Connecting Minority Communities (CMC) and the Office of Minority Broadband Initiatives (OMBI)

Janice Wilkins, Broadband Program Specialist & Federal Program Officer, NTIA

OMBI | Overview

The Office of Minority Broadband Initiatives (OMBI) was established within NTIA's OICG in August 2021 to promote equitable broadband access and adoption at HBCUs, TCUs, MSIs, and in their surrounding anchor communities.

OMBI's Guiding Vision is to achieve **digital equity** for minority communities across the United States by supporting and building capacity in **HBCUs, TCUs, and MSIs** as catalysts for the **expansion of broadband access.**

OMBI's Operational Pillars

1. **Administer the Connecting Minority Communities (CMC) Pilot Program** to provide funding for broadband access, technology, and personnel in an effort to close the digital divide at HBCU, TCU, and MSI anchor institutions and within their communities.

2. **Collaborate with Federal, State, Tribal, and Anchor Institution Stakeholders** to promote collaboration, knowledge sharing, and thought leadership to improve broadband access and adoption among minority communities.

3. **Build Capacity of Anchor Institutions and their Communities** by providing technical assistance to empower applicants, grantees, and collaborating entities with the appropriate tools and resources to effectively implement the CMC Pilot Program or other broadband grants in minority communities.

4. **Promote activities** that would accelerate the adoption of broadband Internet access service (including any associated equipment or personnel necessary to access and use that service

Connecting Minority Communities (CMC) Program

What? The CMC Pilot Program is a **$268 million** focused on building the broadband digital capacities of HBCUs, TCUs and MSI educational institutions and their surrounding communities to:

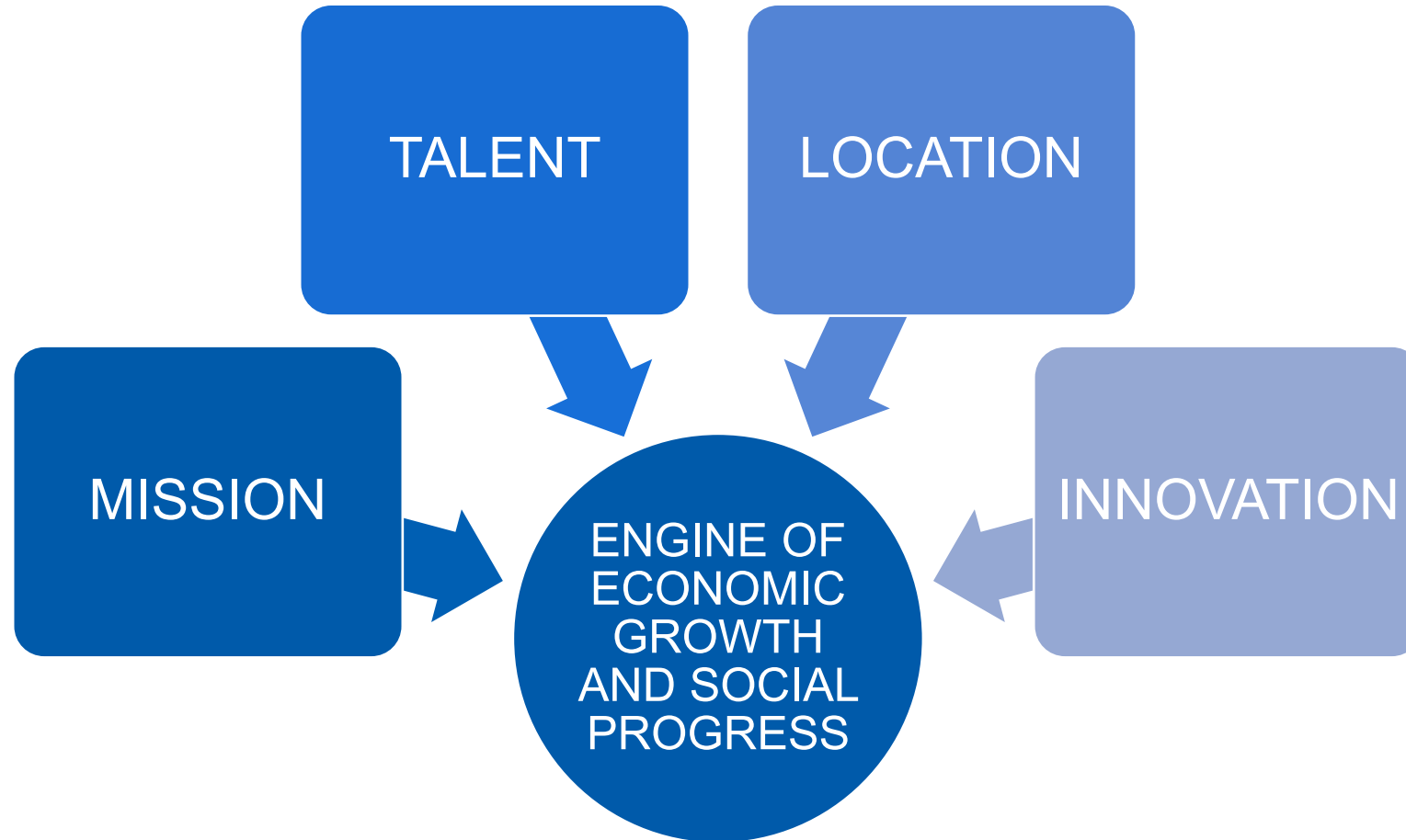Expand educational instruction and remote learning opportunities

NOW HIRING

Hire Information Technology Personnel

Spur economic development, employment and entrepreneurship

Purpose? To build the broadband and digital technology capacities of eligible institutions and support broadband access, adoption, and digital skills within those institutions and in their surrounding anchor communities.

Colleges & Universities Bring Critical Assets, Resources, And Capabilities To Address The Digital Divide
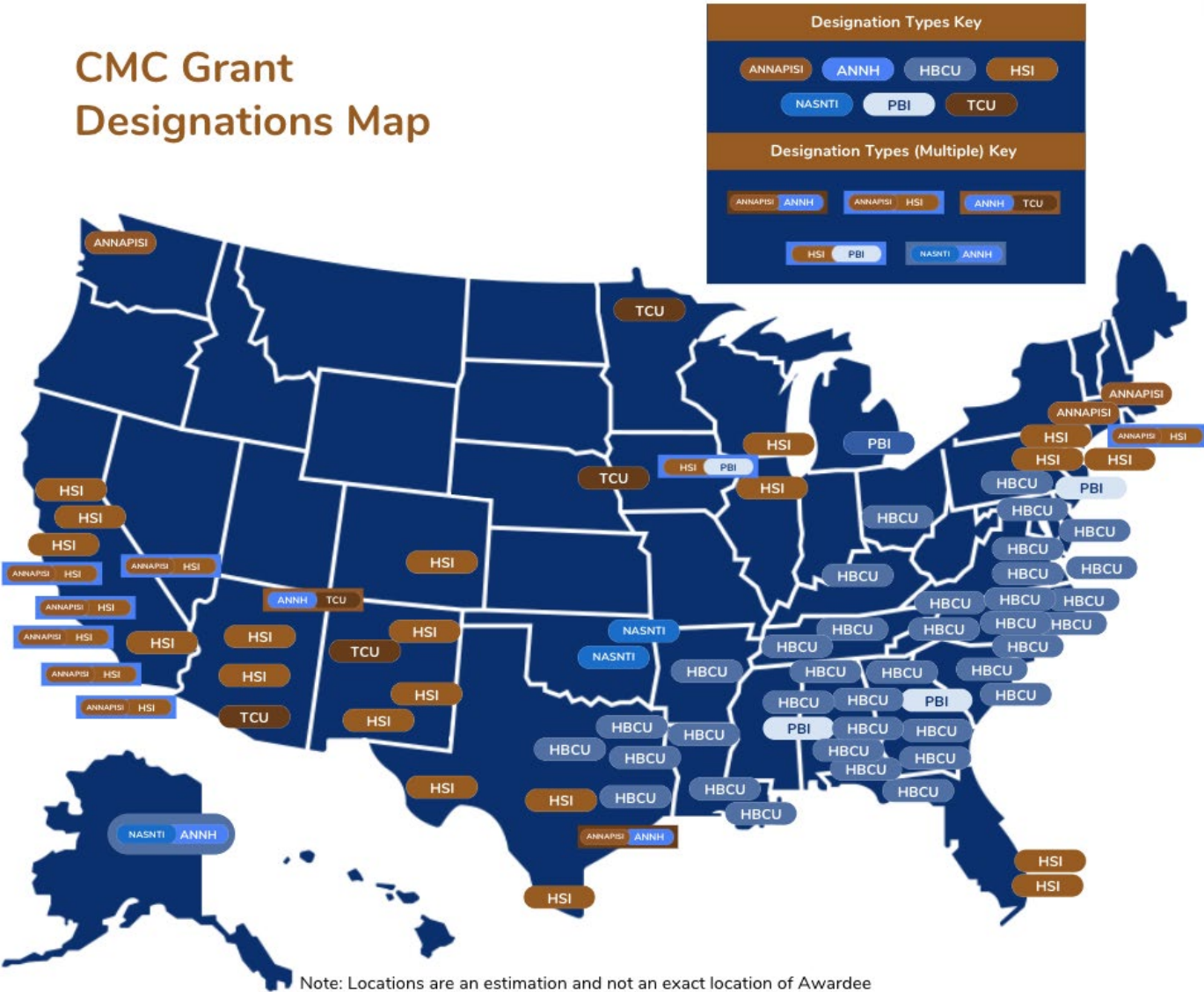
TALENT

LOCATION

MISSION

ENGINE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

INNOVATION

Source: APLU, Higher Education Engagement in Economic Development: Foundations for Strategy and Practice, 2015

CONNECTING MINORITY COMMUNITIES PILOT PROGRAM

93 Grants

$268M

36 States/Territories

CMC Grant Designations Map

Note: Locations are an estimation and not an exact location of Awardee
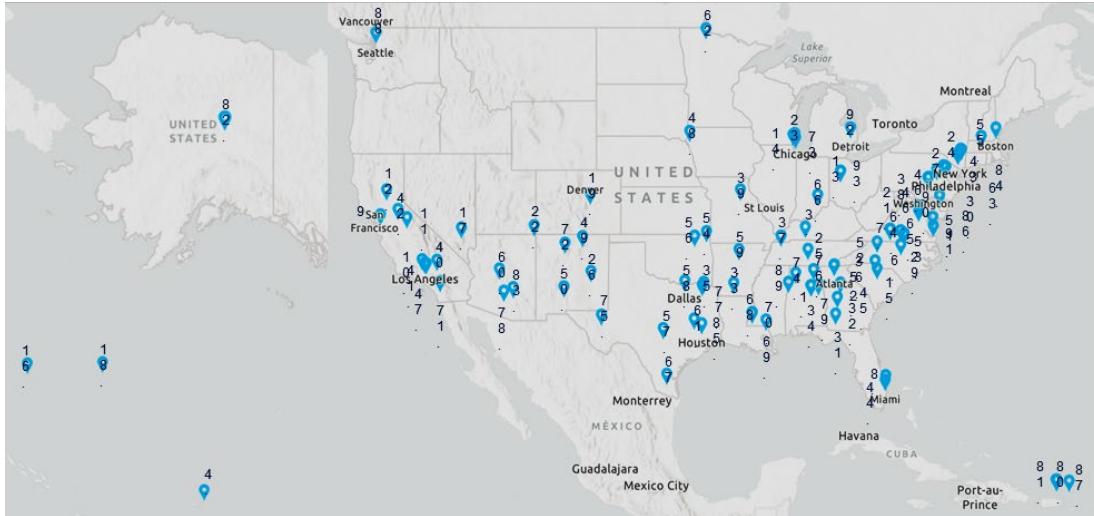
CMC | Grant Recipients

1. Alabama State University
2. Albany State University
3. American Baptist Theological Seminary
4. American Samoa Community College
5. Atlanta Technical College
6. Benedict College
7. Bennett College
8. Broward College
9. Cabrillo College
10. California State University-Dominguez Hills
11. California State University-Fresno
12. California State University-Sacramento
13. Central State University
14. Chicago State University
15. Claflin University
16. College of Micronesia – FSM
17. College of Southern Nevada

18. College of the Marshall Islands
19. Colorado State University Pueblo
20. Community College of Philadelphia
21. Coppin State University
22. Dine College
23. Dominican University
24. Dominican University New York
25. Drake State Community & Technical College
26. Eastern New Mexico University Roswell
27. Eastern University
28. Elizabeth City State University
29. Fayetteville State University
30. Felician University
31. Florida A&M University
32. Fort Valley State University
33. Grambling State University
34. H. Councill Trenholm State Community College

35. Jarvis Christian College
36. Johnson C. Smith University
37. Lane College
38. Lincoln University
39. Lincoln University of Missouri
40. Loma Linda University
41. Long Beach City College
42. Merced College
43. Mercy College
44. Miami Dade College
45. Morehouse School of Medicine
46. Morgan State University
47. Mount Saint Mary's University
48. Nebraska Indian Community College
49. New Mexico Highlands University
50. New Mexico State University
51. Norfolk State University
52. North Carolina A&T State University
53. North Carolina Central University
54. Northeastern State University
55. University of Massachusetts- Boston
56. Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology
57. Our Lady of the Lake University
58. Paul Quinn College
59. Philander Smith College
60. Phoenix College
61. Prairie View A&M University
62. Red Lake Nation College
63. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Newark
64. Saint Augustine's University
65. Shaw University
66. Simmons College of Kentucky
67. South Texas College
68. Southern University and A&M College
69. Southern University at New Orleans
70. Southern University Law Center
71. Southwestern College
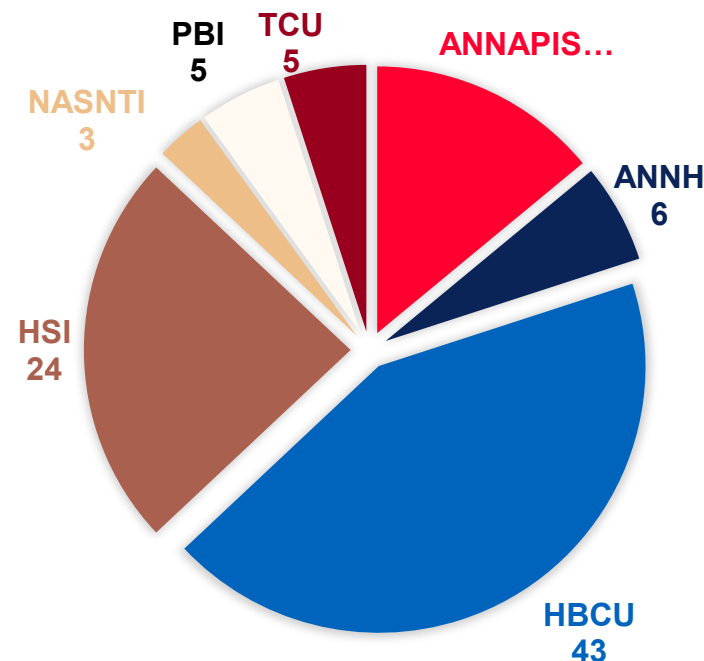72. Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute

73. St. Augustine College
74. Stillman College
75. Sul Ross State University
76. Talladega College
77. Texas College
78. Tonoho O'odham Community College
79. Tuskegee University
80. Universidad Ana G. Mendez, Recinto de Carolina
81. Universidad del Sagrado Corazon
82. University of Alaska Fairbanks
83. University of Arizona
84. University of Connecticut
85. University of Houston – Downtown
86. University of Maryland Eastern Shore
87. University of the Virgin Islands
88. University of Washington
89. University of West Alabama
90. Virginia State University
91. Virginia Union University
92. Wayne County Community College District
93. Wilberforce University

CMC Pilot Program Grant Recipients

OMBI successfully achieved CMC NOFO requirements:

- Provide 40% of funding to HBCUs

- Provide 20% of funding for internet access service/eligible equipment students

Pie chart:
- PBI 5
- TCU 5
- ANNAPIS...
- NASNTI 3
- ANNH 6
- HSI 24
- HBCU 43

For additional information about the CMC
Program please visit:
[Connecting Minority Communities Pilot
Program
(https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/resources/gr
ant-programs/connecting-minority-
communities-pilot-program)](https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/resources/grant-programs/connecting-minority-communities-pilot-program)

For additional follow-up feel free to contact me.

OMBIoutreach@ntia.gov

CMC & OMBI Q & A

Digital Equity (DE) Programs

Angela Thi Bennett, Digital Equity Director, NTIA

The Digital Equity Act seeks to promote digital equity and inclusion

BEAD

Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment Program

A program to get all Americans online by funding partnerships between states or territories, communities, and stakeholders to build infrastructure where we need it and increase adoption of high-speed internet.

Today's focus

DIGITAL EQUITY

$2.75B

Digital Equity Act

Three programs that provide funding to promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all. They aim to ensure that all communities can access and use affordable, reliable high-speed internet to meet their needs and improve their lives.

TRIBAL

$2.00B

Tribal Connectivity Technical Amendments

A program to help tribal communities expand high-speed internet access and adoption on tribal lands.

MIDDLE MILE

$1.00B

Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure

A program to expand middle mile infrastructure, to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas.

Digital Equity Act Grant Programs

INTERNET FOR ALL

	State Planning Grant	State Capacity Grant	Competitive Grant
	$60 million	**$1.44 billion**	**$1.25 billion**
Who	Open to **U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico**	Open to U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, that **completed the State Planning Program**	Open to **certain entities**, such as political subdivisions, Tribal entities, nonprofits, community anchor institutions, local educational agencies, and workforce development orgs
What	Grants will be used to **develop a State Digital Equity Plan**	Grants will be used to **implement State Digital Equity Plans**	Grants will be used to **develop and implement digital inclusion activities**

Other U.S. territories, Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian orgs have a statutory set-aside and separate program requirements under the State Planning and Capacity Programs
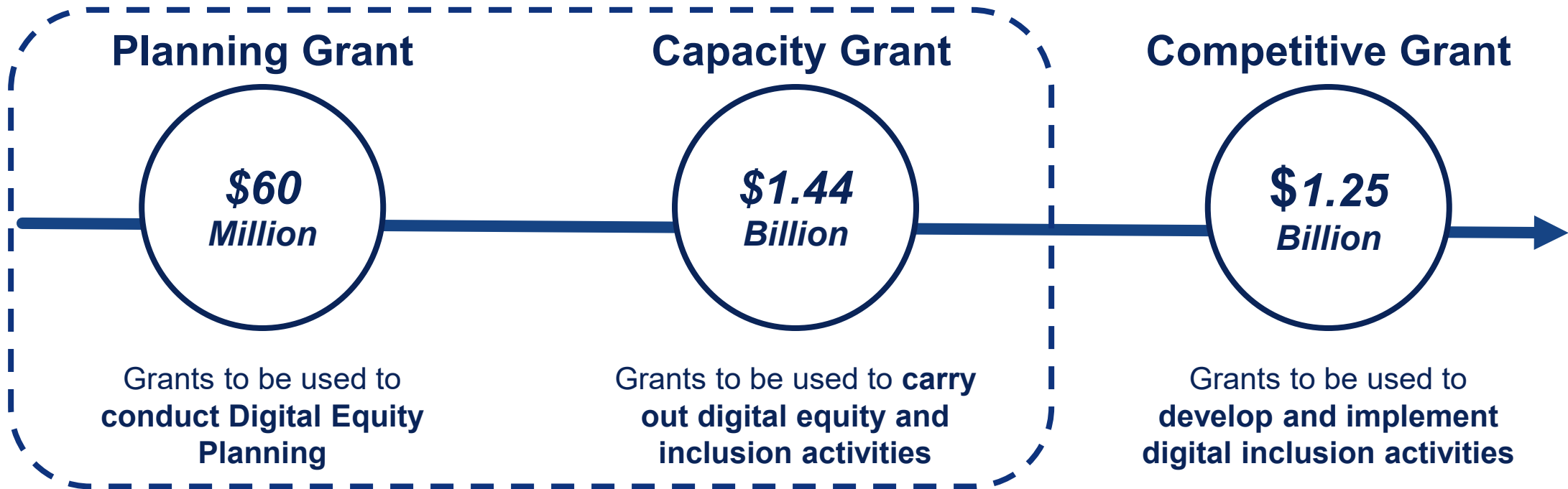
The Digital Equity Act Established 3 Programs

The programs outlined in the Digital Equity Act focus on promoting large scale social and economic change by centering on *digital equity* and *digital inclusion* among the Covered Populations. [1]

FY22 – FY24 Capacity & Planning Grant Program Funding Source

Planning Grant

$60 **Million**

Grants to be used to **conduct Digital Equity Planning**

Capacity Grant

$1.44 **Billion**

Grants to be used to **carry out digital equity and inclusion activities**

Competitive Grant

$1.25 **Billion**

Grants to be used to **develop and implement digital inclusion activities**

NTIA anticipates making $45,300,000 available for the NE Capacity & Planning Grant Program.

1. State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program NOFO Section I.C

Defining Key Terms

Digital Equity

The condition in which individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in in the society and economy of the United States.[1]

Digital Inclusion

The activities necessary to ensure that all individuals in the United States have access to, and the use of, affordable information and communication technologies.[2]

1. 47 U.S.C. §1721(10)
2. 47 U.S.C. §1721(11)

The Digital Equity Act addresses "Covered Populations"

Covered Populations
Identity groups and communities disproportionally impacted by digital inequity

Low-income households

People with disabilities

Aging populations

People with language barriers

Incarcerated individuals

Racial and ethnic minorities

Veterans

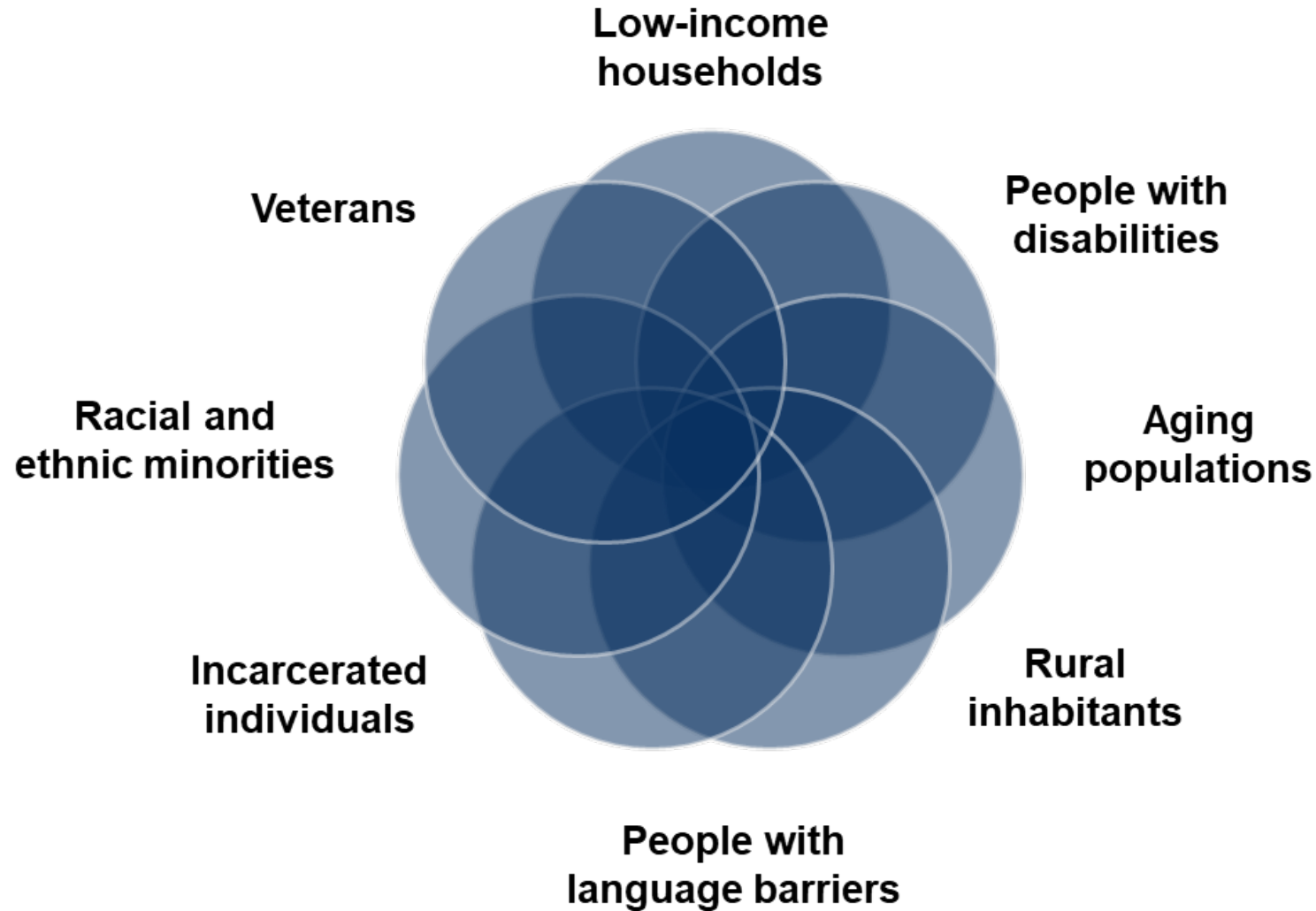Rural inhabitants

The intersectionality of Covered Populations:

Low-income households

People with disabilities

Veterans

Aging populations

Racial and ethnic minorities

Incarcerated individuals

Rural inhabitants

People with language barriers

Set-Aside: NE Capacity & Planning Grant Program

Defining Native Entities for the NE Capacity & Planning Grant Program

INTERNET FOR ALL

The term "Native Entity" refers to **Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations.**[1] Native Entities must meet the eligibility criteria in the NOFO.[2] Consortium applications from Native Entities are encouraged.[3]

Alaska Native Entity: A tribally controlled entity in Alaska whose purpose or mission is to represent or advance the interests of one or more native Alaskan communities. This will include, but will not be limited to, subsidiary organizations of an Indian Tribe; entities that receive federal funding due to their status as an Indian or Native organization; and the Alaska Native Regional Nonprofit Organizations created to administer social, educational, and health services for Alaska Native people in their region.

Indian Tribe: Any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community (i.e., Tribal Organizations), including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, 43 U.S.C. § 1601 et seq., which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

Native Hawaiian Organization (NHO): An organization that is registered with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Native Hawaiian Relations and Hawaiian Homes Commission Act Beneficiary Associations and Homestead Associations, as defined under 43 C.F.R. §§ 47.10 and 48.6, or is the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands.

1.   State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program NOFO Section I.C
2.   State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program NOFO Section III.B.1
3.   State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program NOFO Section III.B.1.b.

Purpose of the NE Capacity & Planning Grant Program

The program's purpose is to **conduct digital equity planning** and **carry out digital equity and inclusion activities** consistent with the Digital Equity Act.

CAPACITY GRANT FUNDS [1]

Purpose | *Implementation*

Funds are available to **carry out digital equity and inclusion activities.**

Open to Native Entities (as Single Applicants or as Consortium Applicants)

The process for allocation is **competitive.**

Native Entities may submit an application that seeks Capacity Grant Funds **only.**

PLANNING GRANT FUNDS (OPTIONAL) [2]

Purpose | *Strategic Planning*

Funds are available for **digital equity planning purposes.**

Native Entities have the **option** to apply for Planning Grant Funds by submitting and answering **additional** respective requirements in the NE Capacity & Planning Grant Program application and completing the **Capacity & Planning Consolidated Budget Form (CBF)**. Applicants may apply for Planning Grant Funds **in conjunction** with Capacity Grant Funds but **not** on a standalone basis.

1.   State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program NOFO Section III.C.2.iv
2.   State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program NOFO Section III.C.2.iiii

NE Capacity Grant Program Goals

Proposed projects and activities must be consistent with the goals of equity and digital inclusion described in 47 U.S.C. §1723(d).

FOR CAPACITY GRANT FUNDS:

Capacity Grant projects and activities must:

🚧 Address identified barriers to digital equity

📏 Use measurable objectives to assess progress towards overcoming these barriers

👪♿ Promote the following among the Covered Populations:

- The availability of, and affordability of access to, fixed and wireless broadband technology;

- The online accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services;

- Digital literacy;

- Awareness of, and the use of, measures to secure the online privacy of, and cybersecurity with respect to, an individual, and;

- The availability and affordability of consumer devices and technical support for those devices.[1]

1. State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program NOFO Section III.C.2.c.iv

NE Planning Grant Program Goals

Proposed planning activities must be consistent with 47 U.S.C. §1723(c).

All eligible Native Entities may apply for Capacity Grant Funds and have the *option* to also apply for Planning Grant Funds when submitting the NE Capacity & Planning Grant Program application. Applicants may **not** apply for Planning Grant Funds on a standalone basis.

FOR PLANNING GRANT FUNDS (IF APPLICABLE):

Planning activities may include:

- A vision statement;

- Outreach and engagement with the Covered Populations for the purpose of identifying barriers to digital equity and conducting a needs assessment;

- Identification of the barriers to digital equity faced by members of the Covered Populations;

- Measurable objectives that address the barriers to digital equity; and

- Implementation strategies to achieve the measurable objectives identified above. [1]

1. State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program NOFO Section III.C.2.c.iii

How to Apply for the NE Capacity & Planning Grant Program

Native Entities are permitted to submit their NE Capacity & Planning Grant Program applications, including Planning Grant Program information, either electronically online, via email, or by mail or courier no later than the submission deadline.[1]

Submission Deadline

Applications submitted through the NGP must be received no later than **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on February 7, 2025.**

Online: NTIA Grants Portal (NGP)	**Email to digitalequity@ntia.gov**	**Mail or courier**
The NGP will open for electronic application submission on October 30, 2024. The forms and requirements can be accessed on the NGP at **https://grants.ntia.gov.** Log in with your account or create an account if you don't have one. Additional instructions can be found in the Application Guidance.	Reminders: • All application requirements should ideally be submitted in one email before the submission deadline. • The last application version NTIA receives will be the application that is reviewed.	Angela Thi Bennett Director of Digital Equity Office of Internet Connectivity & Growth National Telecommunications & Information Administration U.S. Department of Commerce 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20230

1. State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program NOFO Section III.C.6

Additional resources about the Digital Equity Programs

1. Visit the **InternetForAll.gov** for additional information on federal funding programs

2. Visit https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/ to review your State or Territory digital equity plan and learn more about the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program

3. Submit questions to **digitalequity@ntia.gov**

4. Attend future NTIA webinars, including program-specific application guidance webinars for applicants

DE Q & A

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP)

Nick Courtney, Senior Federal Program Officer, NTIA

TBCP NOFO II Update

- NOFO II applications received:
  - More than 160 applications received
  - $2.64 billion in total funding requests
  - Approximate $980 million available from NOFO II

- The Programmatic Review Process is underway

- Watch your inbox for emails from tbcpnofo2@ntia.gov

  - Note: curing turn-a-round windows continue to be very tight and strict

- Targeting Q4 for the first wave of award announcements

TBCP Q & A