

Connect Wyoming Program Guidelines

As of Nov. 15, 2021 | wyomingbusiness.org/connectwyoming



Who is eligible to apply?

1. Any business entity authorized to be formed under title 17 of the Wyoming statutes, or the laws of another state that are the functional equivalent, which is authorized to transact business in this state and has experience installing broadband infrastructure and providing broadband services in rural areas; and
2. Which has submitted coverage maps of their entire service area in Wyoming as well as the proposed project area to the Broadband Map prior to the date of their application as defined in the [Broadband Mapping Guidelines](#) document and subject to rules regarding [Confidential Provider Information](#); and
3. Which offers mass market retail services by wireline or terrestrial fixed wireless technology which provides the capability to transmit and receive data from all or substantially all internet end points.

What kinds of projects are eligible?

1. Broadband Infrastructure investments which provide broadband access to Unserved or Underserved area(s) as defined in the [Connect Wyoming program rules](#), and which shall be installed, owned, and operated by an Eligible Applicant.
2. Meet federal funding criteria by improving opportunities and access to telework, facilitating distance learning, and improving public safety.
3. Projects must serve Unserved or Underserved area(s) as defined in this program and must not overbuild existing adequate broadband service:
 - a. The Council will not consider Applications for projects in areas with reliable speeds of at least one hundred (100) Megabits per second (Mbps) download and twenty (20) Megabits per second (Mbps) upload, nor will it consider projects for areas in which written agreements to develop services at or above this level prior to December 31, 2024 exist.

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4. Include Broadband Infrastructure and equipment costs meeting the following federal funding criteria:
 - a. Middle-mile fiber-optic infrastructure the primary purpose of which is to connect last-mile infrastructure and networks to network service providers; AND/OR
 - b. Last-mile fixed terrestrial infrastructure the primary purpose of which is to provide broadband internet service to end users or end-user devices, including households, businesses, public safety entities and community facilities.
5. All completed projects must reliably deliver minimum speeds of one hundred (100) megabits per second (Mbps) download and one hundred (100) Mbps upload.
 - a. In cases where it is not practicable due to geography, topography, or financial cost to meet those standards, projects must reliably deliver at least one hundred (100) Mbps download speed and at least twenty (20) Mbps upload speed AND must be scalable to a minimum of one hundred (100) Mbps download speed and one hundred (100) Mbps upload speed. Such areas must be noted in the application and supporting mapping.

What costs are eligible?

1. Construction and Materials.
2. New and rehabilitative construction contracts.
3. Architect and engineering services and legal and professional services, if required by the project.
4. Permitting fees, Indefeasible Rights of Use (IRUs), Leases and/or Easements only where these directly result in last-mile connections.
5. Acquisition of Broadband Infrastructure equipment.
6. Construction and installation of Infrastructure equipment, to include direct labor costs.

What costs are not eligible?

1. General broadband planning not associated with the project.
2. Ongoing overhead, operating costs, or staff costs to include bonuses of any kind.

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3. Political activities or lobbying.
4. Matching other Federal Awards.

Funding Terms and Conditions:

1. Applicants are not required to have or provide matching funds, nor letters of support.
2. The Wyoming Business Council shall provide a uniform [Contract](#) for awards made under the Connect Wyoming program. All awards are contingent on the applicant's acceptance and execution of the Contract and strict compliance with all terms and conditions contained therein. **No edits or exceptions to the Contract terms will be accepted.**
3. All awards are contingent upon the appropriation of funding by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming and applicants assume risk of any loss in submitting applications under this program.

Important Dates: All projects must be completed on or before December 31, 2026.

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| Application Launch | November 15, 2021 10:00 a.m. MST |
| Application Period Closes | January 3, 2022 8:00 a.m. MST |
| Application Summary and Proposed Service Areas for all Complete Applications Posted to wyomingbusiness.org/connectwyoming | January 17, 2022 10:00 a.m. MST |
| Challenge Period Closes | February 16, 2022 4:00 p.m. MST |

How does the application process work?

1. Each proposed service/project area must have its own application, and Applicants shall submit no more than one (1) application per proposed service/project area.

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2. Applicants may submit applications for multiple proposed service/project areas.
3. Applications shall be received only during application periods specified by the Council.
4. Applications which do not include all minimum required information shall be afforded ten (10) working days from notification to correct the deficiency. Applications which remain deficient after this period shall be disqualified.
5. Complete applications shall be evaluated by a committee to include Council and Governor's Office staff, and according to the scoring matrix outlined in the application.
6. Projects which develop communities of two thousand (2,000) persons population or less and/or unincorporated areas shall receive first priority.
7. In situations where the Council receives multiple applications for any single project area, applications proposing fiber-optic infrastructure shall be afforded priority over applications proposing fixed wireless infrastructure.
 - i. Applications proposing similar technology will be scored according to cost and demonstrated ability to complete the project.
 - ii. In situations where the Council receives multiple applications for any single project area proposing comparable infrastructure, priority shall be afforded to the applicant proposing the fastest broadband speeds.
8. The review committee shall rank eligible project applications and shall forward these to the Wyoming Business Council Board of Directors with a recommendation of "fund" or "do not fund."
9. All funding decisions shall be at the sole and final discretion of the Board.

How will applications be evaluated?

Connecting Wyoming: 35 points possible

- How many households exist within the proposed project area **and** what percentage of these may be served by this project?

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- How many businesses exist within the proposed project area **and** what percentage of these may be served by this project?
- Listing of all community facilities to be served by this project.

Proposed Solution: 35 points possible

- For all locations potentially served by this project:
 - What percentage will be served by fiber?
 - What percentage will be served using fixed terrestrial technology?
 - What percentage will be served using a hybrid solution?
 - What percentage will be served with a 100 Mbps symmetrical solution?
 - If the solution proposed exceeds 100 Mbps symmetrical, please specify the actual download and upload speeds proposed.
 - What percentage will be served with a 100 Mbps download / 20 Mbps upload scalable solution?
 - Will any portion of the project be served with speeds less than 100 Mbps download / 20 Mbps upload?

Project Readiness and Administration: 30 points possible

- What is the total project cost?
- Describe any and all match provided by the applicant, including cash and in-kind?
 - *Match is not required*
- Describe the permits which will be necessary to complete the project as well as the applicant's approach to permitting? Does the applicant already hold the required permits for any part of this project?
- Where leases, easements and/or land use agreements may be necessary to complete the project as proposed, please describe each and note their status (complete, under negotiation, not yet started, etc.)?