

Broadband Stimulus Grants and Loans Opportunities

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Background

- Currently monitor broadband stimulus grant and loan funding for clients of Strain Slattery Barkley & Co., CPAs, P.C.
- Spent most of 2008 working on the Mike Johanns for U.S. Senate campaign
- Almost 4 years on Capitol Hill working for the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives

Presentation Agenda

- Overview of the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) and Rural Utilities Service (RUS) grants and loans criteria
- How to apply for grants and loans
- Assistance with an application packet
- Questions?

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)

- Economic stimulus bill signed into law by President Obama on February 17, 2009
- ARRA designates \$7.2 billion for grants and loans
- \$4.7 billion for grants through the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) which, in consultation with the FCC, establishes the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)
- \$2.5 billion for grants, loans, and loan guarantees through the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS)

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) continued...

- Money distributed in 3 phases until all funds are exhausted at the end of September 2010
 1. Mid – late June 2009
 2. October - December 2009
 3. May - June 2010

- May apply during all 3 phases if denied approval

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) continued...

- Series of “town hall” meetings were held in March
- Public comments were filed with the Federal Register seeking comment on undefined terms
 - 1. Unserved areas
 - 2. Underserved area
 - 3. Broadband
- Currently waiting for the Notice of Funds Available (NOFA) and solicitation of applications to be filed
- NTIA and RUS want one application for both agencies

Grant Review Criteria

- Most likely a 100 point scale
- Based on past criteria
 - Rurality of the project, economic need, and estimated benefits
- Unserved and underserved area (possible 40 points)
- Speed (possible 10-20 points)
- Project cost (10-15 points)
- Job creation (5 points)
- Timeliness (5 points)
- Customer pricing (5-10 points)
- Sustainability (5 points)
- Others?

Possible Strings Attached

- Pay for Performance Act of 2009
 - Allows Secretary of the Treasury to set the salary of an employee of any company that receives TARP funding (passed House, on Senate Calendar)
 - currently have not heard of any proposal where this oversight has been discussed for BTOP or RUS
- Open networks for projects constructed with stimulus money
- Must be net neutral

Government Oversight

- Quarterly reports made public on entity's use of assistance and progress
- Accounting/audits
- Lobbying disclosure activity
- Projects must be completed within two years of award funding date

Next Steps

- Review of April 13th comments
 - companies hoping that definitions will be released early
 - unserved, underserved, broadband, rural, public interest
- Notice of Funds Available (NOFA) in Federal Register
 - released simultaneously
- Allocation of grants vs. loans

Next Steps continued...

- Shovel ready projects are key
 - want money to go out the door (50% in first wave)
- Over 10,000 applications expected to be received
- It is recommended that you start compiling information and register for www.grants.gov as soon as possible if you have a project in mind
 - registration is free and no commitment
- Grant proposal ready

How to Apply for a Grant or Loan

- DUNS #
- Central Contractor Registration (CCR)
www.ccr.gov
 - processing time can take up to two weeks
- www.grants.gov
- Download appropriate software from website
- Find grant packet info on grants.gov website
- Submit grant proposal

Grant Proposal Outline

- Cover letter
- Executive Summary (1 page)
- Statement of Need (2 pages)
- Project Description (3 pages)
- Budget/Financial Data (1 page)
- Organization Information (1 page)
- Conclusion (2-3 paragraphs)
- Attachments (optional, but recommended)

Grant Proposal Outline Continued...

I. Cover Page

II. Proposal

A. Executive Summary (1 Page)

1. Problem
2. Solution / Project Necessity
3. Funding and future funding requirements
4. Organizational introduction and overview
 - a. Qualifications

Grant Proposal Outline Continued...

B. Statement of Need (2 Pages)

1. Why this project is necessary
 - a. Specific and accurate
 - b. Job creation
2. Who will it benefit? -unserved/underserved
3. Why your program addresses the need better than others
4. Demonstrate proposal would not have been implemented during grant period without a grant

Ex: people in area need to work from home, tele-health, etc.

Ex: increase total number of broadband users to X amount in X area

Ex: increase broadband speeds to users

Grant Proposal Outline Continued...

C. Project Description (3 Pages)

1. Objective
2. Methods
3. Staffing/Administration
4. Evaluation
5. Sustainability
6. Timeline – goal and completion dates
7. Anticipated Outcome

Grant Proposal Outline Continued...

D. Budget (1 Page)

1. Summary
2. Financial description plus explanatory notes
3. Staff - current and new hires
 - people needed, job titles, job descriptions
4. Overhead - facilities, equipment, travel, utilities, office supplies, training
5. Future funding - projections for operating and maintaining equipment/facilities and staff
6. Cost table

Grant Proposal Outline Continued...

E. Organization Information (1 Page)

1. History and governing structure of the company
2. Primary activities, audience, and services
3. Credentials
4. Financial statement from last year
5. Current fiscal budget and possibly next year's budget

F. Conclusion (2-3 Paragraphs)

1. Summary of proposal main points

Grant Proposal Outline Continued...

III. Attachments (optional, but recommended)

A. Letters of support from community leaders

1. Mayors
2. State Senators
3. Schools
4. Organizations
5. Other key benefactors

B. Maps

C. Statistical Data

Additional Information

- www.ntia.doc.gov/broadband
- www.usda.gov/rus
- www.recovery.gov
- www.fcc.gov/recovery/broadband
- www.grants.gov
- www.ccr.gov
- www.ssbcpas.com

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QUESTIONS ???