

## North Dakota CPF Broadband Line Extension Program

### WebGrants User Guide

**Access the WebGrants Portal here: <https://grants.nd.gov/index.do>**

#### 1. General Information

- a. These fields are automatically assigned by the WebGrants Program:
  - i. Application ID
  - ii. Program Area
  - iii. Funding Opportunity
  - iv. Application Stage
  - v. Application Status
- b. **Application Title:** The application title should utilize the following format: City and/or Tribal Land – County – Organization Name (e.g., *Bedford Falls – Sterling County – Broadband Co.*)
  - i. If the project is entirely outside city limits, use the county name.
  - ii. If some or all locations are on Tribal Land, indicate the associated Tribe/Nation.
  - iii. If the locations fall across multiple cities, Tribal Lands, or counties, list them all (e.g., *City A, City B, and City C – County A and County B – Broadband Co.*).
- c. **Primary Contact:** Find and select the user login that will act as the primary contact for the entire application.
- d. **Organization:** Select the organization the primary contact works for.
- e. **Additional Applicants:** Here, the applicant can specify additional users who will be engaged in the Application, Grant Management, or Reporting processes of the grant.

#### 2. CPF Application

- a. Project Information
  - i. **Name of Company:** Enter the name of the primary or sole company applying for the grant.
  - ii. **Vendor #:** Applicant must have an active Vendor # with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This is required in order to reimburse funds to the Grantee.
  - iii. **Remit Location:** This is the information associated with the Vendor #, containing payment information (either physical address for printed checks to be sent or Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) information).
  - iv. General Timeframe for Grant Project:
    - 1. **Construction Start Date:** This is the expected date on which construction will start. This date is an estimate and should fall after initial planning, engineering, and permitting is complete. It represents the first day on which

actual work is started in the field (e.g., OSP install, Network Equipment install/upgrade, etc.).

2. **Construction End Date:** This is the expected date on which all ISP and OSP work will be complete. This date is an estimate and should fall before end-to-end testing and turn-up.
  3. **Substantial Completion Date:** [U.S. Department of the Treasury](#) – Projects must reach substantial completion before December 31, 2026. Substantial completion is defined as the date for which the Project can fulfill the primary operations that it was designed to perform, delivering services to end-users. At substantial completion, service operations and management systems infrastructure must be operational. Recipients may request extensions beyond this timeframe to the extent that factors outside of the Recipient’s control have impacted Project delivery timelines. Treasury will approve extension requests on a case-by-case basis.
- v. **Project Description and Justification:** Here the applicant is to provide a high-level summary of the project identifying area to be served, number of customers impacted, type of technology to be used, proposed speeds that are expected to be delivered, etc. Here you should also include any hardships, extenuating circumstances, or other hurdles that are unique to this project scope. This section will allow the applicant the opportunity to distinguish their project from others and identify any special circumstances that should be considered as part of the application request.
  - vi. **Project Area Template:** Please download the project area template linked, fill it out, and upload it as an attachment.
  - vii. **Total Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs):** BSLs must be served by at least 100/20 Mbps.
  - viii. **Total Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs):** CAIs must be served by at least 1 Gbps symmetrical.
  - ix. **Total Eligible Locations:** This number should be the summation of Total BSLs and Total CAIs. WebGrants will automatically calculate this field once the form is saved.
  - x. **Number Located on Tribal Lands:** This field should indicate the number of locations in the project plan that are located on tribal lands. The count of these locations should be included in the totals for BSLs and CAIs; therefore, these addresses are a subset of the Total Eligible Locations.
  - xi. **New Fiber Deployment:** This field should indicate the total new fiber route miles being added to the applicant’s network due to this project.

b. Documents

- i. **Summary of Applicants Financials:** As part of the scoring criteria, financial soundness will be reviewed to verify the company has the financial resources to complete and maintain the project long-term. Applicants are required to provide

their financial statements in the form of their latest SEC 10Q, 10K or equivalent financial statement/balance sheet.

- ii. **Proposed Funding Service Area Map:** This map should show the specific locations to be served as points and should include a polygon giving the outline of the proposed funded service area. This map should be submitted in KMZ compatible format.
- iii. **Project Timeline:** Provide a project timeline including details for planning, engineering, permitting, construction, installation, test and turn up, etc. If material lead times are a significant factor in the project timeline, please indicate the specific equipment/material and their projected lead times. Project start date, construction start date, construction completion date, and “ready for service” date should be identified.
- iv. **Proposed High Level Network Design:** The applicant should provide a high-level network design that describes the technology used, fiber count and mileage, number of towers/antenna, general description and location of network devices/elements both passive and active, etc. This will be used to assess the technical feasibility of the proposed project’s network design.
- v. **Proposed Service Description and Pricing:** The applicant should provide a high-level service plan for the proposed project area including service speed tiers and cost points. The state recognizes that many of these unserved and underserved addresses require subsidies to build out the broadband network; however, it is expected that these broadband services be affordable to the customers in the service area. This document should be used to discuss/demonstrate your affordability plan.

**c. Additional Financial Information:**

- i. This section will allow the applicant to provide additional financial information regarding their ability to build out and maintain the network post completion.
- ii. If applicable, please identify whether financing has been secured for this project and indicate whether you have outstanding broadband loans or grants from any other organization/program.
- iii. The applicant can also use this additional section of the application to provide specific information regarding any conditions that would impact the financials of this project, including address remoteness and middle mile network cost, known environmental requirements that would significantly increase cost, or construction hurdles (such as issues spanning a river, etc.).

**3. Budget**

- a. **Description:** Please enter a line item for each major component of your project budget. Examples of budget items may include:
  - Fiber construction
  - Engineering and design
  - Permitting and environmental review

- Easements or right-of-way access
- Materials and equipment

This section should clearly outline the areas where grant funds and/or match contributions will be used.

- Requested Amount:** Enter the total dollar amount requested from the CPF grant for each budget item. This amount can be \$0 if the applicant is not requesting funds for that particular item (e.g., if fiber has already been purchased and is not being charged to the grant).
- Match Amount:** Enter the dollar amount the applicant will contribute for each line item. This can be \$0 if the applicant is requesting full funding for that item.
- Match Sources:** If you are including a match, identify all sources of match funding. The match may be zero if you are requesting the state to fund 100% of your line items.

**Note:** There is no set provider match requirement for the program. Applicants should submit their total CPF funds requested as part of the application, and NDIT will assess available funding to determine the feasibility of an award. Since funding is limited to unspent CPF funds from completed projects, awards will be allocated to maximize the number of locations served. If an applicant receives a partial funding offer, they will have the option to adjust their project scope to fit within the available funds or contribute the remaining funds themselves (i.e., provider match) to maintain the full project scope. If an applicant chooses to self-fund the difference, this may increase the likelihood of receiving an award, as it allows NDIT to stretch funding across more locations.

#### 4. Certification Form

- Speeds or Packages:** In this section, the certified engineer will describe the upload and download speeds expected from the network design described in this application. The engineer should identify any circumstances in which the network would not be able to deliver these speeds/packages, including any oversubscription, signal attenuation, or other network design limitations. It is expected that 100 Mbps symmetrical broadband service will be available for the entire project service area (or, where fully symmetrical speeds are impracticable due to geography, topography, or excessive cost, at least 100 Mbps download and between 20–100 Mbps upload, scalable to 100 Mbps in the future).
- Proposed Broadband Technology:** The engineer certifies that the described proposed broadband technology and network design will achieve the performance levels during normal usage at all addresses in the project serving area. They will also identify the upstream and downstream backhaul connection speed to the Internet.
- Expected Performance Level:** In this section, the engineer will identify the expected average performance level during peak usage in the project serving area. They should indicate also if there is a minimum performance due to oversubscription or network design.
- Company Executive:** Here a company executive (VP or higher) will attest that the performance information is accurate.
- Certified Engineer:** Enter the first and last name of the engineer and the date.
- Date:** Enter the day the executive signs the application.

g. **Title and Department:** Enter the executive's title and department in the company.