Attachment Letter J

A digital inclusion plan must be attached for consideration. The plan should specify: the applicant's process to consult with community and consider affordability; a description of how the project will meet the objective of providing broadband infrastructure deployment within the project area to directly enable work, education, and healthcare monitoring; a description of how the project will address a critical need that resulted from or was made apparent or exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency; identify any critical needs of the community intended to be served by the project, and how the project will be tailored to meet those needs, including the carrier's efforts to ensure members of the community to be served will be able to afford the services offered and must describe any discounts and/or support programs to be offered for low-income individuals; specify how the project will impact access to and use of information and communication technologies within the communities it serves, including individuals and communities that are the most disadvantaged; include the pricing structure of the 100/100 Mbps plan being offered to low-income subscribers in addition to the availability of Lifeline or Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) discounts and any additional terms and conditions of service; include evidence of outreach efforts to relevant stakeholders (community leaders, community members, civic organizations, etc.) in the areas they are wishing to serve.

Applicant Response:

Nextlink pricing is for the life of the services and includes unlimited data, no contract obligations, and a basic installation fee of $99. Customers can also use Nextlink routers/mesh for an additional cost monthly. Most importantly, Nextlink guarantees its fair pricing beyond 12 months of service, unlike other providers who increase their rates after only 12 months of service with limited data. Nextlink's participation in the Affordable Connectivity Program helps to ensure access to affordable internet connections our community desperately needs for work, school, and health care.

Nextlink has actively partnered with the Microsoft Airband Initiative since 2019. Benefits from our relationship with Airband include access to technical expertise, preferential pricing on innovative technological solutions, as well as digital skills training and a free technical hotline for its customers through PCs for People, another Airband partner. We also collaborate with National 4-H, another Airband partner, to deliver a digital skills education program entitled Tech Changemakers, which empowers youth to train other community members on digital literacy.

Additionally, Microsoft is providing a one-time $25,000 grant to assist Nextlink in the establishment of digital navigator cohorts in strategic locations to help increase broadband adoption. Nextlink Internet will partner with community stakeholders and anchor institutions to secure Digital Navigators to address the entire digital inclusion process — home connectivity, devices, and digital skills — with members of its communities through repeated interactions. Microsoft Airband partners, like Rural LISC, will work with Nextlink to identify community organizations in the designated project areas to train, organize, and deploy volunteers to serve as digital navigators.

Furthermore, Nextlink's digital inclusion plan directly enables work, education, and healthcare monitoring and addresses the critical needs for our community that resulted from or was made apparent by the COVID-19 public health emergency. We are also aware of their active partnership with the Microsoft Airband Initiative which supports customer access to technical expertise, preferential pricing on innovative technological solutions, and digital skills training.

Nextlink will leverage newly established relationships with community colleges and public libraries that are trusted anchor institutions whose position at the intersection of media, information, and technology makes them dependable guides for the people they work with. Digital Navigators often come from the community they serve, which makes them well positioned to understand and address the technology-related concerns of their fellow community members. A public library embodies the innate trust that is critical to the role of a Digital Navigator.