Division, 202-418-7400
 - **Additional notes:** This fund will be entering the second of two phases of implementation
- **Health Care Connect Fund**
 - **Keywords: Health care; Broadband access (to health care providers)**
 - Funds for broadband services, installation, equipment, and network connections
 - Eligible recipients include public or non-profit health care providers
 - Requires 35% contribution of costs
 - Awards determined through competitive bidding (some exemptions available)
 - Status: Applications due July 1, 2015
 - Website:
 - <http://www.usac.org/rhc/healthcare-connect/default.aspx>
 - <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/rural-health-care>
 - Contact: Telecommunications Access Policy Division, 202-418-7400
 - **Additional notes:** Annual application window typically opens at the beginning of each calendar year

- Schools and Libraries Program (aka E-Rate)
 - **Keywords: Education; Telecommunications access**
 - Funds for the discount of telecommunications services, maintenance, and equipment
 - Eligible recipients include schools and libraries
 - Prospective recipients submit bids through USAC to be matched with vendors
 - Status: Currently not accepting applications.
 - Website:
 - <http://www.usac.org/sl/default.aspx>
 - <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/universal-service-program-schools-and-libraries>
 - Contact: Telecommunications Access Policy Division, 202-418-7400
 - **Additional notes:** Annual application window typically opens during the first quarter of each calendar year

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC)

- Broadband Expansion Grant Program
 - **Keywords: Broadband access**
 - Funds for reimbursement of broadband equipment and construction expenses in underserved areas
 - Eligible recipients include local governments, telecommunications service providers, for- and non-profit organizations, and cooperatives
 - Status: Currently not accepting applications; regulations expected in Summer 2015
 - Website: <http://psc.wi.gov/utilityinfo/tele/broadband/grants/bbGrantApplicationPage.htm>
 - Contact: Dennis Klaila, 608-267-9780, dennis.klaila@wisconsin.gov
 - **Additional notes:** Check area eligibility at <http://www.broadbandmap.wisconsin.gov/>; funding increased under the 2015-2017 state budget.

PSC Universal Service Fund

- Non-profit Grant Program
 - **Keywords: Broadband access**
 - Funds for projects promoting affordable access to telecommunications services to high-cost, low-income, or disabled customers
 - Focuses on basic telecommunication services such as VoIP, though broadband can be included
 - Eligible recipients include non-profit organizations
 - Requires 50% matching funds from recipients
 - Status: Currently not accepting applications; regulations expected in 2015
 - Website: <http://psc.wi.gov/utilityinfo/tele/usf/programs/npSummary.htm>

- Contact: Jeff Richter, 608-267-9624, Jeff.Richter@wisconsin.gov
- **Medical Telecommunications Equipment Grant Program**
 - **Keywords: Health care**
 - Funds for the purchase of medical telecommunications equipment that enhance medical service
 - Eligible recipients include non-profit health clinics, public health agencies, or hospitals serving medically underserved areas or populations
 - Must be governed by a Board of Directors
 - Status: Currently not accepting applications; regulations expected in Summer 2015
 - Website: <http://psc.wi.gov/utilityinfo/tele/usf/programs/tmSummary.htm>
 - Contact: Dennis Klaila, 608-267-9780, dennis.klaila@wisconsin.gov
 - **Additional notes:** Typically offered every other year

Wisconsin Department of Administration

Community Development Block Grants

- **Public Facilities (PF) Grant Program**
 - **Keywords: Community development**
 - Funds for the improvements, repairs, or expansions of community and business support infrastructure and facilities (including broadband infrastructure).
 - Eligible recipients include Units of General Local Government (UGLG) such as a city, village, town, or county.
 - Awards up to \$500,000 or 50% of total project costs
 - Status: Applications due May 22, 2015
 - Website: <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/Divisions/Housing/Bureau-of-Community-Development/CDBG-PF-Program-Overview>
 - Contact: Tom Clippert, 608-261-7538, Tom.clippert@wisconsin.gov
 - **Additional notes:** This program's funding will only be awarded to projects that benefit low- to moderate-income households, as defined by Chapter 3 of the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) National Objectives. Application training sessions will be held February 25th in Madison and March 4th in Phillips
- **Economic Development (ED) Grant Program**
 - **Keywords: Economic development; Business development**
 - Funds for business assistance that creates or retains jobs for low- and moderate-income individuals; supporting regional economic development strategies
 - Eligible recipients include Units of General Local Government such as a city, village, town, or county.

- Awards up to \$1,000,000
 - Status: Applications accepted on a rolling basis
 - Website: <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/Divisions/Housing/Bureau-of-Community-Development/CDBG-ED-Program-Overview>
 - Contact: Tom Clippert, 608-261-7538, Tom.clippert@wisconsin.gov
 - **Additional notes:** Proposals must address one of HUD's National Objectives. Funds are awarded to UGLGs, who in turn lend to local businesses. See application (posted online) for further requirements and stipulations
- **Public Facilities-Economic Development (PFED) Grant Program**
 - **Keywords: Economic development; Business development**
 - Funds for public infrastructure projects that support business expansion or development (including broadband infrastructure)
 - Eligible recipients include Units of General Local Government such as a city, village, town, or county
 - Awards up to \$500,000, or 50% of total project cost
 - Status: Applications accepted on a rolling basis
 - Website: <http://doa.wi.gov/Divisions/Housing/Bureau-of-Community-Development/CDBG-PFED-Program-Overview>
 - Contact: Tom Clippert, 608-261-7538, Tom.clippert@wisconsin.gov
- **Planning Grant (PLNG) Program**
 - **Keywords: Project planning; Community development; Economic development**
 - Funds for plan development (either community-wide or site/neighborhood-specific)
 - Eligible recipients include Units of General Local Government such as a city, village, town, or county
 - Awards up to \$25,000 for community plans; up to \$15,000 for site/neighborhood plans
 - Status: Applications are accepted May 22, 2015.
 - Website: <http://doa.wi.gov/Divisions/Housing/Bureau-of-Community-Development/CDBG-PLNG-Program-Overview>
 - Contact: Tom Clippert, 608-261-7538, Tom.clippert@wisconsin.gov
 - **Additional notes:** At least 90% of funds will be awarded to projects that benefit low- to moderate-income households; application training sessions will be held February 25th in Madison and March 4th in Phillips

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

- **Tower Lease Program (with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources)**
 - **Keywords: Broadband access; Telecommunications access**
 - Allows the installation of telecommunications equipment (e.g., antennae) on DOT- or DNR-owned structures by other parties

- Eligible groups include state and local governments, public education institutions, public utilities, cooperatives, non-profit organizations, certain private commercial organizations
 - Eligibility varies by owning entity
- Contact: Jeff Ohnstad, Jeffrey.ohnstad@dot.wi.gov

COLLECTION OF BROADBAND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, JANUARY 2015

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