CPF-1 Workshop Q&A

Tuesday, January 24, 2023

1. Approximately how long does it take to obtain a SAM UEI?
    a. The process for obtaining a UEI is administered by SAM.gov, an official website of the United States government. According to SAM.gov FAQ on this topic, the entity validation process to obtain a UEI, the review time varies depending upon the complexity of the case. However, the average time for manual review is five (5) business days.
2. Are points associated with community outreach or is it just letters that must be sent out?
    a. Depending upon the nature of the feedback, if negative community feedback is received for a project it may result in a reduction to an applicant's overall technical capability score.
3. What is the timeline for completion of a project within the CPF program? Is it 18 months like NBBP, starting when the award is made in June?
    a. For Capital Project Funds, subrecipients must complete the project within eighteen months after the date the grant is awarded unless granted an extension.
4. Under technical ability, please explain what you mean by negative support from the community?
    a. If a project receives negative feedback from the community it proposes to serve, that would be considered "negative support" and could result in deductions to technical capability depending upon the nature of the feedback.
5. Is the community feedback template currently available?
    a. The community feedback template is being finalized and will be made available on the Commission's website at https://psc.nebraska.gov/telecommunications/nebraska-broadband-bridge-program-nbbp. Applicants are free to deviate from this template but are required to include the following minimum information:
        i. A description of the project and technology to be used;
        ii. A description of the project area;
        iii. The proposed speed tiers and pricing;
        iv. The Commission's contact information for providing feedback to the Commission; and
        v. The deadline by which feedback must be provided.
6. Who must receive the community feedback letters?
    a. Applicants must identify community leaders within the project area and describe the outreach efforts to consult with the identified leaders, which should include the community feedback form.
7. Can other individuals also submit community feedback or letters of support?
    a. Yes.
8. Please define advertisements required as part of the post award process.
    a. We did not define this and are not asking applicants to modify how they interact with their customers. The intent of this requirement is so that consumers in the areas supported by the grant are made aware of the service offerings made available. Regardless of the method of advertisement, they must be made available in multiple languages.

9. If a submitted Digital Inclusion plan does not have a low-income option, how does that impact the scoring of the application?
   a. The Digital Inclusion Plan must include the pricing structure of the 100/100 Mbps plan (or the next highest offering) being offered to low-income subscribers in addition to the availability of Lifeline or ACP discounts. To be eligible for scoring points, the digital inclusion plan must offer at least one low-income option for a discounted service offering at a minimum of 100/100 Mbps at a monthly cost of less than $50 per month. The applicant must participate in federal broadband internet access subsidy programs such as Lifeline or Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), and the low-income plan must be eligible to be discounted further with Lifeline and ACP discounts.
10. Regarding matching sources, can NUSF-99 BDS or NUSF-108 BDS funds be used?
    a. NUSF-99 BDS funds cannot be used as a match source for areas receiving support for fiber builds supported through use of NUSF-99 BDS. NUSF-108 BDS funds can only be used as a match source for new NUSF project areas if the applicant attests that funds available through NUSF-108 BDS are not enough to build out the entire area. Additional requirements for projects involving NUSF-108 BDS funds as a match source are outlined within the 2023 CPF Program Guide
11. When will the additional materials, such as the Community Feedback Template, the Allowed/Disallowed Costs, and the attestation and agreement forms be posted on the PSC website?
    a. We are finalizing these documents and plan to have them posted on the website within the next week.
12. Can you please elaborate on the CPF-1 order issued on January 24, 2023, and what statutory definition regarding villages was relied on?
    a. The CPF-1 order entered January 10, 2023 referenced Neb. Rev. Stat. § 17-201 which contains a statutory definition for the term "village." Following a recent stakeholder meeting, the Commission was asked to provide guidance on the eligibility of villages with fewer than 100 residents. Many villages were formed and incorporated before the law added the 100 population requirement and are still considered incorporated villages. The CPF-1 order entered January 24, 2023 clarifies that to the extent that there are incorporated villages with fewer than 100 residents, these areas should be considered eligible project areas for the purpose of the CPF program in Congressional District 3.
13. How do we handle a project that is in more than one Congressional District?
    a. The project should be separated into two projects. Separate applications would be required for the portion of the project in Congressional District 1 and the portion in Congressional District 3.
14. When will the first 25% of funding for a project be issued?
    a. Unless otherwise determined by Treasury, the first 25% payment is expected to be distributed in July 2022.
15. How far outside of the corporate limits can a project go in the 3rd Congressional District?
    a. A project in Congressional District 3 that includes locations outside of a city of the 2nd class or village would not be eligible.
16. May an applicant submit multiple, contiguous requests provided that no one single project exceeds the $5 million cap?
    a. Yes.
17. Is there a match requirement for CPF funds?
    a. No. However, applicants proposing a match can receive additional scoring points.

18. If middle mile construction is necessary outside of the corporate limits of a town or village in the 3ʳᵈ Congressional District to complete the project in that town or village, is it eligible for funding?
    a. Middle-mile will be considered for funding only if the capacity does not otherwise exist and is required for the project's last-mile build to bring broadband connectivity to eligible locations.
19. If there is no feedback from the community stakeholders, is the project disqualified?
    a. No. However, applicants must demonstrate community outreach efforts as described in the CPF-1 order and Program Guide.
20. Within the 2023 CPF Program Guide, on Page 20 it states that grant recipients must comply with ARPA grant requirements, where can those requirements be found?
    a. Federal Uniform Guidance rules are applicable for Capital Projects Fund, CFDA # 21.029. Uniform Guidance can be found at 2 CFR Part 200, and it establishes uniform administrative, cost principles, and audit requirements for federal awards to non-federal entities. Additional information can be found on the U.S. Department of the Treasury Capital Projects Fund website.
21. Will the presentation be available online?
    a. Yes, the slide deck will be made available on our website at https://psc.nebraska.gov/telecommunications/nebraska-broadband-bridge-program-nbbp