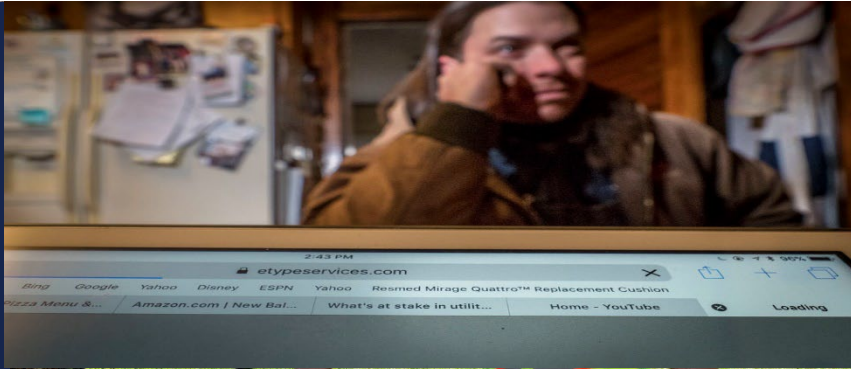


Funding to facilitate broadband deployment in unserved tribal communities



What does this program do?

The ReConnect Program provides loans, grants, and loan-grant combinations to bring high-speed internet to rural areas that lack sufficient access to broadband. ReConnect Program funds can be used to fund the costs of construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service.

The ReConnect Program fosters private-sector investments in broadband infrastructure to deploy high-speed internet service to rural homes, businesses, and essential community facilities that support public safety, health care, schools, libraries, business and industry, and agricultural operations, among other sites.

Who may apply for this program?

Applicants eligible to apply for ReConnect Program funds include:

- Cooperatives or mutual associations
- For-profit corporations, limited liability companies, or limited liability partnerships
- States, local governments, or any agency, subdivision, instrumentality, or political subdivision thereof
- A territory or possession of the U.S.
- Federally recognized tribes (as

listed pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, 25 U.S.C. 479a)

Eligible applicants must be able to supply broadband service to all customers in their proposed funded service area (PFSA) at the same time.

What is an eligible area?

For a geographic area to be eligible to receive federal funds from this program it must meet two criteria: (1) the area must be rural and (2) 50 percent of households in the area must lack sufficient access to broadband service.

- WHAT IS CONSIDERED “RURAL”?
 - Service areas cannot be located in a city, town, or incorporated area with a population greater than 20,000, or an urbanized area adjacent to a city or town with a population greater than 50,000 people.
 - Eligible areas must be completely contained within a rural area or composed of multiple rural areas. Visit the mapping tool at <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect> for additional eligibility information.
- WHAT IS “SUFFICIENT ACCESS”?
 - Currently, sufficient access to broadband is defined as 100 megabits per second (Mbps) downstream and 20 Mbps upstream.

How may funds be used?

This program provides funding for:

- The construction or improvement of facilities capable of delivering 100 Mbps symmetrical service to every premises in the PFSA at the same time.
- The acquisition of an existing system not currently providing sufficient access to broadband service, under certain circumstances, and with restrictions.
- Up to 5 percent of the requested amount can be used for pre-application expenses and up to 3 percent of this amount can be used to cover the costs of the environmental review.

How do we apply?

Applications must be submitted through the Agency’s online application system located on the ReConnect webpage, <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect>. All materials required for completing an application are included in the online system. The ReConnect webpage also includes basic program information and detailed application guidance.

ReConnect Program – Tribal Fact Sheet

Where can we find technical assistance?

The Agency will host several technical assistance webinars and workshops throughout the application window. Webinar and workshop dates and times, along with additional technical assistance resources, can be found at [https:// www.usda.gov/reconnect](https://www.usda.gov/reconnect).

You may also contact your state's Telecommunications General Field Representative (GFR) for assistance. A map and list of GFRs can be found at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr>.

When are applications due?

The current application deadline is November 2, 2022.

Is SUTA applicable to the ReConnect Program?

Yes, tribal applicants may request the following Substantially Underserved Trust Area (SUTA) considerations under the ReConnect Program:

- Interest rates as low as 2 percent
- Extended repayment terms

Can we request a waiver of the matching requirement?

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) recognizes the importance of adjusting collateral requirements to ensure ReConnect Program funds reach unserved communities with the greatest need.

The ReConnect Program may offer 100 percent grants *without* a matching requirement. This offer is announced via the FOA. The FOA published on August 4, 2022 does offer 100 percent grants without a matching requirement..

What are key steps when preparing to apply?

Prior to the release of the ReConnect Program FOA, RUS recommends that applicants:

- Register with SAM.gov or ensure your registration is current
- Prepare your resolution for the Authorized Representative Request (ARR) Process
- Begin compiling required documents outlined in the program regulation (7 CFR 1740)
- Establish partnerships for successful project completion

- Meet with your GFR
- Ensure all users working on the application have a level 2 eAuthentication (eAuth) ID

Can an entity receive funding to serve Tribal Lands without the consent of the Tribe?

No, a Tribal Government Resolution of Consent must be provided if a non-tribal applicant is proposing service over or on tribal lands. Any applicant that fails to provide the Tribal Government Resolution of Consent will not be considered for funding.

Can Tribes self-certify whether broadband service exists on their lands?

Yes, Tribal Governments are the official authority on whether tribal lands are served, unserved, or underserved by providers. RUS will work with Tribal Governments to determine whether tribal land is adequately served.

Can ReConnect funds be used for monitoring expenses associated with the National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106) review?

Yes, monitoring expenses are considered professional costs and are eligible to be funded using up to 3 percent of the total award amount.

Type of Funding Available	Total Funding and Maximum Award Available	Key Funding Requirements
100 Percent Grant for Alaska Native Corporations, Tribal Governments, Colonias, Persistent Poverty Areas, and Socially Vulnerable Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$421 million total funds available • \$25 million maximum award amount • \$35 million maximum, per project, if the PFSA meets certain guidelines. Refer to the FOA for details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only available to entities and areas defined in the FOA published on August 4, 2022. • Competitive review based on scoring criteria • No Match Requirement
100 Percent Grant for Projects Serving Areas Where 90 percent of Households Lack Sufficient Access to Broadband	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$200 million total funds available • \$25 million maximum, per project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive review based on scoring criteria • No match Requirement
100 Percent Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$150 million total funds available • \$25 million maximum award amount • \$35 million maximum, per project, if the PFSA meets certain guidelines. Refer to the FOA for details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive review based on scoring criteria • 25 percent Cash Match Requirement
Loan-Grant Combination(50-50)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$150 million total funds available • \$25 million maximum award amount for the grant • \$25 million maximum award amount for the loan • Loan and grant amounts will always be equal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive review based on scoring criteria. • Interest Rate is set at U.S. Treasury Rate at the time of each advance of funds
100 Percent Loan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$150 million total funds available • \$50 million maximum award amount 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds are awarded until exhausted on a first-come, first-served basis • Interest rate is fixed at 2 percent

NOTE: Because citations and other information may be subject to change, please always consult the program instructions listed in the Federal Register. You may also contact your [General Field Representative for assistance](#). You will find additional forms, resources, and program information at <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect>. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Last Updated: August 2022

