Public Computer Centers

Overview of This Session

- What is a public computer center?
- Eligibility factors for this category
- What is included in your application & how it will be evaluated
  - Executive Summary
  - Project Purpose
  - Project Benefits
  - Project Viability
  - Budget and Sustainability
- Multi-purpose applications
- Q & A

What is a Public Computer Center?

- Open to the public or a specific sub-set (such as children, unemployed, seniors)

- Provides broadband access as defined in NOFA (at the workstation level)

- Offers education, support, and training relevant to community/constituency needs and interests

BTOP Statutory Purposes

- Provide broadband access to consumers residing in unserved areas
- Provide improved broadband access to consumers residing in underserved areas
- Provide broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment, and support to
  - Schools, libraries, medical and healthcare providers, community colleges and other institutions of higher education, and other community support organizations
  - Organizations … that provide outreach, access, equipment and support services to facilitate greater use of broadband service by low-income, unemployed, aged, and otherwise vulnerable populations; and
  - Job-creating strategic facilities
- Improve access to and use of broadband by public safety agencies
- Stimulate demand for broadband

Review of Eligibility Factors

- Advances at least one of the BTOP statutory purposes
- Fully complete application
- Project "substantially completed" within two years
- Technically feasible
- Budget reasonable and all costs eligible
- 20 percent match provided or waiver applied for

Executive Summary

- A concise overview of your project

- Prepare this last!

- Do not include information not provided elsewhere in the application

Project Purpose – 30%

- Make your case –
  - why the problem you are addressing is important
  - how your solution is appropriate and effective, and
  - whether your project is combined with or leverages other BIP/BTOP or Recovery Act programs
- Clearly describe the outcomes you expect to achieve, in measurable terms

Working with Other Recovery Act Programs

- Examples of Recovery Act programs are found in the grant Guidelines

- For more information, go to www.recovery.gov, and click on the links under "State, Local, Tribal and Territorial Information"

- Has an interactive map of the U.S. where you can quickly find relevant information

Enhanced services for
health care delivery, education and children

- If your project includes aspects that involve any of these, describe how it will enhance services
  - Example 1: You will offer workshops at your center about how to find and use reliable health information on the Internet
  - Example 2: You will make GED software available via your workstations and support people who are earning a high school degree

Small and disadvantaged business involvement

- If the applicant is a small and disadvantaged business, or partners with small and disadvantaged businesses (as defined in Section 8(a) of the Small Business Act, 15 USC 637), the proposal will score more highly

Working with Community Anchor Institutions/Partnering

- Successful projects require community support and buy-in

- Community anchor institutions (schools, libraries, health care facilities, higher education institutions, etc.) are essential links in the chain of community support

- Talk with the institutions in your community to explore how they can be involved in your public computer centers project and what they might gain from participating

- Find out if they are involved in other Recovery Act programs that you can leverage as part of your project

Multi-purpose Projects

- Complete an application for EACH project you intend to do, with separate budgets and responses

- Use the Project Purpose section to explain how the different elements reinforce each other - but emphasize the purpose of the Category in which you're applying

- If partners are participating in more than one of your projects, you don't need to obtain separate letters for each application
  - But their letters should reference all of the applications they are involved in

Project Benefits – 25%

- Key evaluation factors:
  - Availability to the public, including hours of operation and workstations available
  - Training and education programs offered
  - Staff qualifications
- This section will look at both quantitative and qualitative information – the value of the programs you offer as well as the number of programs, for example
- Outreach is a critical component

Project Viability – 25%

- Technical feasibility –
  - Describe your technology plan, including network configuration and end-user devices (computers, handhelds)
  - Describe how you will approach system security, reliability, and appropriate use of your facilities
  - Describe what makes your systems user-friendly

Project Viability – 25% (continued)

- Organizational capability
  - Send only relevant resumes or biographies
  - Be specific about your organizational experience
  - Project start-up frequently takes longer than anticipated – build some extra room in your timeline for this
  - Community involvement in the project (partnerships are key)
- Ability to start promptly and complete within the Recovery Act timeframe – scale your project appropriately

Project Budget & Sustainability – 20%

- Important budget concepts:
  - Eligible and ineligible costs
  - Clarity of budget presentation and narrative
  - Standards for evaluation: allowable, reasonable, necessary, and allocable
- Sustainability is evaluated based on *both* the sustainability of the project beyond the grant period *and* the leveraging of matching or other funds

What is Eligible?

- "Acquiring broadband-related equipment, instrumentation, networking capability, hardware and software, and digital network technology for broadband services;

- "Developing and providing training, education, support and awareness programs or web-based resources;

- "Facilitating access to broadband services, including, but not limited to, making public computer centers accessible to the disabled…"

- And other such projects and activities as the Assistant Secretary finds to be consistent with program purposes

What is NOT eligible?

- "BTOP grant funds may not be used to fund purchases that are not used predominantly for the provision of broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment and support."

- Plus, under Recovery Act: swimming pools, golf courses, casinos, zoos, or aquariums

- Construction costs, unless you are applying for funding specifically for construction.

Clarity of Budget Presentation

- Your job is to make it easy for reviewers and NTIA staff to understand what you are asking the government to fund and what you are providing as matching costs.

- Provide as detailed a cost breakdown as necessary to understand your budget.

- Tie your budget narrative closely to your presentation of the budget on the SF 424A and any supporting documents.

- Explain the sources and nature of your matching funds (whether in cash or in kind) and how they will be spent, following the line items in the SF 424A/C.

How Your Budget Will Be Evaluated

- Costs must be:
  - *Reasonable* – for the goods and services provided, consistent with local norms
  - *Necessary* - sufficient to carry out the project and directly related to its success
  - *Allocable* – clearly tied to an eligible activity
  - *Appropriate* to the scope of the proposed project – neither too large nor too small

Matching Funds

- Match can be in kind (i.e. contributed goods or services) or in cash
- Cash matches are scored more favorably
- Costs that would not be eligible for federal funding as part of the project are NOT eligible as matching funds
- Grantees must document all matching funds and report them as part of regular financial reporting

Questions?