

Digital Equity Act at a Glance



The third grant program funded by the Digital Equity Act of 2021 is the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program. The information below can guide organizations as they [Get Ready](#) to prepare their applications.

Understanding the DE Competitive Grant Program: What You Need to Know

The Digital Equity Act programs focus on empowering those most impacted by the digital divide, referred to as “Covered Populations.” The Covered Populations are:

(1) Individuals who live in Covered Households (defined as households with income from the most recently completed year of not more than 150% of the poverty level); (2) Aging individuals; (3) Incarcerated individuals, other than individuals who are incarcerated in a Federal correctional facility; (4) Veterans; (5) Individuals with disabilities; (6) Individuals with a language barrier, including English learners and those with low levels of literacy; (7) Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and (8) Individuals who primarily reside in a rural area. [47 USC 1721\(8\)](#)

Who Can Apply?

As long as applicants are not, or have not, served as the administering entity for a State under the Planning Grant Program or Capacity Grant Program, the following types of groups are eligible to apply:

- A political subdivision, agency or instrumentality of a State;
- An Indian Tribe, an Alaska Native entity, or a Native Hawaiian organization;
- A foundation, corporation, institute or association that is a not-for-profit entity, and is not a school;
- A community anchor institution;
- A local education agency;
- An entity that carries out workforce development programs; or
- A partnership between any of the entities described above.

[47 U.S.C. 1724\(b\)](#)

How Can the Grant be Used?

The grant's purpose is to create the conditions where individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in the society and economy of the United States. **Allowable uses of grant awards include:**

- Developing and implementing digital inclusion activities that benefit Covered Populations.
- Facilitating the adoption of broadband by Covered Populations.
- Implementing training programs for Covered Populations.
- Making available equipment or technology for broadband services to Covered Populations.
- Constructing, upgrading, extending, or operating new or existing public access computing centers for Covered Populations.

[47 U.S.C. 1724\(d\)\(2\)\(A\)](#)

What is the Match?

Awards granted through the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program **may not exceed 90 percent** of the total project cost, unless a waiver is granted by the Assistant Secretary.

[47 U.S.C. 1724\(d\)\(2\)\(C\)](#)

What is the Period of Performance?

Recipients will have **four years** from the date of the award to expend the grant.

One additional year will be given to Grant recipients to continue measuring and evaluating the activities supported.

[47 U.S.C. 1724\(d\)\(2\)\(D\)](#)

To learn more about the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program, see the [Digital Equity Act of 2021](#).