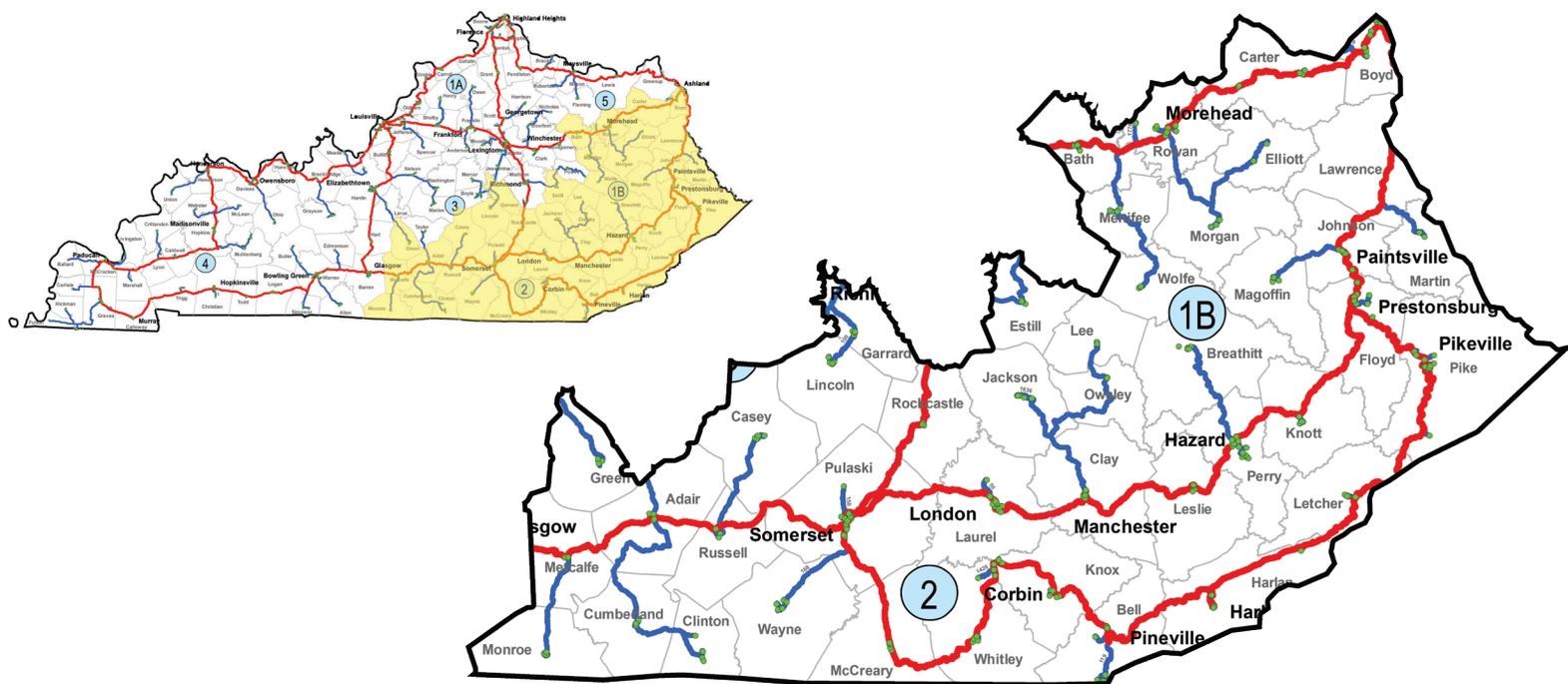


The Center for Rural Development

TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



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TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

PROGRAM GUIDE

Introduction/Overview

The Center for Rural Development's Fiber Infrastructure Project - Phase 3 is funded by a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission and is administered by The Center for Rural Development (The Center). As part of the grant, a technology assistance program will be provided to ARC counties so they may conduct asset mapping, perform feasibility studies, conduct pre-engineering analysis of community fiber projects or other activities that will extend the reach of the KentuckyWired fiber infrastructure. This assistance does not include reimbursement of construction activities, acquisition of goods and equipment or reimbursement of applicant expenses.

The cost of obtaining approved technology assistance will be reimbursed by The Center at 80% of the approved amount. The remaining 20% will be the sole responsibility of the applicant. The Center may, at its discretion, accept documented and verified in-kind contributions or a combination of funds and in-kind to meet the required 20% applicant contribution.

This technology assistance program is being implemented in cooperation with the Commonwealth of Kentucky. It is intended to assist communities in their efforts to establish strategic plans and to formulate data-driven grant requests to finance locally initiated broadband construction projects. The Center will also be assisting with one-on-one consultations for public officials and be providing community information workshops.

Applicant Eligibility

Applications for assistance may be submitted to The Center by Kentucky County or City Governments, Regional Industrial Development Authorities, Area Development Districts, Utility Commissions, Rural Electric Cooperatives, Rural Telephone Cooperatives or Fiber Infrastructure Boards with IRS Non-Profit status.

From the following:

ARC Distressed Counties: Adair, Bath, Bell, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Elliott, Estill, Floyd, Harlan, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lincoln, Magoffin, Martin, McCreary, Menifee, Morgan, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Rockcastle, Russell, Wayne, Whitley and Wolfe.

ARC At-Risk Counties: Boyd, Garrard, Green, Laurel, Metcalfe, Monroe, Pulaski and Rowan.



Services Provider Eligibility

The Center considers the quality of the services being delivered to be the most important factor in making the program successful. As it currently stands, there is not an approved provider list or an application to become one. The Center intends, however, to scrutinize a provider's qualifications and ability to provide the requested service. Service providers will be asked to submit references and other information necessary to assess their qualifications prior to their approval to deliver services. The Center reserves the right to deny any request for assistance if it feels that the preferred provider does not have the experience or capacity to perform the service to its satisfaction.

Studies, surveys or other documents produced by a service provider for the applicant must contain a majority of original content specific to the community and the task. The Center will not accept "boilerplate" content in fulfillment of these items. This requirement must be conveyed to all potential providers during the solicitation process.

The program does seek to utilize providers located within The Center's 42-county service area and the Commonwealth of Kentucky whenever practical. Applications indicating a preference for providers located outside the 42-county service area and the Commonwealth of Kentucky may be approved if the services being sought are not readily available or the nature of the service warrants the use of such providers.

Eligible Services

Services to be reimbursed through the grant must meet eligibility standards as defined by OMB regulations and the program's goals of providing strategic support for development of high-speed telecommunications infrastructure to increase local and regional connectivity and affordability within the region.

These services are to include, but not limited to; Feasibility Studies, Fiber Asset Mapping, Internet Service Surveys, Project Pre-engineering Analysis, Project Financial Sustainability Modeling or Community Education and Engagement Activities. In all cases, any service request must consider the integration or productive use of the KentuckyWired Fiber infrastructure and demonstrate benefit to the community.

Application Process

Eligible applicants have the opportunity to be considered for re-imbursement by completing and submitting a Technology Assistance Request using The Center developed form and guidelines in the format indicated in attachment (A). Applicants are encouraged to be as detailed as possible in making their requests. Applicants should limit each request to a single activity, scope of work, and preferred provider.

Applicants may submit their technology assistance request at any time, unless the program has published a notice that new applications are not currently being accepted. In order to be considered for approval at a monthly review meeting, the application and all required support documentation (i.e. provider quotes, statement of qualification, references etc.) must be received by The Center no later than the first business day of that month. Applications may be initially submitted via e-mail or facsimile and doing so by the deadline will satisfy the requirement to be considered at that month's review meeting. However, an application originally received via e-mail or facsimile must also be received in its original form by The Center. In order to retain its status of meeting that month's deadline, any application originally received through e-mail or facsimile must be delivered in its original form in person, or via mail postmarked, no later than five (5) business days after the monthly deadline.



Requests may not contain any retroactive technology assistance, defined as any assistance that has already occurred, in part or in whole, prior to the Technology Assistance Request approval date. The Technology Assistance Request must be signed by a representative of the applicant who is authorized to enter into contractual agreements on behalf of the applicant.

Written proposals along with price quote(s) or bid(s) supporting the cost of the requested reimbursement must be completed by the service provider(s) and must be solicited by the applicant in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Uniform procurement guidance and requirements. All services bids/quotes received by the applicant must be submitted with the Technology Assistance Request. All technical assistance applications submitted with a single bid/quote must be accompanied by a sole source justification and will be subject to ARC administrative review and approval prior to review committee evaluation. Additional information or other supporting documentation may be requested if deemed necessary to evaluate a request.

If the applicant intends to use funds to meet the match requirement of 20%, those funds must be identified and adhere to the match guidelines established by the Appalachian Regional Commission. Other Federal Agency, Appalachian Regional Commission or The Center for Rural Development funding awards may not be used as match.

Review Committee

The process of evaluating and awarding Technology Assistance Requests is completed by a review Committee consisting of Center staff and management. The President and CEO of The Center attends and participates in review meetings and holds the last right of refusal. The decisions of the President and CEO shall be final.

Technology Assistance Requests that are denied may be re-submitted for consideration if they have been modified to address issues that led to the initial denial. Any re-submittal will be reviewed and may be accepted or further denied at the discretion of the review committee.

Award Process/Funding Limit

The Technology Assistance Request Review Committee meets the last Monday of each month to consider all requests submitted by that month's deadline. The Review Committee reserves the right to forego any monthly meeting if it is determined that there is no time-sensitive business to conduct.

Technology Assistance Requests can vary greatly in scope and cost. It is therefore counter-productive to establish a hard limit on funding. The Center, however, through its experience and expertise, can estimate what would be considered a proper and reasonable cost to fulfill a technology assistance request. The total funding allocated to fulfilling technology assistance requests is also limited and it is the desire of The Center to assist as many communities as possible. The Center, therefore, reserves the right to deny any requests that it considers to be unreasonable or excessive in cost.

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

Upon approval by the Review Committee, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) must be executed between the applicant and The Center in order for the terms and conditions of the award to take effect. Communities that are awarded have a period of six (6) months from the award date in which to engage the approved provider.



Payment Process

The Technical Assistance program operates on a reimbursement basis. Applicants that are awarded grants are required to pay 100% of the approved cost directly to the approved provider per the provider's payment terms. Upon successful completion of the service, applicants must complete and submit a "Reimbursement Certification and Request Form", along with one copy of all reports, surveys, studies or other documentation produced by the service provider in order to receive reimbursement for 80% of the cost of eligible expenses. Additional costs, such as travel expenses, wages, materials or supplies not included in the accepted provider Quote/bid, are not reimbursable by The Center.

The additional documentation required for reimbursement include copies of the provider invoice(s), proof of payment to the provider and proof of services scope of work completion. Proof of payment consists of copies of cancelled checks (front and back), or credit card, or cash receipts. Proof of scope of work completion may be in the form of a letter of completion on the provider's letterhead which indicates that all items within the scope of work have been completed. All requests for reimbursement must be submitted no later than ninety (90) days following the work completion date.

Match

In the event that an applicant has requested, on initial application, that in-kind contributions be considered for the applicants 20% match, supporting documentation must be submitted with the application and also on the reimbursement request and must be approved by The Center as meeting ARC guidelines for match. The Center will review all in-kind match documentation and determine the monetary value based on federal guidelines.

Additional Program Requirements

Applicants must notify The Center immediately of any significant changes that occur once the MOA has been executed, or of any problems that may affect the ability to complete the scope of work. Significant changes include changes in the employment status of any employees participating in, or necessary to the completion of work, work stoppage or delay by provider, change in provider's ownership, address, federal identification number, or contact person.

Changes not permissible

Technology Assistance support is awarded for specific service providers to accomplish a specific scope of work. Once a Memorandum of Agreement has been executed, changes in providers, or in the scope of work, will not be accepted or approved for reimbursement unless agreed to, in writing, by both parties. For this reason, applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully consider their needs and diligently craft a scope of work that will successfully address and meet those needs.

The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Guidelines

OMB guidelines are applicable to this program. They can be found online at the following URL:

https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl

It is recommended that the applicant familiarize themselves with the guidelines set forth by the OMB. This is especially pertinent to the valuation of in-kind contributions and to the service provider solicitation process. The Center cannot fund Technology Assistance requests that are found to be in violation of OMB guidelines.



Applicant Information:

- Agency Name, Mailing Address, County
- Contact Name, Phone Number and Email Address

Technology Assistance Description

- A brief description of the assistance needed and what outcome is expected as a result of receiving the assistance
- A brief description of the geographic area involved
- A brief description of the community benefit expected

Scope of Work to be performed

- A detailed line-item description of the work to be performed by the service provider

Service Provider Deliverables

- A detailed description of any and all documentation, materials or other items the service provider will be producing. For studies, this must include a table of contents or section outline describing the desired content. All training, meeting or event services must include a detailed syllabus

Preferred service provider

- Attach a minimum of 2 or more proposals (w/ price quotes or bids) or supply documentation to support and justify a sole-source provider. Solicitations must be compliant with Federal OMB Procurement Guidance. (Note: All technical assistance applications submitted with a single bid/quote must be accompanied by a sole source justification and will be subject to ARC administrative review and approval prior to review committee evaluation.)
- Indicate a preferred service provider choice and provide reasoning

Supporting documentation

- Attach any documentation necessary for The Center to conduct an informed review of the request. This would include references and qualifications of the preferred service provider, past broadband work/studies completed by the applicant, strategic broadband plans of the community

Total cost of the technology assistance

- Attach service provider quotes/bid responses

Match Source of funds and Amount

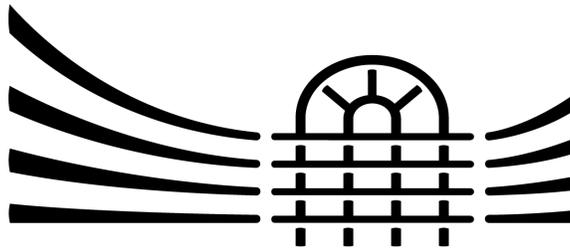
- Must be a minimum of 20% and may not originate from Federal, ARC or The Center funding sources

In-Kind description and anticipated value (not to exceed 20% of total cost of assistance)

- Federal OMB Procurement Guidelines should be used to determine anticipated value

All requests must be signed by a representative of the applicant who is authorized to enter into contractual agreements on behalf of the applicant.





The Center for Rural Development

We help people feel **safer** through public safety initiatives;
let people tap into their **creative** spirit through the arts;
empower people through leadership education opportunities;
and give people **access** through advanced technology
We change people's lives.



The Center for Rural Development supports the implementation of KentuckyWired infrastructure to bridge the digital divide in the communities we serve.



The Center for Rural Development's Fiber Infrastructure Project – Phase 3 is funded by grant KY-18984-17 from the Appalachian Regional Commission and is administered by The Center for Rural Development.