

## **Application Evaluation and Scoring Process – Oklahoma Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program (OBIG)**

### **Introduction to Scoring and Award Process**

The Oklahoma Broadband Office (OBO) will prioritize broadband infrastructure projects that deliver the greatest public benefit relative to cost. To evaluate the applications to the OBIG Program for the greatest public net benefits, OBIG administrative rules and Treasury Guidance specify certain priorities that the OBO must consider.

To fulfill this requirement of reviewing applications in an objective and fair manner, applications will be reviewed and evaluated by the OBO using the following criteria and point values to systematically score and award grants. These criteria reflect information provided in the grant application. To ensure that an application receives the best possible score, it should include complete and comprehensive responses to all information requested.

Applications will be evaluated in a two-step process. In **Step 1**, the OBO will evaluate applications against a minimum set of Pass/Fail requirements. An application is disqualified if it fails one or more of the requirements outlined in Step 1. If an application meets the minimum requirements in Step 1, it is then evaluated and scored through a multi-criterion driven process in **Step 2**. All applications are scored on a 100-point scale.

### **Step 1: Application Requirement Review**

<b>Application Requirement</b>	<b>P/F</b>
Applicant provides fabric ID and addresses of locations currently unserved and underserved in the project service area	
Applicant provides evidence that communities identified to be served have a critical need for the project as is related to access, affordability, reliability, and/or consistency	
Applicant certifies that the project is designed to deliver, upon completion, service that reliably meets or exceeds symmetrical download and upload speeds of 100 Mbps (or 100/20 scalable with documented exceptions)	
Applicant commits to provide at least one low-cost option (not ACP) providing at least 100/20 Mbps or greater sufficient for households with multiple users to simultaneously telework and engage in remote learning	

Applicant certifies participation in FCC’s Affordable Connectivity Program committed to participating in the FCC Affordable Connectivity Program	
Applicant certifies that it shall comply, as applicable, with all federal labor and construction standard requirements as required by the Department of Treasury	
Project must be completed no later than 12/31/2026	
Applicant submits all other applicable documentation	

**Step 2: Competitive Criteria Evaluation**

The table below outlines the total point distribution among the seven selection criteria categories.

<b>Section Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>
Number of Connections & Speed	25
Matching Request	20
Project Readiness	15
Project Sustainability	15
Community Support or Engagement	10
Economic Development & Community Impact	10
Broadband Adoption Assistance	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**1. Number of Broadband Connections & Speeds:** Up to 25 points possible

The proposed improvements in broadband speed and number of connections to be served by the project:

# of Connections	Speed Now:	<25/3	<25/3	<100/20	<100/20
	Speed After Build:	100/100	>100/100	100/100	>100/100
0 to 100	Points:	19	24	14	17
100+		20	25	15	18

**Scoring Notes:**

- **Speeds** are evaluated based on anticipated improvements in broadband speed offerings from pre-existing broadband service levels to proposed service levels
  - If the after build speed can only reliably meet 100/20 mbps and scalable to 100/100 mbps, the applicant must demonstrate the impracticality of meeting 100/100 mbps based on topography, geography, or excessive cost.
- **Connections** are evaluated based on the number of total locations potentially served
  - Total locations include households, businesses, farms, and community anchor institutions.

**2. Matching Fund Amount:** Up to 20 points possible

The percent of the total eligible project cost contributed by the applicant:

Percent of total eligible project cost contributed by the Applicant	Points
50% or greater	20
40 to 50%	15
30 to 40%	10
25 to 30%	5
Less than 25%	0

**Scoring Notes:**

- Applicant matching funds exceeding 25% of eligible projects costs will result in a higher score
- Any funding partner contributions are included in applicant matching funds for points

<sup>1</sup> Definitions for unserved and underserved based on Treasury Guidance: Unserved – lacking a wireline connection that reliably delivers 25/3 Mbps; Underserved – lacking a wireline connection that reliably delivers 100/20 Mbps.

**3. Project Readiness:** Up to 15 points possible

Applicant has demonstrated the organizational capacity to initiate, construct, and launch the project:

Scoring Definition	Points
Project is “shovel-ready,” and applicant can begin construction within 90-120 days following grant award	15
Project is “shovel-ready,” and applicant can begin construction within six to eight months following grant award	12
Project is not “shovel-ready,” but applicant provides sufficient evidence to demonstrate project can be completed prior to December 31, 2026	5
Project is not “shovel-ready,” and applicant provides no evidence to demonstrate project can be completed prior to December 31, 2026	0

**Scoring Notes:**

A project is “**shovel-ready**” if the applicant has concretely demonstrated a comprehensive knowledge for – and detailed preparation for – the proposed project.

- All budget material is provided in a detailed, yet clearly understandable manner, sources and uses of funds are realistic, all grant eligible elements are included, all funding partners are secured
- Other broadband infrastructure requirements are included – certified engineering design and diagrams, documentation of scalable equipment, and all preconstruction requirements (e.g., construction permits, rights-of-way, etc.) are identified and included in the project schedule
- Project implementation requirements are provided – proposed speed tiers and service pricing, 5-year service commitment, and proposed marketing strategies
- Complete project schedule and financial requirements are provided

**4. Project Sustainability:** Up to 15 points possible

Applicant has demonstrated strong internal capacity to effectively support and sustain its broadband infrastructure proposal:

Attribute	Scoring Definition	Points
Technical Expertise	Applicant has <b>strong technical expertise</b> in building and maintaining broadband networks	5
	Applicant has <b>sufficient technical expertise</b> in building and maintaining broadband networks	2.5
	Applicant has <b>limited technical expertise</b> in building and maintaining broadband networks	0
Organizational Support	Applicant has <b>strong organizational capabilities</b> (staff, experience, processes) necessary to successfully complete the project and provide on-going support	2
	Applicant has <b>sufficient organizational capabilities</b> (staff, experience, processes) necessary to successfully complete the project and provide on-going support	1
	Applicant has <b>limited organizational capabilities</b> (staff, experience, processes) necessary to successfully complete the project and provide on-going support	0
Financial Viability	Applicant provides <b>strong evidence</b> of financial viability	4
	Applicant provides <b>sufficient evidence</b> of financial viability	2
	Applicant provides <b>limited evidence</b> of financial viability	0
Scalability	Applicant <b>demonstrates potential for future scalability</b> beyond initial project goals	4
	Applicant <b>does not demonstrate potential for future scalability</b> beyond initial project goals	0

**Scoring Notes:**

An applicant must demonstrate project sustainability in four areas:

- **Technical expertise** – specific prior experience in providing broadband services.
  - **Strong Technical Expertise** is defined as leadership having a combined no less than 20 years of broadband infrastructure related experience.

- **Sufficient Technical Expertise** is defined as leadership having a combined no less than 10 years of broadband infrastructure related experience.
- **Limited Technical Expertise** is defined as leadership having a combined less than 9 years of broadband infrastructure related experience.
- **Organizational support**– how the organization will sustain broadband service delivery and maintenance
  - **Strong organization capabilities** is defined as the company building and operating broadband infrastructure for no less than 10 years.
  - **Sufficient organization capabilities** is defined as the company building and operating broadband infrastructure for no less than 5 years.
  - **Limited organization capabilities** is defined as the company building and operating broadband infrastructure for less than 5 years.

- **Financial viability**– most current audited financial statements and the most recent quarter’s financial statements
  - **Strong evidence of financial viability** is defined as having no prior audit finding within the last 3 audits
  - **Sufficient evidence of financial viability** is defined as having minor audit finding within the last 3 audits
  - **Limited evidence of financial viability** is defined as having no prior audits or having major audit deficient within the last 3 audits
- **Future scalability**– how the organizations will scale broadband service delivery beyond the scope of the proposed document
  - **Demonstrates potential for future scalability** is defined as the company offering broadband service speeds of greater than 100/100 mbps
  - **Does not demonstrate potential for future scalability** is defined as the company does not offer broadband service speeds of greater than 100/110 mbps

5. **Community Support or Engagement:** Up to 10 possible points

Applicant provides evidence of critical need and community support for the proposed project:

Attribute	Scoring Definition	Points
Community Support or Engagement	Applicant provides <b>strong evidence</b> of community support or engagement	5
	Applicant provides <b>sufficient evidence</b> of community support or engagement	2.5
	Applicant provides <b>limited evidence</b> of community support or engagement	0
Critical Need	Applicant provides <b>strong evidence</b> to explain why there is critical need for a proposed project.	5
	Applicant provides <b>sufficient evidence</b> to explain why there is critical need for a proposed project.	2.5
	Applicant provides <b>limited evidence</b> to explain why there is critical need for a proposed project.	0

**Scoring Notes:**

- **Community support:** Applicant's evidence of community support may take a variety of formats but should demonstrate how the impacted community has informed the design, implementation, and/or operation of the project. Applications should include a letter of commitment and/or local resolution or ordinance from the appropriate unit of government/tribal entity.
  - **Strong evidence of community support or engagement** is defined as no less than 5 letters of community support and having had conducted no fewer than 3 community support meetings
  - **Sufficient evidence of community support or engagement** is defined as no less than 3 letters of community support and having had conducted no fewer than 1 community support meeting
  - **Limited evidence of community support or engagement** is defined as no less than 3 letters of community support and having had conducted no community support meetings
- **Critical need:** Applicant provides evidence of critical need as it relates to access, affordability, and reliability
  - **Strong evidence of critical need** is defined as no less than 5 explained reasons as to what the need is for broadband connectivity
  - **Sufficient evidence of critical need** is defined as no less than 3 explained reasons as to what the need is for broadband connectivity
  - **Limited evidence of critical need** is defined as no less 1 explained reason as to what the need is for broadband connectivity



**6. Economic Development and Community Impact:** Up to 10 points possible

Applicant has demonstrated the economic development and community enhancement potential of the proposed project:

Scoring Definitions	Points
(1) Applicant <b>has demonstrated</b> the proposed project service area is economically distressed (2) Applicant <b>has identified</b> the number of households, businesses, farms, agricultural-use customers, other significant community institutions, and educational facilities which may benefit from improved broadband service (3) Applicant <b>has evaluated</b> potential economic, education, and health impacts of the proposed project	10
(1) Applicant <b>has demonstrated</b> the proposed project service area is economic distressed (2) Applicant <b>has identified</b> the number of households, businesses, farms, agricultural-use customers, other significant community institutions, and educational facilities which may benefit from improved broadband service (3) Applicant <b>has not evaluated</b> potential economic, education, and health impacts of the proposed project	5
(1) Applicant <b>has not</b> demonstrated the proposed project service area is economic distressed (2) Applicant <b>has not</b> identified the number of households, businesses, farms, agricultural-use customers, other significant community institutions, and educational facilities which may benefit from improved broadband service (3) Applicant <b>has not evaluated</b> potential economic, education, and health impacts of the proposed project	0

**Scoring Notes:**

- **Economically distressed:** Applicant has demonstrated that the proposed project area has unemployment, individual poverty, or population decline greater than the statewide average. Additional indicators may include Qualified Census Tracts, CDC’s Social Vulnerability Index, ACP eligibility data, etc.

- Applicant has identified the number of households, businesses, farms, agricultural-use customers, other significant community institutions, and educational facilities in the proposed project area which may benefit from improved broadband service
- For businesses, farms, and agricultural use customers, Applicant has identified how improved broadband speeds and coverage will enable the project area to become and/or remain competitively viable
- For significant community institutions, Applicant has identified how improved broadband deployment will be incorporated into specific community programs
- For project service areas including educational institutions, Applicant has identified the proposed impact on e-learning (defined as learning utilizing technologies to access educational curriculum outside of the classroom)
- For a project including health entities, Applicant has identified the proposed impact on telemedicine
- If the project service area is an economically distressed area, Applicant has demonstrated that the proposed project area has unemployment, individual poverty, or population decline greater than the statewide average

7. **Broadband Adoption Assistance**: Up to 5 points possible

Applicant has demonstrated the necessary broadband adoption strategies will be in place to assist the success of the overall proposed project:

Attribute	Scoring Definition	Points
Adoption Assistance	Applicant documents broadband adoption activities planned	2.5
	Applicant does not have any planned broadband adoption activities	0
Affordability	Applicant provides low-cost high-speed plan option less than or equal to \$30 (the minimum ACP subsidy)	2.5
	Applicant provides a low-cost high-speed option that covers more than 50% of the cost of a plan with a \$30 ACP subsidy	1.25
	Applicant has no plans to address affordability	0

	through proposed project beyond ACP participation	
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**Scoring Notes:**

- **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)** provides monthly broadband stipends (\$30 and \$75) to eligible households
- Broadband adoption activities may include providing prospective customers with digital literacy training and/or technical support required to successfully adopt and utilize broadband service
- Activities to address affordability may include conducting ACP outreach to increase benefit uptake and/or providing a low-cost high-speed option to ACP eligible household so that cost of the plan is fully covered by the subsidy