



Division of Broadband and Digital Equity

State of North Carolina

2024-2025 BEAD PROGRAM PREQUALIFICATION GUIDANCE

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program

Funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

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1. KEY INFORMATION

Summary: The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) [program](#) provides \$42.45 billion from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to expand high-speed internet access by funding planning, infrastructure deployment and adoption program in all 50 states and the territories. Details of the program are available in the NTIA's Notice of Funding Opportunity at broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/BEAD%20NOFO.pdf. North Carolina's allocation for this program is \$1.53 billion. As required by the BEAD program, the N.C. Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) developed and submitted the BEAD Initial Proposal Volume I (approved by the NTIA in April 2024), and the Initial Proposal Volume II. These proposals outline North Carolina's plans for use and implementation of these funds.

NCDIT will launch the Subgrantee Selection phase of the BEAD program in 2025. Broadband providers submitting applications during this process will bid on specific [locations](#) to serve with last-mile broadband infrastructure.

In fall 2024, NCDIT is offering broadband providers the opportunity to prequalify for the BEAD Subgrantee Selection phase. Prequalification is intended to streamline the application process and ensure applicants meet the program's minimum and mandatory requirements. While prequalification is not mandatory, the division strongly encourages broadband providers to prequalify so they can focus their efforts on project applications when that process launches in 2025. Providers must either complete the qualification process during the prequalification phase or during the later project application phase before submitting project applications that may result in funding.

Please read through the entire guidance package before you begin your prequalification response form. This will ensure you understand the full scope of the prequalification requirements as well as the details you will need to provide to complete the prequalification process.

Purpose: The purpose of this prequalification guidance is to aid [Potential Applicants](#) in providing the required responses and documentation needed to prequalify for North Carolina's BEAD funding program. It assists Potential Applicants in gathering the necessary information at an organizational level to assess their financial, technical, managerial, operational, and other capabilities, as outlined in the BEAD Notice of Funding (NOFO) and North Carolina's BEAD Initial Proposal. By submitting this information during the prequalification process, Potential Applicants can focus their efforts on [project](#)-related details once the project application window opens. Prequalifying for the BEAD program is strongly recommended prior to submitting a project application during the Subgrantee Selection phase.

Prequalification Deadline: Prequalification opens at 2 p.m. EST on Sept. 16, 2024. NCDIT will accept and review prequalification response forms until 11:59 p.m. EST Feb. 3, 2025.

Submission Guidelines: Potential Applicants for the BEAD program should submit their prequalification response form through the Broadband Infrastructure Office's (BIO) Data Exchange. To support the exchange of information for the BEAD program, NCDIT has established the BIO Data Exchange cloud storage folders for the secure upload of files to private folders that are only accessible to the broadband provider to which they are assigned.

The prequalification response form document for submission is available at

ncbroadband.gov/bead-prequalification-response-form/open.

No other prequalification response form submission method is allowed. Prequalification response forms should be complete, and attachments clearly labeled. Completed prequalification response form, attachments, and supporting documentation should be received by NCDIT by the date and time listed above to be considered for prequalification. It is the Potential Applicant's responsibility to ensure the prequalification response form is received by NCDIT prior to the submission deadline. Further submission instructions are available in the [Instructions for Submission](#) section of this document.

Contact: If Potential Applicants have any questions related to this guidance document and the prequalification response form, please contact NCDIT at BEAD@nc.gov.

2. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION

Potential Applicants should adhere to the following general instructions to bring clarity and order to their submission:

- The submission should contain the completed prequalification response form along with any required attachments, as noted. The signature page of the prequalification response form should be placed at the front of the submission package.
- The Potential Applicant can refer to the prequalification submission checklist which is available at ncbroadband.gov/bead-prequalification-checklist/open. The Potential Applicant is not required to submit the prequalification submission checklist with the prequalification response form.
- Use the prequalification response form for providing all responses. The prequalification response form is an Adobe Acrobat® Form with instructions and blanks for responses. The template may include specific capacity constraints for responses. The Potential Applicant should strive to offer thorough and comprehensive responses while also prioritizing brevity and clarity.
- Supply all relevant and material information as requested. Certain information should be uploaded in separate documents. Documents saved in an Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) are required. For each document uploaded as a separate file, a single cover page should be included with Potential Applicant's (organization's) name, date of submission, name of attached document, primary contact name, email, and phone number. If relevant material information is not provided, the prequalification response form may be rejected for consideration and evaluation.
- Furnish all information requested; and where response spaces are provided in the prequalification response form, the Potential Applicant shall furnish said information in the spaces provided. Submissions that do not comply with these instructions may be rejected or returned to the Potential Applicant for modification.
- For certifications, an Officer/Director level employee of the Potential Applicant should be the certifying individual in the prequalification response form.
- If the Potential Applicant is submitting an Internet site link in response to a question, the Potential Applicant should test the link with multiple client browsers to ensure functionality for the assessment team.
- Any submission that does not adhere to these instructions may be deemed non-responsive and rejected on that basis.
- Only information that is received in response to the requirements in this document and as required the prequalification response form along with required attachments will be assessed. Reference to information previously submitted or internet website addresses will not suffice as a response.

2.1 BIO Data Exchange Instructions

Potential Applicants for the BEAD program should submit their prequalification response form through NCDIT's BIO Data Exchange cloud storage folders for the secure upload of files to private folders that are only accessible to the broadband provider to which they are assigned. For context, the BIO Data Exchange has also been used to collect information from broadband providers for mapping data related to the other recent broadband infrastructure programs.

These folders should be used by broadband providers for the following data exchange purposes:

- Upload of prequalification response form
- Upload of all supporting documentation for the BEAD prequalification submission

Upon the identification of the correct data contact person(s) at each participating broadband provider, secure login credentials and instructions will be individually provided. These credentials can then be used to upload the necessary files from an internet browser. Files should be uploaded using the NCDIT Broadband Data Exchange Web Application at assets.gis.nc.gov/apps/ncbio-data-exchange/index.html. Prequalification information must be uploaded as directed in this guidance document, in separate files and labelled as required.

Designated data contacts (including name, email and phone number) should be emailed to BEAD@nc.gov.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 Agency Background

NCDIT's mission is to promote a stronger North Carolina that connects customers, residents, business, education, and government. NCDIT provides technology services to [state](#) agencies and is charged with closing the digital divide by expanding availability of [Broadband](#) services and promoting the adoption of affordable, high-speed internet. NCDIT is responsible for expanding access to broadband infrastructure, supporting affordability, advancing digital literacy, and building digital equity in North Carolina.

The NCDIT Division of Broadband and Digital Equity houses two offices – the Broadband Infrastructure Office and the Office of Digital Equity and Literacy – charged with ensuring every North Carolinian has access to an affordable high-speed internet connection and the devices and digital skills needed to participate in the modern economy.

3.2 Problem Statement

Too many North Carolinians lack access to an internet connection, cannot afford an internet subscription, or do not have an adequate device to access the internet. Many also lack the skills to take advantage of digital services like telehealth, online education, or online job boards. Infrastructure is a major challenge, affecting both rural and urban areas in North Carolina. North Carolina seeks to use federal funding provided through the BEAD program to rapidly build crucial infrastructure in [unserved](#) and [underserved](#) areas to ensure broadband service for households, businesses, and [Community Anchor Institutions](#) (“CAIs”). This prequalification phase is the first step to deploying BEAD's monumental investment in broadband infrastructure, furthering North Carolina's commitment to ensuring that everyone in the state has access to the digital tools they need to succeed in the modern digital economy.

3.3 BEAD Program Background Overview

North Carolina has been allocated \$1.53 billion from the BEAD program to invest into closing the digital divide. The BEAD program is authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and provides total funding of \$42.45 billion to all states. The main objective of the BEAD program is to achieve universal connectivity by establishing the necessary groundwork for widespread access, affordability, equity, and adoption of broadband. Additionally, the program aims to create well-paying job opportunities and address long-standing equity gaps. The BEAD program's primary focus is on deploying broadband service to unserved locations, followed by underserved locations, and then serving CAIs. Funding may also be used for non-deployment activities such as promoting internet affordability, device ownership, digital skills training including privacy and cyber-security, and online accessibility and inclusivity of online content.

3.4 BEAD Deployment Subprogram Application Structure

North Carolina's BEAD subgrantee selection process will consist of two phases, as outlined below. It should be noted that this prequalification response form is only to assess eligibility for broadband deployment subgrants. Should the state have available funds to be used for non-deployment activities, a separate guidance for non-deployment projects will be provided later.

3.4.1 Phase 1 – Prequalification

NCDIT is requesting Potential Applicants submit the necessary organizational information to assess their financial, technical, managerial, operational, and other capabilities for participating in the BEAD program in advance of submitting any [project](#) applications. The information collected during prequalification will be applied to all future BEAD applications submitted by the Potential Applicant, including multiple project applications, as it aims to help ensure Potential Applicants meet the program's minimum and mandatory requirements, assess risks, and streamline the application process. NCDIT may request additional qualification information from Potential Applicants as part of the project applications.

3.4.2 Phase 2 – Project Application

After completing prequalification, qualified Potential Applicants will proceed to submit project applications when project applications open. Project applications will be scored to determine the BEAD subgrant awards. Potential Applicants have the option to submit multiple projects, with each project requiring a separate application. The information provided during the prequalification phase will apply to all project applications submitted by the Potential Applicant.

3.5 Prequalification Background

Prequalification is an important step in the BEAD application process detailed in NCDIT's Initial Proposal Volume II, serving as the first phase in the selection of [Subgrantees](#). Its primary objective is to collect required information for assessing the eligibility of the Potential Applicants for BEAD funding at the organizational level. As part of prequalification, NCDIT is requesting Potential Applicants provide necessary information that can be utilized for all future BEAD infrastructure deployment project applications.

Collecting this information during prequalification streamlines the overall BEAD application process while serving as a crucial checkpoint to verify that Potential Applicants fulfill the program's minimum and mandatory requirements.

To facilitate this process, NCDIT has developed comprehensive guidelines for the prequalification process based on the BEAD NOFO and the NCDIT's Initial Proposal Volume II, which are outlined in this document. Please be aware that all relevant information regarding the prequalification process will be shared and promoted on the NCDIT website at ncbroadband.gov/BEAD-prequalification.

If the Potential Applicant submits the prequalification response form during the prequalification period, they will have the opportunity to make modifications or resubmit if the information submitted as part of prequalification is incomplete, insufficient, or requires revisions. This opportunity may not be available during the project application phase.

Potential Applicants who did not apply during the prequalification period or failed to provide completed documentation after the prequalification period, will have the opportunity to apply again during the project application period.

4. PREQUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS

4.1 General Requirements and Specifications Overview

This prequalification guidance focuses on eleven specific qualifications as summarized below and detailed in the [Specific Qualifications section](#). Each component is further comprised of questions or requests for certain information. Potential Applicants will submit required information for each element to document that they meet the requirements and demonstrate the ability to successfully deploy and sustain any future broadband infrastructure projects awarded under North Carolina's BEAD program.

The remainder of the document is organized into the following sections:

- **Section 5: Completeness Check / Assessment**
- **Section 6: General Requirements**
- **Section 7: Specific Qualifications**
 - Section 7.1: Financial Capability
 - Section 7.2: Managerial Capability
 - Section 7.3: Technical Capability
 - Section 7.4: Compliance with Applicable Laws
 - Section 7.5: Operational Capability
 - Section 7.6: Ownership Information
 - Section 7.7: Public Funding Information
 - Section 7.8: Fair Labor Practices and Highly Skilled Workforce
 - Section 7.9: Environmental and National Historical Preservation
 - Section 7.10: Build America, Buy America Act (BABA)
 - Section 7.11: Cybersecurity and Supply Chain Risk Management Compliance

Approved response forms may be made publicly available following the conclusion of the prequalification process. Potential Applicants may designate appropriate portions of their response form as confidential, consistent with and only to the extent permitted under N.C. Gen. Stat. § 132-1, et seq. or other applicable law, by marking the top of each page containing confidential information as "CONFIDENTIAL" in boldface type. Automatically marking each page as confidential is not sufficient. NCDIT is not the arbiter of claims against an assertion of confidentiality. If NCDIT is served with a subpoena, discovery request, or public record request for information that has been designated by the Potential Applicant as confidential information, NCDIT shall forward written notification thereof to the Potential Applicant, along with the subpoena or other request. NCDIT shall not, pursuant to the subpoena or other request, produce documents or information designated by as confidential information without the Potential Applicant's written consent or unless ordered to do so by a court of competent jurisdiction.

5. COMPLETENESS CHECK/ASSESSMENT

The completeness check /assessment of the submitted prequalification response forms will be performed to qualify Potential Applicants. The completeness check/ assessment is based on the submission of required information documenting financial stability, operational capacity, and technical capacity, among other requirements, to design, deploy, operate, and sustain a broadband network for end users. The assessment will be made on complete/incomplete basis. Please note, components of this prequalification submission will be assessed for conducting risk analysis of Potential Applicants.

Potential Applicants that provide the necessary documentation and explanation to demonstrate they possess the required capacity to participate in the project application process will be considered pre-qualified. Inability to provide the necessary documentation and explanation will result in an incomplete prequalification response form. Potential Applicants will have the opportunity to resubmit any incomplete or insufficient prequalification response forms during the prequalification phase. NCDIT may seek clarifications from Potential Applicants based on submitted information, as necessary.

Potential Applicants who failed to resubmit completed documentation after NCDIT's request during the prequalification period will have the opportunity to apply again during the project application period.

Following the completeness check/assessment of prequalification response forms, Potential Applicants who qualify will be determined "pre-qualified" when applying to North Carolina's BEAD Broadband Deployment Subgrant Program.

6. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

[\(Reference Section IV,D,1 of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

Before entering into any broadband deployment Subgrantee agreement, Potential Applicants should fulfill the following conditions:

- The ability to carry out activities funded by the subgrant in a competent manner while complying with all relevant federal, state, and local laws and requirements.
- Possession of the financial and managerial capacity to meet the obligations of the Subgrantee under the subgrant, as well as the requirements of the BEAD Program and any additional criteria set by the [Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce for Communications and Information](#) or NCDIT.
- Possession of the necessary technical and operational capability to deliver the services specified in the subgrant according to the terms outlined in the award.

During the assessment of these capabilities, following the close of the project application phase, NCDIT will consider the size and nature of the Potential Applicant, ensuring that the assessment is appropriate and fair. The purpose of this assessment process is not to exclude any type of entity from applying for projects, but rather to ensure all Potential Applicants have the necessary capabilities to fulfill the Subgrantee obligations of the program. Furthermore, NCDIT will allow Potential Applicants to demonstrate their capabilities in various ways. For example:

- A consortium or partnership made up of several members can showcase the unique strengths of each member to illustrate how, together, the group satisfies the Subgrantee qualifications. It's important to note that all entities within this group will share collective responsibility for meeting financial and contractual obligations and they will be held jointly and severally liable if they fail to fulfill these obligations.
 - Potential Applicants are required to provide a narrative that explains the organizational structure, role, relationship, and significance of each consortium member/partnership entity. The narrative provided should also demonstrate individual expertise and that the Potential Applicant possesses sufficient working capital to successfully carry out and complete the project.
 - The consortium/partnership entities are also required to submit details of the underlying agreement(s) amongst member/partnership organizations.
 - In the event of the guarantor is identified, the guarantor will be held liable for financial and contractual obligations. A parental guarantee will be required at the time of signing the grant agreement.

7. SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS

7.1 Financial Capability

[\(Reference Section IV,D,2.a of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

7.1.1 Certifications

To demonstrate financial capability, Potential Applicants should certify that they:

- Are financially qualified to meet the obligations associated with the BEAD projects;
- Will have available funds for all project costs that exceed the amount of the grant;
- Will comply with all BEAD Program requirements, including service milestones;
- Have sufficient financial resources to cover project costs until further disbursements are authorized; and
- Will comply with uniform administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements (in 2 CFR 200) to complete and operate the project as made applicable by NTIA, state law, and the award agreement. Note that BEAD subgrantees will be subject to the North Carolina Administrative Code's Uniform Administration of State Awards of Grants (09 NCAC 03M), which requires compliance with the cost principles outlined in 2 CFR 200.

7.1.2 Audited Financial Statements (Three Years)

If the Potential Applicant is not a publicly traded company, they should submit audited financial statements for the three most recent fiscal years including Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Changes in Financial Position or Statement of Cash Flows and any footnotes to the financial statements. If the Potential Applicant's financial history is less than three years, include quarterly or half year statements for partial years including the current year. Statements may be audited, reviewed, or compiled by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), or may be produced directly from accounting software (e.g., QuickBooks, Sage, FreshBooks, or other similar programs). Statements should be in PDF format. As part of project applications, Potential Applicants will be required to complete a pre-designed pro forma template provided by NCDIT for project applications.

If the Potential Applicant has not been audited during the ordinary course of business, they should submit unaudited financial statements from the prior fiscal year. In addition, they should certify that audited financial statements from the prior fiscal year will be provided by an independent certified public accountant prior to receiving any subgrants. This requirement applies to all Potential Applicants that are not publicly held, including those that have solely operated an electric transmission or distribution service.

If the Potential Applicant is publicly held, provide direct links to 10-K statements for the three most recent fiscal years.

In the event a guarantor is identified, the Potential Applicant should provide financial statements of the guarantor for the last three years.

In case of a consortium/partnership, the Potential Applicant should provide audited financial

statements for each of the member organizations for the past three years.

The BEAD program requires audited financial statements. As such, tax returns such as Form 1040 Schedule C, Form 1120 (all variants), Form 1165, or a partnership statement (Form K-1) will not be accepted in lieu of financial statements.

7.1.3 Material Changes in Financial Condition (If Applicable)

If applicable, Potential Applicants will provide a detailed summary of any changes in financial conditions that have occurred or are projected to occur, since the most recent completed fiscal year and during the next fiscal year not yet captured in financial statements. This includes:

- A description of any material change, actual and projected, and any related changes or disruptions in ownership or the executive management;
- Actual and projected impacts on the Potential Applicant's organizational and financial capacity and its ability to remain engaged in the BEAD program and submit a project application; and
- A detailed description of any other projected impacts, positive and negative, of the changes experienced and anticipated to be experienced in the periods ahead, including the likelihood that the circumstances of the change or impacts thereof will continue during the period of performance of the potential grant award.

Estimates of the impact on revenues, expenses and the change in equity should be provided separately for each material change. References to the notes in the financial statements are not sufficient to address the requirement to discuss the impact of material changes. Where a material change will have a negative financial impact, the affected entity should describe measures that would be undertaken to insulate the BEAD project(s) from any recent material changes and those currently in progress or reasonably anticipated in the future. If its financial statements indicate that expenses and losses exceed income in each of the three completed fiscal years (even if there has not been a material change), the affected entity should describe measures that will be undertaken to make the entity profitable in the future and an estimate of when the entity will be profitable.

Set forth below is a list of examples of what may be considered to be a material change in financial condition:

- A change in the tangible net worth of 10% or more of net assets;
- A sale, merger or acquisition exceeding 10% of the value of net assets prior to the sale, merger or acquisition which in any way involves the affected entity or its parent company;
- A change in credit rating for the Potential Applicant or its parent company;
- Inability to meet material conditions of loan or debt covenants by the Potential Applicant or its parent company, that has required or will require a waiver or modification of agreed financial ratios, coverage factors or other loan stipulations or additional credit support from shareholders or other third parties;
- In the current and three most recent completed fiscal years, the Potential Applicant or its

parent company (i) incurred a net operating loss; (ii) sustained charges exceeding 5% of the then net assets due to claims, changes in accounting, write-offs or business restructuring; or (iii) implemented a restructuring/reduction in labor force exceeding 5% of employees or involved the disposition of assets exceeding 10% of the then-net assets; and

- Other events known to the Potential Applicant that represent a material change in financial condition over the past three years, or which may be pending for the next reporting period.

7.1.4 Credit Rating (If Applicable)

If available, Potential Applicants shall provide a copy of their latest corporate credit rating carried out by certified credit rating agencies including but not limited to S&P Global, Moody's, and Fitch Ratings.

7.1.5 Bankruptcy/Insolvency Proceedings

Potential Applicants will provide summary information on any current and prior Insolvency Events from the last five fiscal years relating to the Potential Applicant or any person or entity which directly or indirectly through one or more intermediaries' controls, or is controlled by, or is under common control with, the Potential Applicant. For the purposes of this prequalification, Insolvency Event means any voluntary or involuntary bankruptcy, insolvency, liquidation, restructuring, suspension of payments, scheme of arrangement, appointment of provisional liquidator, receiver or administrative receiver, resolution or petition for winding-up or similar proceeding, under any applicable law, in any jurisdiction. If Potential Applicant is a sole proprietorship, include personal bankruptcy filings. Additionally, include information about dates, type, court and jurisdiction, and operating restrictions (if any) imposed by the court post-bankruptcy and whether such restrictions have been lifted.

7.1.6 Failure to Perform

The Potential Applicant will provide details on the number of federal and state broadband grant projects it was awarded but defaulted, terminated, or otherwise failed to complete in the required timeline, was accused of failing to complete in the required timeline, forfeited or was asked to return any awarded or expended funds, or was notified by the grantor that it failed to meet project milestones or timelines or submit required progress reports or other documentation from Jan. 1, 2019, to the date of submitting the prequalification. The word default, as used in this context, is defined as the omission or failure to fulfill a duty, observe a promise, discharge an obligation, or perform an agreement and is specific to instances where the Potential Applicant may be deemed to be at fault for the failure to perform the grant project(s).

For each instance, provide a synopsis of why the project was not completed and the current status of the project(s).

7.1.7 Performance Security Requirements

The Potential Applicant will be required to submit at least one of the following options below during the project application phase to demonstrate sufficient financial strength and capability.

Option 1:

Commitment letter from a bank that meets the eligibility requirements set forth in 47 C.F.R. §

54.804(c)(2) stating without conditions or qualification the standby letter of credit capacity of the Potential Applicant.

Option 2:

Surety letter from an acceptable surety on federal bonds as identified in the Department of Treasury Circular 570 stating without conditions or qualification the performance bonding capacity of the Potential Applicant.

7.1.8 Letter of Credit Requirements

Please note this is not required as part of the prequalification response but will be required prior to signing a subgrant agreement. It has been included in this guidance for the awareness of Potential Applicants.

NCDIT will establish a model letter of credit substantially like the model letter of credit (LOC) established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in connection with the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Applicants should submit the model letter signed from an eligible bank committing to issue an irrevocable standby LOC to the Applicant. The LOC amount should be at least 25% of the subaward amount. Additionally, Applicants should provide an opinion letter from legal counsel stating that the bankruptcy court would not consider the LOC as part of the Subgrantee's bankruptcy estate. A Conditional Programmatic Waiver of the LOC is granted only to the extent to and as described in [NTIA BEAD LOC Waiver Notice](#).

The Potential Applicants are required to provide a certification that they understand that if awarded a project under the BEAD program, they will have to provide the required LOC.

7.2 Managerial Capability

[\(Reference Section IV.D.2.b of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

7.2.1 Corporate Organization Chart(s)/Baseline Company Profile

Provide a corporate organizational chart identifying the parent company and any subsidiaries or affiliates that will be performing work in North Carolina and identifying the company serving as the Potential Applicant to the BEAD Program. The Potential Applicant should be part of the company and be able to contract, receive, and implement grant awards in North Carolina. Within the organizational chart, describe the Potential Applicants' business type in relation to tax filings (for-profit, not-for-profit, etc.) and whether the company is publicly traded.

7.2.2 Organization ID Number

Potential Applicants should indicate appropriate identification numbers by providing the specific ID number for the relevant corporate entity. If an ID number does not apply, please indicate such and provide instead one of the following:

- US FEIN (Federal Employer Identification Number)
- NC SOS (Registration number for NC Secretary of State)
- US CAGE (Commercial and Government Entity)

- FCC FRN (FCC Registration Number)
- FCC ETC (FCC Eligible Telecommunications Carrier)
- Unique Entity Identifier (Generated by Sam.gov)
- Equifax (Equifax Vendor ID Number)

7.2.3 Applicant's Organizational Chart

Potential Applicants should submit their organizational chart that includes all relevant personnel within the organization who are likely to have a role on a potential broadband project(s) to be funded by this grant award in North Carolina. Additionally, Potential Applicants should certify that they have employed personnel with relevant certifications for broadband deployment projects as mandated by state and federal law and reflective of industry practices. Relevant personnel should include a chief technology officer, project engineer, and contractor oversight team, among other relevant personnel.

7.2.4 Resumes for Key Management Personnel

Provide one-page resumes of all relevant financial, technical, and managerial key personnel that would be involved in a BEAD broadband deployment project. All key personnel should be employees of the firm rather than contractors. Each resume should demonstrate relevant experience with broadband projects of similar scope and scale.

7.2.5 Explanation of Roles and Responsibilities

Provide a detailed narrative explaining the specific roles and responsibilities of all key personnel who would be involved in the BEAD broadband deployment projects in North Carolina. This narrative should comprehensively outline the functions and tasks assigned to individuals in the financial, technical, and managerial domains.

7.2.6 Organizational and Managerial Readiness

Potential Applicants will be required to provide a narrative that highlights the organization's readiness, including emphasizing any relevant experience or successful track record in managing similar projects and showcasing the team's ability to handle the complexities and challenges that may arise during the proposed broadband project. Additionally, the Potential Applicants may provide details of any resources, partnerships, or technological infrastructure that will contribute to the efficient and effective execution of the project, demonstrating the organization's capacity to deliver tangible results.

The Potential Applicants will be required to provide a narrative describing their readiness to manage a broadband network. This includes providing a comprehensive overview of the experience and qualifications of key management personnel, as well as highlighting any recent and upcoming organizational changes, such as mergers and acquisitions. Additionally, Potential Applicants should outline relevant organizational policies that contribute to their readiness in effectively managing a broadband network.

7.3 Technical Capability

[\(Reference Section IV,D,2.c of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

7.3.1 Certifications

Potential Applicants applying for funding to develop or enhance a broadband network should certify that they are:

- Technically qualified to complete and operate BEAD projects,
 - Potential Applicants should provide a narrative describing their technical qualifications such as years of technical experience, experience across similar projects, and a high-level approach to deployment to demonstrate their technical qualifications.
- Capable of carrying out the funded activities in a competent manner, including that they will use an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce (including certifying that the employed personnel will have relevant certifications for deployment projects, as mandated by state and federal laws and reflective of industry practices), and
- All contracted resources possess the necessary skills and qualifications to work on any of the Potential Applicants' proposed project(s).

7.3.2 Project Experience

Potential Applicants will be required to submit organizational qualifications that outline previous experience with broadband/telecommunications deployment projects, as well as other projects of comparable size and scope of the projects the Potential Applicant intends to develop through the BEAD Program. Prior project experiences with a comparable scope should be accompanied by a narrative to illustrate experience completing successful projects. Each description of project experience should include details such as the construction cost, start and completion dates of the project, any teaming partners and the use of subcontractors, and the value that the Potential Applicants contributed to the project. Potential Applicants should also indicate the network types that they have deployed or operated in the past (Fiber-to-the-Premise (FTTP), Hybrid Fiber-Coaxial (HFC), Coaxial, Copper/DSL, Fixed Wireless, Mobile Wireless, etc.). If a Potential Applicant plans to use specific contractors or subcontractors, include at least one example of each contractor and subcontractor's past performance in the context of a similar project.

7.3.3 Appropriately Skilled and Credentialed Workforce Narrative

Potential Applicants, as well as contractors and subcontractors, should describe the steps that will be taken to ensure that awarded project(s) are carried out by an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce. The description should include any safety training, certifications, licensure requirements, and whether in-house training with established requirements is provided for each job title for any anticipated non-union labor.

7.3.4 Contractor Selection Process

If the Potential Applicant is planning to use a contracted workforce, provide a detailed narrative of the contractor selection process, outlining which skills, certifications, qualifications, or training programs will be required for each role that adheres to industry practices and complies with

relevant state and federal law. As noted by the NTIA¹ recipients receiving fixed amount subawards are exempt from complying with the Uniform Guidance procurement standards for contractor selection, specifically the procurement standards contained in 2 CFR 200.318-320 and 200.324-326. NCDIT's BEAD awards will be distributed via fixed amount subawards exclusively.

7.3.5 Approach to Broadband Deployment

To further demonstrate technical capability to complete BEAD program projects, Potential Applicants should provide information around their company's approach to the following:

High Level Network Summary

Potential Applicants should provide a general overview of their architecture for their current broadband networks in North Carolina. The response is an overview to assist in better understanding how the Potential Applicant views its networks at a high-level and is not considered binding for any specific infrastructure projects.

The response will provide a succinct overview of central office (CO), headend or colocation facilities to last mile connectivity, and further describe whether internet access is via peering, direct connection, or a combination of both. In the summary, provide failover and general network security processes. Do not provide details of security architecture, processes, or credentials.

The Potential Applicants should describe the general backbone strategies from the CO or headend, and decision criteria for splicing to middle mile / distribution fiber or coaxial cabling. Additionally, Potential Applicants should summarize powered and unpowered components generally used in the networks. As well as summarize overall design direction for future network construction or additions, if different from the strategy for the current networks.

If the Potential Applicant does not currently own or operate networks in North Carolina, the response should be a concise summary of overall network architecture principles utilized by the Potential Applicant.

Network Design for Grant Projects

The Potential Applicants should provide a brief summary of network design considerations for grant-based projects in North Carolina targeting unserved and underserved locations. Information should include but is not limited to analysis of eligible project areas, budget development and review, network design considerations to achieve last mile connectivity, and details on how internal / external resources may be engaged in the process.

Network Development

The Potential Applicants should briefly outline their general approach to advance a proposed project from a concept to an actual work-in-progress project. Briefly describe the transition to a managed project including how high-level key milestones are defined. Summarize the approach to planning for permits, easements, and preparation for make-ready work. If the network

¹ NTIA Guidance Published December 2023 for Tailored Uniform Guidance to the BEAD program. https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2023-12/BEAD_Policy_Notice_of_Uniform_Guidance_Part_200_Exceptions_Related_Issues.pdf

development of a grant project is different than a privately funded build, note any key differences. This response should be a description of an overall process and is not a request for a specific project plan/timeline.

Network Construction

Potential Applicants will provide summary information on how network construction for new projects is generally managed and implemented. The response should outline key construction phases and whether internal or external resources are used during construction. The Potential Applicant should include names of typical contractors used in North Carolina projects. If network construction processes differ for grant-funded projects, respondent should describe how grant-funded deployment projects differ in approach in terms of Network Construction.

Network Turnup / Operationalization

The Potential Applicant should summarize the high-level processes and typical transition from network construction to operationalization including quality control processes for new construction combined with the resolution of construction and turnup issues. Describe intermediate test processes during construction. Identify the safeguards in place to ensure adequate reliability and stability are present prior to general availability of the network. Also explain who in the company is responsible for network turnup and signoff for completion.

Reliability Repair

The Potential Applicant should describe its broad standards for ongoing infrastructure review and maintenance including generalized information on resource and funding allocation and schedules, identification of key vendors, and escalation processes.

- **Reliability:** The Potential Applicant should describe the overall objectives for network reliability (excluding upstream providers). Briefly describe network monitoring algorithms and systems in use. Describe what generally constitutes a “Network Emergency.”
- **Repair:** The Potential Applicant should summarize how repair requirements are communicated and managed. Describe whether mean time to detect and mean time to restore statistics are calculated for the Potential Applicant for fiber networks in NC and whether such statistics are of value in supporting network restoration. If not, describe how response times are tracked and measured to ensure timely repair (non-extraordinary).
- **Resource Management:** The Potential Applicant should summarize resource management protocols utilized to support network maintenance and repairs including crew, equipment, and supplies.
- **Dispatch Process:** The Potential Applicant should briefly describe the standard dispatch process related to the identification and management of network outages or repairs. Generally, describe the broad process relating to an outage for an individual subscriber. Describe how scheduled maintenance windows tie to these processes.
- **Inventory:** The Potential Applicant should briefly describe general inventory management policies, processes, and capabilities for infrastructure components such as cables, connectors, conduit; for network electronics (such as cards, hubs, antennas, radios, routers, switches etc.); and for end user components (such as network interface devices, optical

network terminals, etc.). If inventory management processes for a grant project are different than a privately funded build, note any key differences.

Network Management and Security

Network security represents the protection of data which travels the network, or is accessible from the network, but also the maintenance of network availability uses by end user subscribers. It is generally accepted that end users carry primary responsibility for data and application security. The responses to this component should summarize at a high-level the approach of the Potential Applicant to network level security. Note: Do not disclose confidential or specific network security architecture, device information or credentials in these responses.

- Security Management Information: If the Potential Applicant utilizes a third party for managed services, please list the name of the managed network security company. Please certify if the Potential Applicant utilizes both an in-house security manager and a third-party company for security management.
- Network Security Policy: The Potential Applicants should summarize its policy for network security including physical security, network access, and other incursions such as cyber-attacks. Briefly describe differences between protocols for company owned networks vs. partner owned networks. (Indicate in the response if Potential Applicant does not utilize a partner-owned network).

7.4 Compliance with Applicable Laws

[\(Reference Section IV,D,2.d of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

7.4.1 Compliance with Laws Commitment

It is essential to ensure that Potential Applicants for North Carolina's BEAD program have the capability to effectively conduct the activities funded by the subgrant while adhering to all relevant federal, state, territorial, and local laws. For prequalification, Potential Applicants will be required to provide:

- An attestation confirming an understanding and commitment to comply with all federal, state, and local laws;
- A comprehensive overview of previous records or compliance checks demonstrating compliance with all federal, state, and local laws for previous broadband projects, including those funded by North Carolina's Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) and Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) programs;
- A description of established processes, procedures, or protocols that in place to ensure continued compliance during broadband deployment projects.

If the Potential Applicant is unable to certify the above statements on behalf of themselves, their contractors, or subcontractors, they should provide an explanation. This explanation should offer context for the violation and demonstrate the adoption of procedures to prevent future violations.

7.4.2 Safety and Health Requirements Commitment

Potential Applicants should provide detailed information regarding their commitment to compliance with occupational safety and health requirements, explicitly highlighting the permission for employees to create worker-led health and safety committees that management will engage with upon reasonable request. Potential Applicants may submit evidence of training programs or initiatives aimed at informing and ensuring that their team understands and adheres to safety and legal standards. Examples of evidence may include a description, training schedules, modules, or materials.

If the Potential Applicant, their contractors, or subcontractors, are unable to comply with occupational safety and health requirements, the Potential Applicant will be required to provide an explanation. This explanation should offer context for the violation and demonstrate the adoption of procedures to prevent future violations.

7.5 Operational Capability

[\(Reference Section IV,D,2.e of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

To be considered eligible, Potential Applicants must meet certain operational qualifications, which may differ depending on whether they are existing broadband service providers or not.

7.5.1 Certification of Compliance with FCC Regulations ([Existing Providers Only](#))

Potential Applicants should certify compliance with current federal communications filings including, but not limited to:

- Timely filing of Form(s) 477, 498, and 499
- Broadband Data Collection (BDC) data submitted since July 1, 2021, including filing dates, agency, form type, and status (if any), and
- Broadband DATA Act submission if deemed applicable.

Potential Applicants should certify their compliance has been consistent throughout the period of their operation, showing compliance with and respect for the [Commission's](#) rules and regulations. In the instance of any deviations or failure to adhere to the Commission's rules and regulations, an explanation is required. The explanation should detail the circumstances, whether there are any related (pending or completed) enforcement actions, civil litigation, or other matters. It should be noted that companies who have not filed timely submissions of Broadband Data Collection and FCC Form 477 data will be ineligible for BEAD program subgrants.²

The response to this requirement should not include copies of reports or supporting schedules.

7.5.2 History of Operations ([Existing Providers Only](#))

The Potential Applicants should demonstrate a consistent service history providing voice, broadband, and/or electric transmission or distribution over the past two consecutive years

² https://broadbandusa.ntia.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/FCC_Mapping_and_Challenge_Presentation.pdf

leading up to the date of their prequalification submission. If the Potential Applicant is a wholly owned subsidiary of a larger entity that meets these service requirements, they can be considered eligible. Potential Applicants should provide:

- Evidence and attestation of successful past operations, including years of operation. Any entity that has provided voice, broadband, and/or electric transmission or distribution service for at least two consecutive years (specifying the number of years of operation) prior to prequalification submission or is a wholly owned subsidiary of such an entity should provide a certification attesting to these facts and specifying the number of years they have been operating.
- A description of current subscriber counts classified as home, businesses, and CAIs summarized at the county level within North Carolina and at the state level outside of North Carolina.
- Summarized list of relevant completed and ongoing projects in the last two years
- Any penalties paid for deployment projects and any relevant information on prior criminal proceedings or civil litigation in North Carolina where they have been a defendant. Examples of prior penalties paid may include non-compliance penalties, violations of regulatory requirements, contract breaches, financial mismanagement, non-payment of subcontractors or vendor, and environmental damages.

7.5.3 For New Broadband Service Providers Only

New entrants seeking to deploy broadband infrastructure should provide evidence sufficient to demonstrate that they have obtained, through internal or external resources, sufficient operational capabilities. This includes:

- Years in existence and nature of business;
- Length of time providing broadband service, if any;
- Resumes from key personnel;
- Description of relevant ongoing or completed projects; and
- Narratives from contractors, subcontractors, or other partners with relevant operational experience, or other comparable evidence.

Please be aware that if resumes and project descriptions have already been submitted in earlier sections of the prequalification response form to meet previous requirements, this does not need to be submitted again.

7.5.4 Contact Information for Authorized Representatives

Potential Applicants should provide the name and contact information for one or more contacts responsible for full cost management for broadband projects in North Carolina, where “full cost” means the individual who carries full responsibility for review, authorization and approval for North Carolina project activity and expenditures. Include name, title, email address, phone number, and physical address.

7.5.5 Billing and Operational Support Systems (B/OSS)

The Potential Applicants should briefly describe the billing system utilized for end user

account management. If the billing system is provided by a third party, include the name and URL of the provider. Further, Potential Applicants should indicate if billing system data is stored onsite or offsite and provide a brief summary of backup protocols for this data.

7.5.6 Billing and Customer Data

Billing Processes. The Potential Applicants should briefly describe billing cycles and summarize end user access to billing information. Included in the response should be a summary of payment methods available to subscribers.

Customer Data. The Potential Applicants should summarize internal policy and security standards for protecting customer proprietary network information (CPNI) and equivalent end user information including personal and billing information. The frequency of security standards testing, and reviews should be included.

In the response, do not provide information which has the potential to compromise ongoing or planned systems operations, network management or security.

7.5.7 End User Support

Potential Applicants should briefly describe both the types of support as well as support standards. Summarize end user support protocols including the capacity for 24 x 7 inbound support. Briefly describe resolution procedures relative to real time resolution, dispatch, or escalation.

7.5.8 Human Resource Capacity

Summarize Potential Applicant's capacity, from a human resource perspective, especially in relation to the federal funding now available nationwide for broadband investments. Describe broad strategies for absorbing the additional deployment work in this climate. Briefly describe how new employees and/or contract personnel are trained and integrated to support grant projects in North Carolina.

7.6 Ownership Information

[\(Reference Section IV, D.2.f of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

Potential Applicants should provide a comprehensive disclosure of their ownership information, adhering to the specifics laid out in 47 CFR part 1.2112(a)(1)-(7). This regulation mandates the full disclosure of direct and indirect ownership interests, including details of any parties with a 10% or more stake, the nature of the interest, and the inter-relationships with any FCC-regulated entities. Each Potential Applicant shall fully disclose the following:

7.6.1 Potential Applicant Information

List the real party or parties with interest in the Potential Applicant, including a complete disclosure of the identity and relationship of those persons or entities directly or indirectly owning or controlling (or both) the Potential Applicant.

7.6.2 Stockholders Information

List the name, address, and citizenship of any party holding 10% or more of stock in the

Potential Applicant, whether voting or nonvoting, common, or preferred, including the specific amount of the interest or percentage held.

7.6.3 Limited Partners Information

List, in the case of a limited partnership, the name, address and citizenship of each limited partner whose interest in the Potential Applicant is 10% or greater (as calculated according to the percentage of equity paid in or the percentage of distribution of profits and losses).

7.6.4 General Partners Information

List, in the case of a general partnership, the name, address and citizenship of each partner, and the share or interest participation in the partnership.

7.6.5 Limited Liability Company Information

In the case of a limited liability company, list the name, address, and citizenship of each of its members whose interest in the Potential Applicant is 10% or greater.

7.6.6 Indirect Ownership Interest Information

List all parties holding indirect ownership interests in the Potential Applicant as determined by successive multiplication of the ownership percentages for each link in the vertical ownership chain, that equals 10% or more of the Potential Applicant, except that if the ownership percentage for an interest in any link in the chain exceeds 50% or represents actual control, it shall be treated and reported as if it were a 100% interest.

7.6.7 FCC-Regulated Entity Information

List any FCC-regulated entity or Applicant for an FCC license, in which the Potential Applicant or any of the parties identified in sections above, owns 10% or more of stock, whether voting or nonvoting, common, or preferred. This list should include a description of each such entity's principal business and a description of each such entity's relationship to the Potential Applicant (e.g., Company A owns 10% of Company B (the Applicant) and 10% of Company C, then Companies A and C should be listed on Company B's application, where C is an FCC licensee and/or license Applicant).

7.6.8 Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) and Minority & Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) Information

If applicable, Potential Applicants are encouraged to submit documentation certifying status as an Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) or Minority & Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) as defined by North Carolina General Statutes.

7.7 Public Funding Information

[\(Reference Section IV, D.2. g of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

Potential Applicants are required to submit a list of all publicly funded state and federal broadband deployment projects, other than those funded through North Carolina's BEAD program for which they, or their affiliates, have submitted or plan to submit an application for, along with any publicly funded broadband deployment project they are undertaking or planning

to undertake. This includes detailing aspects like sources of public funding/funding agency, award date, award amount, expected end date of the project, service speed, coverage area, commitment to serve unserved/underserved areas, the amount of public funding used, consumer service costs, and matching fund requirement amount.

Publicly funded broadband deployment projects include but are not limited to funds provided under:

- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act
- The CARES Act
- The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021
- The American Rescue Plan of 2021
- Any federal Universal Service Fund high-cost program - Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) or Connect America Fund (CAF), etc.
- Any North Carolina or local universal service or broadband deployment funding program such as the Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) program, Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) program, or Stop-Gap Solutions program.

7.8 Fair Labor Practices and Highly Skilled Workforce

[\(Reference Section IV,C,1.e of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

Potential Applicants must provide the following information related to fair labor practices and use of a highly skilled workforce if it is anticipated to be applicable to all the Potential Applicant's project(s). If the following information is project specific, the Potential Applicant can submit this information as part of their project application. Potential Applicants should identify if they intend on providing the following information during prequalification or during project applications. Additionally, should the Potential Applicant provide information at the prequalification stage, note that if there are changes to the Potential Applicant's record of compliance between prequalification and the project application period, they should provide updated information during the project application stage.

Potential Applicants will need to present documented and signed evidence of compliance with federal and state labor and employment laws for the past three years by an Officer/Director-level employee of the entity (e.g., President, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer, or equivalent position). The same compliance documentation will be required for Potential Applicant's contractors or subcontractors. Lastly, Potential Applicants must disclose any non-compliance with federal and state labor and employment laws for themselves and their contractors and subcontractors over the past three years. This record should also describe the corrective steps taken to avoid similar incidents and ensure future compliance.

7.8.1 Certifications

To demonstrate record of compliance, Potential Applicants must provide the following certification:

- Certification from an Officer/Director-level employee (e.g., President, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer, or equivalent position) of the Potential Applicants (and, if applicable, any Contractor and/or Subcontractors) evidencing consistent compliance with federal labor and employment laws by the subgrantee, as well as all contractors and subcontractors, for the past three years.
- Written confirmation that the Potential Applicant has disclosed any instances in which it or its contractors or subcontractors have been found to have violated laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years.

7.9 Environmental and National Historical Preservation

[\(Reference Section VII, D,4 of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

7.9.1 Certifications

To demonstrate intent to comply, Potential Applicants should provide the following certifications:

- Potential Applicant will comply with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. part 4321 et seq.) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S.C. part 300101 et seq.).
- Potential Applicant understands that NEPA analysis will be required for every project funded through the BEAD Program and agrees to provide sufficient information to allow for NEPA analysis such as a detailed project description, including applicable supporting documentation.
- Potential Applicant understands that they are responsible for identifying and obtaining applicable federal, state and local Permits (such as easements) required to complete any BEAD projects.
- Potential Applicant will cooperate with NTIA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposed projects or other eligible activities.

7.10 Build America, Buy America Act (BABA)

[\(Reference Section VII, D,6 of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

All funds made available through the BEAD program for broadband infrastructure should comply with the provisions of BABA made applicable to BEAD by the NTIA. NTIA's limited BABA waiver for the BEAD program requires certain equipment be produced in the U.S., while waiving the domestic manufacturing requirement for other equipment. Subgrantees will be required to report certain information for materials used in BEAD deployments. During the prequalification phase, the Potential Applicants are required to certify and provide plans for compliance with BABA.

It is imperative that Potential Applicants thoroughly read and understand the BABA requirements and guidance to ensure compliance. The Notice of Final Waiver is available at commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2024-02/BABA%20Waiver%20Signed.pdf and FAQs may be

found here: [commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2024-02/BEAD%20FAQs%202-22-24.pdf](https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2024-02/BEAD%20FAQs%202-22-24.pdf). Potential Applicants should recognize the significance of adhering to these guidelines and take appropriate measures to equip themselves accordingly.

Potential Applicants should certify they understand and commit to comply with the BABA requirements in the prequalification response form. The Potential Applicants should also certify that they will comply to adhere to using the U.S. Department of Commerce's cleared vendor list.

In the prequalification response form, Potential Applicants should provide detailed plans outlining their approach to remaining compliant with BABA requirements.

7.11 Cybersecurity and Supply Chain Risk Management Compliance

[\(Reference Section IV.C.2.c.vi of the BEAD NOFO\)](#)

7.11.1 Cybersecurity Risk Management Plan

BEAD Potential Applicants will be required to submit a cybersecurity management plan. Potential Applicants are required to submit this as part of their prequalification submission or during the project application. If significant changes are made to the plan, a new version should be promptly submitted to NCDIT within 30 days (applicable until the end of the period of performance). In accordance with the BEAD Initial Proposal Volume II guidance, subgrantees that rely on network facilities owned or operated by a third party must obtain cybersecurity and supply chain risk management processes and procedures from that network provider and provide the results.

Potential Applicants must provide their cybersecurity risk management plan that includes the following criteria:

- **Operational Status:** The cybersecurity risk management plan should be operational if the Potential Applicant is already providing services prior to the grant award. If the Potential Applicant is not yet providing services, the plan should be ready to be operationalized upon providing service.
- **National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Framework and Executive Order Compliance:** The plan should align with the latest version of the NIST Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity. It should also incorporate the security and privacy controls mandated by Executive Order 14028. The plan should outline how these standards and controls will be implemented and maintained.
- **Security and Privacy Controls:** Specify the security and privacy controls that will be put in place to protect critical infrastructure and sensitive data. Detail the specific safeguards, technologies, and policies that will be employed to address potential cybersecurity risks and threats.
- **Evaluation and Updates:** Establish a process for periodic evaluation and assessment of the cybersecurity risk management plan. Define specific intervals for plan evaluation and specify the criteria to trigger updates or adjustments. Ensure that the plan will be regularly reviewed and updated to address emerging cybersecurity risks and challenges.

7.11.2 Supply Chain Risk Management Compliance

Potential Applicants are required to submit a supply chain risk management plan that is being used to safeguard the integrity of their supply chain. Potential Applicants are required to submit this as either part of their prequalification or the project application. If significant changes are made to the plan, a new version should be promptly submitted to NCDIT within 30 days (applicable until the end of the period of performance). The plan should comply with the following:

- **Operational Status:** The Potential Applicant should have a supply chain risk management plan in place. If the Potential Applicant is already providing services at the time of the grant, the supply chain risk management plan should be operational. If the Potential Applicant is not yet providing services at the time of the grant award, the supply chain risk management plan should be ready to be operationalized.
- **Key Practices and Guidance:** The supply chain risk management plan should be based on the key practices described in the NIST publication NISTIR 8276, "Key Practices in Cyber Supply Chain Risk Management: Observations from Industry." The plan should also incorporate relevant supply chain risk management guidance from NIST, including NIST 800-161, "Cybersecurity Supply Chain Risk Management Practices for Systems and Organizations." The plan should clearly specify the supply chain risk management controls that will be implemented.
- **Evaluation and Updates:** The supply chain risk management plan should be reevaluated and updated on a periodic basis. The plan should be regularly reviewed and updated as events warrant to address evolving supply chain risks and challenges.

APPENDIX A: Definitions

As used herein.

- Applicant: Those entities who submit subgrant application(s) for BEAD broadband deployment project(s) in North Carolina
- Assistant Secretary³: The term “Assistant Secretary” means the [Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information](#) or the individual who holds any successor position.
- Broadband⁴: Broadband Service: The term “broadband” or “broadband service” has the meaning given the term “broadband internet access service” in [Section 8.1\(b\) of title 47](#), Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation, meaning it is a mass-market retail service by wire or radio that provides the capability to transmit data to and receive data from all or substantially all internet endpoints, including any capabilities that are incidental to and enable the operation of the communications service, but excluding dial-up internet access service. This term also encompasses any service that the Commission finds to be providing a functional equivalent of the service described in the previous sentence or that is used to evade the protections set forth in this part.
- Broadband Provider/Internet Service Provider (ISP): A broadband provider, also known as an Internet Service Provider (ISP), is a company or organization that offers and manages access to the internet for both personal and business customers. Broadband providers enable high-speed internet access through various types of technologies such as digital subscriber line (DSL), cable modem, fiber optics, satellite, and wireless connections. Broadband Providers/ISPs are eligible to apply for BEAD subgrants.
- Commission⁵: The term “Commission” means the [Federal Communications Commission](#).
- Community Anchor Institution (CAI)⁶: The term “community anchor institution” means an entity such as a school, library, health clinic, health center, hospital or other medical provider, public safety entity, institution of higher education, public housing organization (including any public housing agency, HUD-assisted housing organization or tribal housing organization), or community support organization that facilitates greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations, including, but not limited to, low-income individuals, unemployed individuals, children, the incarcerated, and aged individuals. A CAI is eligible for the BEAD funding if it does not currently receive “[qualifying broadband](#)” service which is [Reliable Broadband Service](#) with (i) a speed of not less than 1 Gbps for downloads and uploads alike and (ii) latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds.
- Existing Provider⁷: The designation of “Existing Provider” is established in the NTIA BEAD qualifications guidance as a provider who provided a voice, broadband, and/or electric transmission or distribution service for at least the two (2) consecutive years prior to the date of its prequalification submission or that it is a wholly owned subsidiary of

³ [BEAD NOFO Pg 11](#)

⁴ [BEAD NOFO pg.11](#)

⁵ [BEAD NOFO pg.11](#)

⁶ [BEAD NOFO pg.11](#)

⁷ [BEAD Subgrantee Qualifications Evaluation Guide \(ntia.gov\)](#)

such an entity.

- Insolvency Event: As defined in section 7.1.5 of this prequalification guidance document
- Location; Broadband-Serviceable Location⁸: The terms “location” and “broadband serviceable location” mean “a business or residential location in the United States at which fixed broadband Internet access service is, or can be, installed.”
- Potential Applicant: Those entities who may be interested in applying for BEAD broadband deployment projects in North Carolina and are submitting prequalification information.
- Program⁹: The term “Program” means the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program.
- Project¹⁰: For this grant, the term “project” means an undertaking by a Subgrantee to construct and deploy infrastructure for the provision of broadband service. A “project” may constitute a single unserved or underserved broadband-serviceable location, or a grouping of broadband-serviceable locations in which not less than 80 percent of broadband-serviceable locations served by the project are unserved locations or underserved locations.
- Qualifying Broadband Service¹¹: To a location that is not a CAI, qualifying broadband is Reliable Broadband Service with (i) a speed of not less than 100 Mbps for downloads; and (ii) a speed of not less than 20 Mbps for uploads; and (iii) latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds; “qualifying broadband” to a CAI is Reliable Broadband Service with a speed of not less than 1 Gbps for downloads and uploads alike and latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds.
- Reliable Broadband Service¹²: For this grant, the term “Reliable Broadband Service” means broadband service that is accessible to a location via: i) fiber-optic technology (BDC technology code 50) ii) cable modem/hybrid fiber-coaxial (HFC) technology (technology code 40) iii) digital subscriber line (DSL) technology (technology code 10) iv) terrestrial fixed wireless technology utilizing entirely licensed spectrum (includes spectrum licensed by rule) or using a hybrid of licensed and unlicensed spectrum (technology codes 71 and 72).
- State¹³: The term “state” means, for the purposes of the BEAD Program in this document refers to the state of North Carolina.
- Subgrantee/Subrecipient¹⁴: The term “Subgrantee” or “subrecipient” means an entity that receives grant funds from the state of North Carolina to carry out eligible activities.

⁸ [BEAD NOFO pg.13](#)

⁹ [BEAD NOFO pg.14](#)

¹⁰ [BEAD NOFO pg.14](#)

¹¹ [BEAD Technologies Guidance pg. 2](#)

¹² [BEAD NOFO pg.15](#)

¹³ [BEAD NOFO pg.15](#)

¹⁴ [BEAD NOFO pg.15](#)

- Underserved Location¹⁵: The term “underserved location” means a broadband-serviceable location that is (a) not an unserved location, and (b) that the North Carolina BEAD program eligible locations map show as lacking access to Reliable Broadband Service offered with—(i) a speed of not less than 100 Mbps for downloads; and (ii) a speed of not less than 20 Mbps for uploads; and (iii) latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds.
- Unserved Location¹⁶: The term “unserved location” means a broadband-serviceable location that the North Carolina BEAD program eligible locations map show as (a) having no access to broadband service, or (b) lacking access to Reliable Broadband Service offered with—(i) a speed of not less than 25 Mbps for downloads; and (ii) a speed of not less than 3 Mbps for uploads; and (iii) latency less than or equal to 100 millisecond.

¹⁵ [BEAD NOFO pg.16](#)

¹⁶ [BEAD NOFO pg.17](#)