SLIGP State and Local Implementation Grant Program

U.S. Department of Commerce | National Telecommunications and Information Administration | 1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W. | Washington, D.C. 20230 | ntia.doc.gov

SLIGP 2.0 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Updated May 7, 2018

1. Why did NTIA establish SLIGP 2.0?

The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (Act) directs the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to establish a grant program (SLIGP) to assist State, regional, tribal, and local jurisdictions with identifying, planning, and implementing the most efficient and effective means to use and integrate the infrastructure, equipment, and other architecture associated with the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) to satisfy the wireless broadband and data services needs of their jurisdictions. The purpose of SLIGP 2.0 grant program is to provide continued support to States and territories as they further plan for NPSBN deployment and public safety user adoption in the post-State Plan period.

2. How is SLIGP 2.0 different from the original SLIGP grant awards?

The purpose of SLIGP 2.0 is to provide continued support to States and territories as they coordinate with FirstNet and plan for NPSBN deployment in the post-State Plan period after original SLIGP grants are due to expire by February 2018. Original SLIGP recipients should note that allowable and unallowable activities and costs under SLIGP 2.0 differ from the list of program priority areas and allowable and unallowable activities and costs under original SLIGP grants. SLIGP 2.0 recipients have the discretion to choose among the allowable activities laid out in Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), as it is not mandatory to perform all of the activities.

Additionally, funding allocations for SLIGP 2.0 differ from those used to award original SLIGP grants. NTIA has divided recipients into three funding "tiers" using the State or territory's population as recorded in the 2010 census.

3. Who is eligible to apply for a SLIGP 2.0 grant?

Any State, territory, or the District of Columbia is eligible for a grant under the SLIGP 2.0. A designated State or territory-level agency is eligible to apply for the SLIGP 2.0. Please note the applicant agency for the SLIGP 2.0 does not necessarily need to be the same agency as the original SLIGP recipient.

The SLIGP 2.0 NOFO is the official competition document. Nothing in this document or other supplemental materials is intended to conflict with or supersede the NOFO in any way. Any perceived conflict must be resolved by reference to the NOFO.

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4. *How do I apply?*

States and territories should submit applications via Grants.gov. Please refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (Solicitation #: 2018-NTIA-SLIGP-2) for further details, which can be found at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=297692.

5. *Who is the State designated point of contact?*

The Act mandates that each Governor designate a single officer or governmental body to serve as the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for FirstNet. To find out who the SPOC under the current SLIGP funding is for your State visit the SLIGP award page for your State or territory. SLIGP 2.0 applicants may designate the original SLIGP single officer or governing body to serve as SPOC, or they may select a different individual or entity if they desire.

6. *How are localities and tribes able to access the funds necessary to ensure their needs are addressed?*

Localities and tribes are encouraged to work collaboratively with their respective States and territories to ensure they are part of the overall process of planning and implementing the nationwide public safety broadband network.

7. *How long is the grant period?*

The period of performance for SLIGP 2.0 awards is two (2) years.

8. *How much grant funding am I eligible to receive?*

NTIA has divided recipients into three funding "tiers" using the State or territory's population as recorded in the 2010 census. When an application for a multi-year award is approved, funding will be provided for only the first period of the project. If a project is selected for funding, NTIA has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award. Continued funding will be contingent upon the availability of funds.

The first tier of recipients will be eligible to receive up to $425,000 in Increment 1 and a maximum of $775,000 in Increment 2. The second tier of recipients will be eligible to receive up to $250,000 in Increment 1 and a maximum of $450,000 in Increment 2. The third tier of recipients will be eligible to receive up to $200,000 in Increment 1 and a maximum of $350,000 in Increment 2. Please refer to Section B. Federal Award Information of the NOFO to determine your State or territory's tier.

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Tier	1st Increment Federal Share (9 months)*	2nd Increment Federal Share Ceiling (15 months)	Total Federal Share
Tier 1 Applicants	$425,000	$775,000	$1,200,000
Tier 2 Applicants	$250,000	$450,000	$700,000
Tier 3 Applicants	$200,000	$350,000	$550,000

9. What does "multi-year funding" mean?

NTIA will utilize a multi-year funding mechanism for SLIGP 2.0 awards and will only fund the first nine months of the period of performance during initial awards. See the table under FAQ #8 for the ceiling amount of each funding tier. Increment 2 funding is contingent upon the availability of funds and will be awarded at NTIA's discretion.

10. What activities must SLIGP 2.0 grant recipients complete by the end of the grant period?

As described in the NOFO, there are no mandatory grant activities aside from the designation of a single officer or governing body to serve as the SPOC. SLIGP 2.0 will have different allowable activities and costs than the original SLIGP, based on the State's opt-in or opt-out status. Allowable activities for opt-in States include:

- Single officer (or governmental body) and staff to, at a minimum, provide for ongoing coordination with NTIA and implementation of grant funds.
- Existing governance body to provide input to the single officer and to contribute towards planning activities to further identify potential public safety users of the NPSBN and prepare for data sharing.
- Data collection in specific areas identified to be helpful as requested by FirstNet.
- Development of policies and agreements to increase sharing of data between existing public safety systems across various agencies within the State or territory using the NPSBN.
- Individuals, such as the single officer and governing body members, to perform planning activities to help FirstNet and its partner further identify potential public safety users of the NPSBN.
- Planning efforts to help FirstNet gain inclusion on applicable statewide contract vehicles.
- Planning activities to prepare for emergency communications technology transitions.

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- Activities to identify and plan for the transition of public safety applications, software, and databases.
- Identifying and documenting on-going coverage needs/gaps within the State.
- Activities to convene stakeholder outreach events to continue planning for NPSBN implementation, as requested by FirstNet.

Please see the NOFO for allowable activities for any State or territory that chooses to officially opt-out of FirstNet's plan to deploy and operate a RAN in their State.

11. What are allowable costs?

Allowable costs are those costs described in and consistent with the principles identified in the Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR Part 200, subpart E and in the grant program's authorizing legislation as detailed in the NOFO. Allowable costs must be reasonable, allocable, necessary to the project, and conform to generally accepted accounting principles.

Allowable costs for States and territories who have opted-in may include categories such as: (1) personnel costs; (2) travel costs associated with stakeholder attendance at governance body meetings, FirstNet meetings, data collection, or other allowable program activities; (3) supply costs necessary for implementation, management, and performance of the award and program activities; (4) contractual costs associated with carrying out programmatic activities of the SLIGP 2.0 grant; (5) other miscellaneous costs associated with implementing the SLIGP 2.0, including but not limited to donated stakeholder time at governance meetings, meeting or office space; (6) administrative services costs, equipment costs, supplies, legal costs associated with managing the grant award; and (7) indirect costs associated with managing and implementing the SLIGP 2.0 program.

Please see the NOFO for allowable costs for any State or territory that chooses to officially opt-out of FirstNet's plan to deploy and operate a RAN in their State.

12. What are ineligible costs?

Funds awarded under the SLIGP 2.0 may not be used for the following activities or costs:

- Education of the FirstNet and partner network solution, marketing of service, user subscription activities that would fall under FirstNet's partner's contractual obligations as publicly described by FirstNet or its partner.

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- Any FirstNet or FirstNet Partner fees including user fees and acquisition costs related to FirstNet service or devices.
- Further data collection other than those data collection activities that are specifically allowable.
- User adoption activities, including, but not limited to, the subscription of users.
- Deploying and operating demonstration networks, even for outreach purposes.
- Radio Access Network (RAN) design, engineering and architecture; constructing, operating, maintenance, and improvement costs for a RAN.

Please see the NOFO for ineligible costs for any State or territory that chooses to officially opt-out of FirstNet's plan to deploy and operate a RAN in their State.

SLIGP 2.0 recipients may suggest additional activities as part of their program that are subject to NTIA approval, as recipients must receive permission from NTIA to perform any activities not listed as allowable under the NOFO.

13. How will FirstNet request outreach and data collection activities?

Requests for outreach and data collection activities will come in writing or email from the FirstNet Chief Customer Office. FirstNet anticipates making requests for broad categories of outreach events and data collection from all grantees and may request outreach and data from some grantees on an ad hoc basis throughout the grant period. If you have questions about potential activities FirstNet may request, please contact your FirstNet regional lead.

As a reminder, SLIGP 2.0 grantees may never conduct education of the FirstNet and partner network solution, marketing or user subscription, and any convening of stakeholders for the purpose of outreach must be requested by FirstNet for opt-in states.

14. Is drive testing an allowable activity?

Drive testing is allowable under the following conditions:

- Recipients must have a documented and reasonable basis for drive testing
- Coverage gaps can be identified by purchasing wireless coverage data analytics from independent private sector firms
- Recipients may contract for public or private crowdsourcing to identify coverage gaps

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- After gaps are identified, grantees may perform or contract for drive testing in those areas to better understand gaps (allowable budget categories may be a factor in deciding who is best suited to perform drive testing)
- May only perform drive testing for areas where NPSBN coverage is projected within an Initial Operating Capability period that has already occurred for your State

15. What travel does NTIA anticipate being allowable?

NTIA does not have information on the potential travel requests in terms of FirstNet-sponsored meetings during the grant period. However, out of state travel to events such as National Broadband conferences would be an allowable expense if the attendee participates in NPSBN-planning focused activities and sessions.

16. What is the minimum non-federal matching share?

Under the Act, the federal share of the cost of any activity carried out under the grant program may not exceed 80 percent of the eligible cost of carrying out grant activities. Thus, NTIA expects that SLIGP grant recipients will provide at least <u>20 percent</u> non-federal matching funds toward the total eligible project cost. Please note that the requirement is 20 percent of the total project costs, not 20 percent of the federal share awarded. Recipients may use indirect costs and allowable in-kind costs to help achieve the 20 percent matching requirement.

NTIA waives the requirement for local matching funds under $200,000 (including in-kind contributions) for the territorial governments of Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All other applicants will need to meet the 20 percent matching requirement, unless an applicant petitions the Assistant Secretary for a waiver of the matching requirement and a full or partial waiver is granted.

17. What are examples of allowable match activities?

An applicant may choose which grant activities to execute that will contribute to the matching requirement. Some examples include: in-kind State personnel salary and fringe benefit costs to perform the grant-funded project activities; overhead and indirect costs associated with managing the grant award; volunteer stakeholder time associated with convening meetings and data collection requested by FirstNet; donated space for convening meetings requested by FirstNet; donated volunteer time for allowable governance activities; and other activities associated with completing allowable activities.

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18. Can I use 1.0 funds to prepare my 2.0 application?

You may not charge the SLIGP 1.0 grant program for time spent preparing your SLIGP 2.0 grant application. However, you may build pre-award expenses into your budget and receive reimbursement from your SLIGP 2.0 award for allowable activities and costs incurred during the period of when the NOFO opened on grants.gov through the SLIGP 2.0 award start date.

19. Who can I contact at NTIA if I have questions?

Grantees with questions may contact the general SLIGP inbox at **sligp2@ntia.doc.gov**.

20. What is the scope for the "Planning activities to prepare for emergency communications technology transitions" allowable activity?

NTIA further clarifies the activities and scope of "Planning activities to prepare for emergency communications technology transitions" as noted below.

Grantees may develop transition plans to enable public safety entities to more fully understand the considerations and requirements needed to plan for the transfer from currently used mission-critical emergency communications technology (e.g., push-to-talk communications) in order to integrate and use the NPSBN for mission critical emergency communications. In addition, long term planning activities to support the eventual transition to primary use of the NPSBN for mission-critical emergency communications is allowable. Examples of allowable activities include:

a) developing planning assessments of currently used mission-critical systems that may require modification to obtain interoperability with the NPSBN;

b) gathering information, conducting surveys, or assembling stakeholders to better understand the current state of mission-critical users, systems, and organizational factors associated with transitioning from current mission-critical technologies to the NPSBN; and

c) developing guides, checklists, and tools to assist public safety entities with using the NPSBN for mission-critical emergency communications.

Since SLIGP 2.0 is exclusively a planning grant; ineligible costs include development of technical specifications and operational plans to implement the integration and/or transition from currently used mission critical emergency communications to the NPSBN.