

BROADBAND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

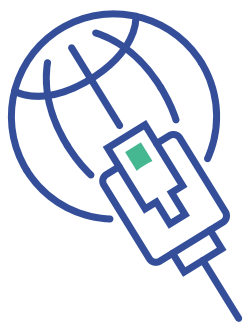


One of the biggest hurdles in broadband deployment is finding the funding to undertake the varying projects necessary for ubiquitous connectivity in a community. There are a myriad of federal funding programs available to help communities improve broadband connectivity. This document will highlight some of the existing federal funding programs, what they fund, where to apply, and important dates.

This explainer is not an exhaustive list of available funding opportunities. For a more comprehensive list of federal funding options, the National Telecommunications Information Administration ("NTIA") has created a Federal Funding Guide that outlines broadband funding programs from a variety of federal agencies. Review NTIA's 2021 guide [here](#). States may also make funding available for community projects. Click [here](#) for contacts and resources for state broadband programs.

U.S. Department of Agriculture ("USDA"): Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program

The USDA's Rural Housing Service administers the Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program ("CF Program"), which includes low-interest direct loans and grant funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. These facilities contribute an essential service to the community and include schools, libraries, community kitchens, hospitals, municipal government buildings, and more. Communities can use CF funds to purchase devices, develop smart city applications, and improve telehealth capacity.



The CF program is open to cities, villages, townships, towns, and Tribal governments with no more than 20,000 residents according to U.S. Census data. The program places priority on communities with a population of less than 5,500. It also prioritizes low-income communities that have a median household income below 80% of the state's nonmetropolitan median household income. Applications are accepted on a year-round basis.

For information on how to apply for this program, visit USDA's website [here](#).