

**MBI**

MASSACHUSETTS  
BROADBAND INSTITUTE



at the MassTech  
Collaborative

# BEAD Deployment

## **Bidders' Conference**

January 29, 2025, at 1pm

# Bidders' Conference Guidelines

- This Bidders' Conference is being recorded.
- This presentation provides participants with an overview of Massachusetts Technology Collaborative ("MassTech"), Massachusetts Broadband Initiative ("MBI"), and the BEAD Deployment Program.
- All microphones are muted on entry; please stay muted throughout the presentation.
- Please set your screen name as your full name and affiliated organization.
- There will be time allocated after the presentation for Q&A with attendees.
- Written Questions must be submitted electronically to [proposals@masstech.org](mailto:proposals@masstech.org) on or before **February 7, 2025 @ 5:00 PM** with the following subject line: "Questions – Solicitation No. 2025-MBI-06."
- Answers will be posted on MassTech's website and COMMBUYS.
- If you have questions during this Bidders's Conference, please type them in the Q&A Chat.
- MBI will be the only ones who see your posted questions and MBI will read as many questions as time permits.
- MBI reserves the right to mute or dismiss participants that behave in an inappropriate manner.

## BIDDERS' CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

### Meeting Objectives

1. To provide prospective Applicants with guidance to develop grant applications that satisfy Program and grant solicitation requirements.
2. Prospective Applicants should utilize this Bidders' Conference to inform project eligibility for funding and help put forth a successful grant application.

# Agenda

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1. Introduction and BEAD Overview
2. Grant Program Overview
3. Overview of Submittable Application
4. Questions and Answers



01

# Introduction



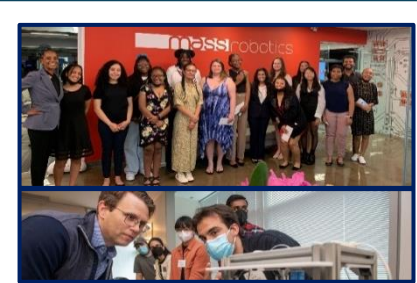
# MASSACHUSETTS TECHNOLOGY COLLABORATIVE

## OUR MISSION:

We strengthen the competitiveness of the tech and innovation economy by driving strategic investments, partnerships, and insights that harness the talent of Massachusetts.



*Administering ~\$530M in state and federal funds over the next 2 fiscal years.*



*Established in 1982 by Legislative Statute*

# BEAD Program Overview

The state of Massachusetts received \$147 million funding allocation for its BEAD program. The goal of the BEAD program is to achieve universal service – which means 100% of broadband serviceable locations (BSL's) have the internet available. CAIs are eligible for funding in Round 1.

MBI  
Objectives  
for BEAD  
Round One

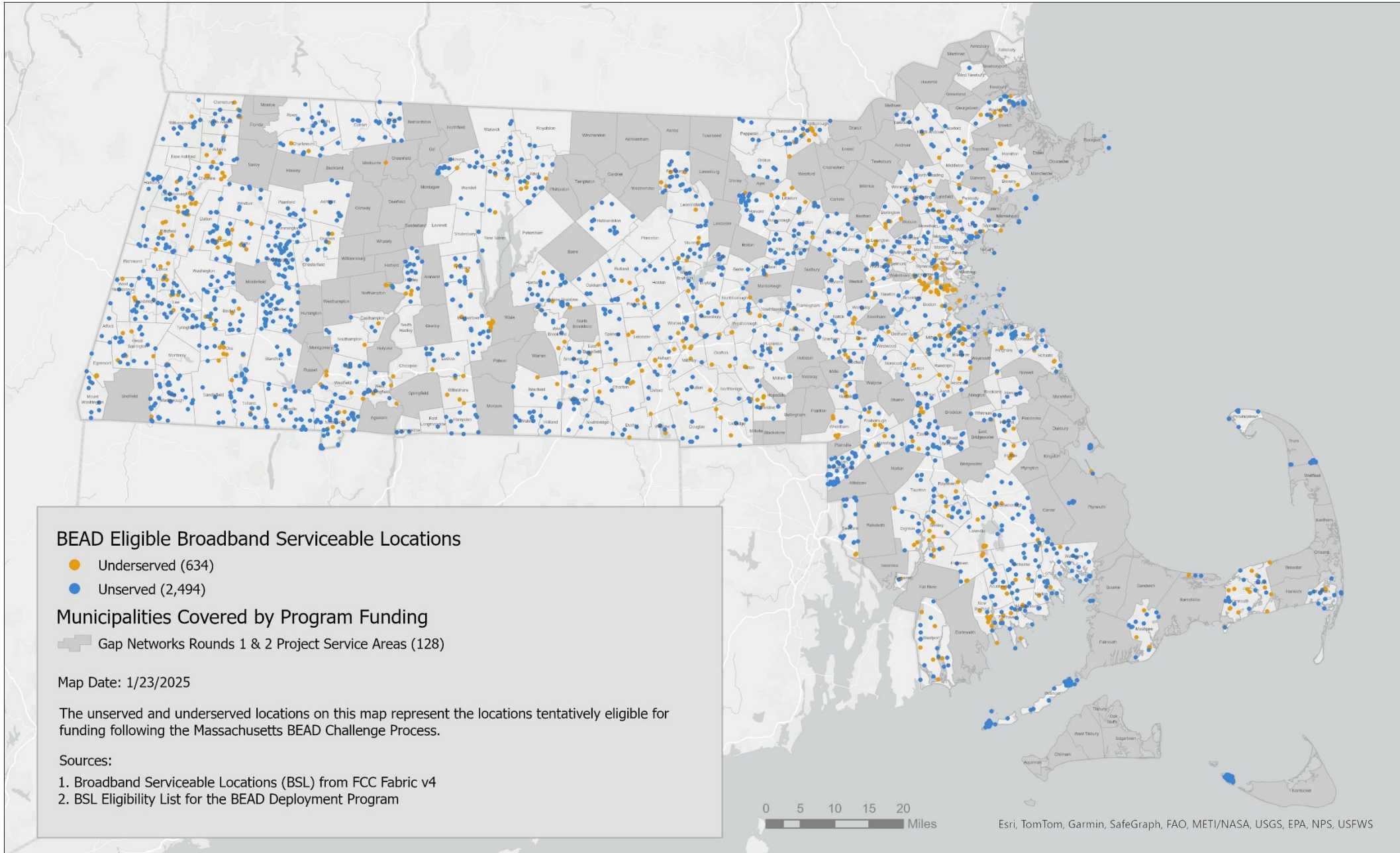
1. Unserved Locations (below 25Mbps / 3Mbps)
2. Underserved Locations (below 100Mbps / 20Mbps)
3. Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs)

BEAD  
Activities  
Completed  
to Date

- Five-Year Action Plan Approved
- Initial Proposal Volume I Approved
- Initial Proposal Volume II Approved
- Challenge Process Completed
- Challenge Process Results Approved



# Provisional Map of Locations



**3,128** eligible  
BSLs in **221**  
Municipalities



# Timeline

Activity	Date
BEAD Deployment Phase Round One Opens	January 15, 2025
Bidders Conference	January 29, 2025
Questions Due	February 7, 2025
Responses Posted	February 14, 2025
BEAD Deployment Phase Round One Closes **	February 28, 2025

\*All RFP schedule descriptions and dates are tentative and subject to change.



02

# Grant Program Overview

# Eligible Entities

## Who can apply for BEAD Funding?

Private entities (e.g., corporations, limited liability companies, general partnerships, limited partnerships, etc.)

Local governmental entities (e.g., municipalities or municipal light plants that offer broadband service)

Tribal Governments

Non-Profit Organizations

Co-operatives, electric co-operatives and utilities

Public Private Partnerships, which are long-term agreements between local government entities and private entities for the delivery and funding of broadband services

Other entities that develop and/or operate broadband networks and can demonstrate the experience, capacity and financial resources and stability to satisfy the grant obligations

# Project Service Areas

A Project Service Area (PSA) in BEAD Deployment Round 1 is a single Municipality.

BEAD subgrantees must commit to serve 100% of eligible Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs) in the municipalities they include in their applications based on the BSL Eligibility List posted with this Solicitation. Applicants may identify potentially high-cost locations and other BSL-specific issues (such as location does not qualify as a BSL).

CAIs that lack access to 1 Gbps symmetrical service may be included in the application.

Applicants may propose to serve more than one PSA. A new project application will be needed for each PSA that Applicant proposes to serve. MBI streamlined the application to allow some categories of information to be entered only once if there are no differences across all proposed PSAs (such as technology to be deployed).

Please reference the BEAD BSL Eligibility List and the BEAD CAI List when preparing your applications. MBI has also provided templates to use in your application. All resources can be found on the [\*\*BEAD Solicitation webpage\*\*](#).

# Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold

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- The Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold (“EHCPLT”) will be determined by MBI after reviewing Round One applications.
- MBI will prioritize fiber deployment while ensuring MBI has enough funds for universal broadband access and other BEAD priorities.
- If fiber is not cost-effective as determined by implementation of the EHCPLT, an Alternative Technology may be used, however priority will be given to end-to-end fiber projects.
- MBI will develop a cost model based on data from the MBI Gap Networks Program, CostQuest, and Round One of the BEAD Program.
- NTIA recently issued new guidance on Alternative Technologies that can be accessed [here](#).



# Eligible Project Costs

## Categories of eligible Project costs include but not limited to:

Make ready	Qualifying Long Drop, Non-Standard Customer Installation costs - Applicants may request funding to cover the cost of a “non-standard” customer installation that requires the customer to contribute to the upfront, non-recurring cost of the installation. The customer installation is defined as the broadband infrastructure service (aerial or conduit) running from a backbone or lateral fiber optic cable to an unserved or underserved BSL in a proposed PSA.
Design and engineering	
Permitting and regulatory compliance, including environmental, historical, and cultural reviews, building, and electrical	
Network equipment, fiber/cabling, facilities and materials	
Construction and installation	
Qualifying Multiple Dwelling Unit costs	Incidental Overbuild costs – The Applicant must demonstrate that the proposed overbuild portions of the project are the most cost-effective and necessary approach to reaching unserved or underserved BSLs. Incidental overbuild costs cannot exceed 10% of the total project cost.
Leases for terms longer than one year of facilities including IRU agreements and capital leases	
Personnel costs required for carrying out the capital Project	
Costs associated with monitoring and reporting in compliance with Treasury requirements	

# Ineligible Project Costs



**Ineligible costs include those costs that are unallowable under the applicable federal cost principles. Ineligible costs include, but are not limited to:**

Acquisition of spectrum licenses

Operating expenses (including salaries of staff operating the capital Project once completed)

Short-term operation leases

Payment of interest or principal on outstanding debt instruments

Fees associated with the issuance of new debt

Satisfaction of any obligation arising under or pursuant to a settlement agreement, judgment, consent decree, or judicially confirmed debt restructuring plan in a judicial, administrative, or regulatory proceeding

Support or opposition of collective bargaining

Program grant application preparation costs

Expenses incurred prior to the execution of the funding agreement.

Prohibited equipment or services

Incremental profits and feed

**Please note:** Costs ineligible for the BEAD Program may not be paid for with matching funds committed to an award.

# Funding Agreement

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- Applicants that are awarded funding will be required to have an authorized representative execute a Funding Agreement with MassTech.
- The Funding Agreement template will be posted on MBI's website.
- The Funding Agreement will include terms and conditions including, but not limited to:
  - Description of the services
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Grant payment schedule (consistent with payment on a cost reimbursement basis upon completion of specified project milestones)
  - Eligible uses of funds
  - Period of performance
  - Accounting and reporting requirements
  - Compliance requirements
  - Remedies for noncompliance
  - Audit practices
  - Record keeping
  - Internal controls, and other terms required by federal law

# Threshold Requirements

- **Project Service Area**
  - Letter of Municipal Support
  - Tribal Engagement
  - Network Design
    - Project Data and Budget
    - Network Design & Narrative
    - Certification
    - Conduit Access Points
    - Timeline
- **Build American, Buy America (BABA) Compliance**
- **Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) Compliance**
  - National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Certifications
  - Climate Resiliency Certification & Plans
- **Project Financials**
  - Financial Partners
  - Performance Security (Surety Letter OR Letter of Credit)
  - Project Financials Workbook
- **Project Workforce**
  - Compliance with Federal Labor and Employment Law
- **Fair Labor Law and Standards**
  - Prevailing Wage Certifications
  - Wage, Fringe Benefits and Overtime Payments
  - Workplace Safety
- **Compliance**
- **Funding Agreement Modifications**
- **Additional Certifications**

# Scoring Criteria: Priority Broadband Projects

Primary Criteria:			
Minimal BEAD Program Outlay	To determine the BEAD funding needed for a project, both projected costs and the subgrantee's proposed match (minimum 25% of project cost) will be accounted for. Points or credits will increase as BEAD costs decrease. MBI shall also consider the cost per location and any factors that may impact the project's scalability or resilience.	30%  (60 points)	<b>75%</b>  <b>(150 points)</b>
Affordability	The prospective subgrantee's commitment to provide the most affordable total price to the customer for 1 Gbps/1 Gbps service in the project area.	30%  (60 points)	
Fair Labor Practices	MBI shall prioritize projects based on prospective subgrantees' compliance with federal labor and employment laws. New entrants without a compliance record may make specific commitments to strong labor and employment standards to mitigate this. Section IV.C.1.e of the BEAD NOFO provides more details about this prioritization requirement.	15%  (30 points)	



# Scoring Criteria: Priority Broadband Projects

Secondary Criteria:			
Speed To Deployment	All subgrantees that receive BEAD Program funds for network deployment must deploy the planned broadband network and begin providing services to each customer that desires broadband services within the project area not later than four years after the date on which the subgrantee executes a contract with MBI. MBI shall give secondary criterion prioritization weight to the prospective subgrantee's binding commitment to provide service by an earlier date certain, subject to contractual penalties to MBI, with greater benefits awarded to applicants promising an earlier service provision date.	5% (10 points)	<b>25%</b> <b>(50 points)</b>
Serving CAIs	Servicing CAIs as part of Round One projects will not be mandatory but is strongly encouraged and incentivized by MBI. This scoring criteria will assess the percentage of CAIs within the project area that will be served as part of the proposed project.	5% (10 points)	
Low-Cost Plans	MBI will allocate points for committed service pricing of the low-cost plan below \$30/month.	10% (20 points)	
Serving MDUs at Enterprise Level	This scoring criteria will award points if applicants plan to offer service at an enterprise level for MDUs. Full points will be awarded if the applicant can commit to offering this service option.	5% (10 points)	

# Scoring Criteria: Other Last-Mile Broadband Projects

<b>Primary Criteria:</b>			
Minimal BEAD Program Outlay	To determine the BEAD funding needed for a project, both projected costs and the subgrantee's proposed match (minimum 25% of project cost) will be accounted for. Points or credits will increase as BEAD costs decrease. MBI shall also consider the cost per location and any factors that may impact the project's scalability or resilience.	32.5%  (65 points)	<b>75%</b>  <b>(150 points)</b>
Affordability	Prospective subgrantee's commitment to providing the most affordable 100/20 Mbps service in the proposed area.	32.5%  (65 points)	
Fair Labor Practices	MBI shall prioritize projects based on prospective subgrantees' compliance with federal labor and employment laws. New entrants without a compliance record may make specific commitments to strong labor and employment standards to mitigate this. Section IV.C.1.e of the BEAD NOFO provides more details about this prioritization requirement.	10%  (20 points)	

# Scoring Criteria: Other Last-Mile Broadband Projects

*Please reference Section 6 of the full Solicitation to understand the full scoring rubric breakdown.*

Secondary Criteria:			
Speed of Network and Other Technical Capacities	Applications proposing easily scalable technologies with longer asset cycles and lower future investment will be favored over those with costlier upgrades and shorter asset cycles.	5% (10 points)	25% (50 points)
Speed To Deployment	All subgrantees that receive BEAD Program funds for network deployment must deploy the planned broadband network and begin providing services to each customer that desires broadband services within the project area not later than four years after the date on which the subgrantee executes a contract with MBI. MBI shall give secondary criterion prioritization weight to the prospective subgrantee's binding commitment to provide service by an earlier date certain, subject to contractual penalties to MBI, with greater benefits awarded to applicants promising an earlier service provision date.	4% (8 points)	
Serving CAIs	Servicing CAIs as part of Round One projects will not be mandatory but is strongly encouraged and incentivized by MBI. This scoring criteria will assess the percentage of CAIs within the project area that will be served as part of the proposed project.	4% (8 points)	
Low-Cost Plans	MBI will allocate points for committed service pricing of the low-cost plan below \$30/month.	8% (16 points)	
Serving MDUs at Enterprise Level	This scoring criteria will award points if applicants plan to offer service at an enterprise level for MDUs. Full points will be awarded if the applicant can commit to offering this service option.	4% (8 points)	

# Match Funds

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## Match Funding Contributions

- Subgrantee must contribute a mandatory Funding Match of at 25% of the total proposed project costs.
- “Funding Match” shall mean the portion of the proposed project costs not covered by BEAD Award Funds.
- MBI will score proposals more favorably that minimize BEAD funding outlays.

## In-Kind Contributions

- In-kind contributions are capped at 15% consistent with the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200).
- May include third-party in-kind contributions, are non-cash donations of property, goods, or services, which benefit a federally assisted project, and which may count toward satisfying the non-federal matching requirement of a project’s total budgeted costs when such contributions meet certain criteria.

## Match Waivers

- Applicants are required to confirm if they are applying for a match waiver and must provide a description of the special circumstances underlying the reason it is not feasible to provide the minimum match requirement of 25%
- Match waivers are not guaranteed, and MBI may request further information to assist in making its determination. NTIA approval is needed for a full or partial match waiver.

# Monitoring and Reporting

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## Monitoring

- MassTech will monitor subgrantee activities to ensure awards are used for authorized purposes, in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the subaward.
- MassTech will employ a robust subgrantee monitoring program that will consist of risk assessments, quarterly subgrantee reporting, random sampling of subgrantee files, corrective action policies and post-contracting support to ensure subgrantees can meet all required BEAD compliance reporting and activities.
- MassTech reserves the right to increase the frequency of reporting and conduct an on-site review if any issues or concerns are identified.

## Financial Reviews

- Subgrantee must engage in a financial review with MassTech on either a three-month, six-month, or annual basis. Frequency will be determined based on results of risk assessment.

## Quarterly Project Status and Performance Reports:

- Project status and performance reports must be submitted for the duration of the subgrant.

## Final Close-Out Report:

- Subgrantee shall submit a final project report with appropriate supporting documentation for MBI's review and approval.



# Federal Reporting Requirements

Subgrantees will be required to submit project-related information that will enable MBI to comply with all federal BEAD reporting requirements mandated by NTIA. This information includes but is not limited to:

- Provide a list of addresses or location identifications (including the Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric established under 47 U.S.C. 642(b)(1)(B)) that constitute the service locations that will be served by the broadband infrastructure to be constructed and the status of each Project
- Identify new locations served within each Project Area at the relevant reporting intervals, and service taken (if applicable)
- Identify whether each address or location is residential, commercial, or a community anchor institution;
- Describe the types of facilities that have been constructed and installed
- Describe the peak and off-peak actual speeds of the broadband service being offered
- Describe the maximum advertised speed of the broadband service being offered
- Describe the non-promotional prices, including any associated fees, charged for different tiers of broadband service being offered
- List all interconnection agreements that were requested, and their current status
- Report the number and size of contracts and subcontracts awarded by the subgrantee disaggregated by recipients of each such contract or subcontracts that are MBEs or WBEs
- Include any other data that would be required to comply with the data and mapping collection standards of the FCC for broadband infrastructure Projects
- Include an SF-425, Federal Financial Report and meet the requirements described in the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (dated November 12, 2020), Section A.01 for Financial Reports



03

# Overview of Submittable Application

# Submittable Overview and Live Demo



## Welcome to the Massachusetts Broadband Institute's (MBI) Grant Platform, Submittable.

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute is administering federally funded broadband and digital equity programs on behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The following broadband infrastructure grant program is now open on MBI's grant platform:

- Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Deployment

If you have questions, please contact [broadband@masstech.org](mailto:broadband@masstech.org).

### Tips for using Submittable:

- You will need to create a free Submittable account or sign in with Google or Facebook credentials to submit to these forms.
- You can [save a draft](#) of your work if you would like to finish filling out the form at a later date.
- If anything changes with the information you submitted, please request to [edit the submission](#)
- Our platform works best on Google Chrome, Firefox, and Safari. Internet Explorer is not supported. Please make sure you are using a supported browser.
- [You can download Firefox by following the instructions linked here.](#)
- [You can download Chrome by following the instructions linked here.](#)

# Submittable Overview

## Step 1: BEAD Qualification Form

### BEAD Qualification

#### How to invite team members to collaborate on your application.

- Click on **Manage Collaborators**. A Dialog box will appear, asking you to enter the email addresses of your collaborators. Enter those addresses, then click Invite.
- Invited collaborators will receive an email, letting them know you've invited them to collaborate on a draft submission using Submittable. In order to communicate with collaborators through the Submittable platform, all invitees must accept the invite BEFORE the owner of the submission (that's you!) hits Submit.
- After you've sent invitations to collaborate, you can click on the Invite Collaborators link again anytime to see the status of your invitations. In the row for each invitee who has not yet accepted their invitation, you will see a Pending indication. There will also be a trash can next to each person's name so that the Submission Owner can remove anyone that they no longer want to collaborate on the submission.

[Follow this link for additional information](#)

### General Applicant Information

#### Lead Organization Type: *(required)*

#### Lead Organization Tax Identification: *(required)*

This may be the organization's EIN or the individual's tax identification number.

## Step 2: BEAD Deployment Application Form

### 2025 BEAD Deployment Application Form

#### Instructions

Thank you for your interest in the Broadband Equity and Access Deployment (BEAD) program. Please follow these step-by-step instructions to complete your online application. Ensure that all required sections and documents are submitted before the application deadline. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

#### 1. Review the Solicitation Document

Carefully read the BEAD solicitation document before proceeding. It contains important information about eligibility, requirements, and evaluation criteria. Access the solicitation here: [BEAD Solicitation Document](#).

Please also reference the [BEAD Deployment Application Guide](#) for helpful tips as you work to complete your application.

#### 2. Complete the Application Sections

The application consists of multiple sections. Each section must be completed in full.

PSA applications will be completed through a separate form (linked below). Please submit a PSA Selection form for all PSAs you are interested in applying for.

#### 3. Upload Required Files

Several file uploads are required to complete your application. Please ensure all documents are properly labeled and uploaded to the corresponding sections, **using the naming convention identified under file uploads, where applicable.**

#### 4. Certifications and Assurances

Applicants must review, sign, and upload the following certifications:

- Certification of Compliance with BEAD Program Guidelines
- Certification of Financial Capability
- Certification of Non-Discrimination
- Any additional assurances as outlined in the solicitation document

#### 5. Save and Submit Your Application

You may return to your application at any time to make changes or complete additional sections. Be sure to save your work regularly to avoid losing any progress.

Once all sections are completed and documents uploaded:

1. Review your application to ensure accuracy and completeness.

# Submittable Overview

## Step 3: PSA Selection and Supporting Documents Form

Applicants must fill out one of these forms per PSA.

### PSA Selection and Supporting Documents

**1.2 Project Areas:** Identify which PSA you are interested in serving. Please use the following naming convention: **PSA #, Municipality Name** (required)

Limit: 300 characters

Example: PSA 1, Amherst

Applicants will fill out one form for each PSA they are interested in serving.

**Select the Municipality from the dropdown list:** (required)

Please also refer to the full list of BEAD Eligible BSLs here: [BEAD BSL Eligibility List](#)

**1.3 Letters of Municipal Support:** Confirm whether your organization has received an unconditional letter of support from the Municipality associated with the Project Application.

- Yes
- No, but will submit by March 10, 2025

**1.4 Tribal Engagement:** Does your proposed project cross Tribal Lands?

- Yes
- No

# Submittable Overview

## BEAD Qualification Form:

- General Applicant Information
- Financial Capability Certifications
- Audited Financial Statements
- Managerial Capability
- Project History
- Project Readiness
- Technical Capability
- Compliance with Applicable Law
- Operational Capability
- Ownership Information
- Public Funding
- EHP and BABA Compliance
- Labor Standards and Protections
- Cybersecurity and SCRM Compliance

*\*Applicants who have previously been pre-qualified by MBI will not have to complete this form again.*

Resource:

[BEAD Qualification Guidelines](#)

# Submittable Overview

## BEAD Deployment Application Form:

- Threshold Questions
  - Proposed BSL and CAI List
  - Network Design, Narrative, and Certifications
  - Timeline
  - BABA Requirements
  - EHP Requirements
  - Project Financials & Project Financials Workbook
  - Project Workforce
  - Fair Labor Laws and Standards
  - Compliance
  - Additional Certifications
- Scoring Questions
  - Minimal BEAD Program Outlay
  - Matching Funds
  - Affordability
  - Fair Labor Practices
  - Speed to Deployment
  - Low-Cost Plans
  - Serving MDUs at the Enterprise Level

## Resource:

### [BEAD Application Guide](#)

*Please pay close attention to all naming convention guidance and use templates provided.*



# Submittable Overview

## PSA Selection and Supporting Documents Form:

- Project Service Area Selection
- Letters of Municipal Support
  - MBI has extended the deadline to submit to March 10, 2025.  
There will be an additional form you can access in your account to submit after February 28.
- Tribal Engagement
- Project Data
- Minimal Program Outlay (Project Budget)
- Project Budget Table

## Resources:

[BEAD Application Guide](#)

[BEAD BSL Eligibility List](#)

[BEAD CAI List](#)

# Submittable Overview

## Additional Resources:

- For technical issues with the Submittable platform, visit [Submittable Support](#)
- For program specific questions please email [proposals@masstech.org](mailto:proposals@masstech.org) with the subject line “2025-MBI-06 BEAD Deployment Application Question”
  - MBI will post Questions and Answers by February 14, 2025
- All guidance documents, templates, and supporting documents can be located on the [BEAD Solicitation page](#)
  - Slides and a recording of this meeting will also be posted



04

# Questions and Answers Session



**MA BEAD**  
**Broadband Equity**  
**Access & Deployment**

# Thank You

Please email  
[broadband@masstech.org](mailto:broadband@masstech.org) with  
any additional questions

