Ways for Stakeholders to get Involved: Local Governments

An overview of stakeholder roles and ways they can get involved in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Programs. National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) envisions and welcomes extensive coordination between States, Territories, local governments, community organizations, industries, women- and minority-owned Business Enterprises (WMBE), and citizens throughout the broadband program lifecycle including planning, grantee selection and implementation. The stakeholders bring specific expertise which is critical to the success of these programs.

Program	Funding	Description	Who Can Apply to BIL Programs?
Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD)	**$42.5B**	Aims to deploy broadband service to unserved and underserved locations, gigabit connections to community anchor institutions, and funding to pursue access-, adoption-, and equity-related uses.	**States** and **territories** are the *only* Eligible Entities for BEAD. A broad range of stakeholders entities **could potentially apply as to be a subgrantee** applicant to the State and Territory BEAD programs
State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program (DEA)*	**$2.75B**	Promotes digital equity through activities to build capacity related to the adoption of broadband across three different planning and implementation programs.	**States**, **territories**, and **tribal governments/tribes** are the *only* Eligible Entities for DEA. However, a broad range of stakeholders may be an "administering entity."
Middle Mile Grant (MMG)	**$1.00B**	Expand middle mile infrastructure, reducing the cost to serve unserved and underserved areas and increasing resilience of the internet backbone	MMG has the most grantees, which include:**State**, **territories**, **political subdivisions of states**, **tribal governments/tribes**, **private entities**, and **community-based organizations** and groups..

Stakeholder Roles in the BIL Grants Program

Stakeholders can perform a role of an *advocate*, a *collaborator*, *data and information provider* as well as a *subgrantee*, and are encouraged to engage with the Eligible Entities starting with the **planning process and extending all the way to the implementation** of the programs. For each program, Eligible Entities are **required to involve stakeholders** and **obtain public comments** to create successful applications. Local coordination and stakeholder engagement is **evaluated in every step of the application process**, and it will determine distribution of funds and approval of plans.

Local Coordination

Each Eligible Entity must develop a comprehensive **local coordination approach** that will begin in the development of the Five-Year Action Plan and continue at each stage of the application process all the way to awarding. Entities are required to **coordinate and document its coordination with all types of stakeholders**.

DEA/BEAD Collaboration

There is a lot of overlap between BEAD and DEA, so planning teams should be sure to work with **stakeholders from both programs** to reduce duplicating stakeholder work. Many elements can be incorporated into both application processes and will also strengthen each application (for example, emphasizing DEA elements in a BEAD application).

Forming Partnerships

Stakeholders are **encouraged to form partnerships** to submit applications. Especially because a wide variety of stakeholders are eligible to apply to MMG funding programs, collaborating on applications and forming partnerships with like-minded groups (State/local govts, ISPs/community groups) will strengthen applications.

* "Ways to get involved" will be expanded to include other Digital Equity programs after NTIA releases the future NOFO's

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Defined as local governments, unit of a local government, and related associations/representatives (e.g., municipal governments, regional planning agencies). NTIA emphasizes that localities and groups representing historically excluded communities can and must make their voices heard to ensure that longstanding equity gaps and advance digital equity.

Different Ways to Get Involved per Program

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD)

- ☐ Collaborate with Eligible Entities, as defined in the NOFO, in the **planning** process.

- ☐ Share current state and future needs of local broadband availability, infrastructure deployment challenges, and of any local regulations which may impact infrastructure deployment.

- ☐ Apply to be a **subgrantee,** if eligible, as defined in the BEAD NOFO. Localities can apply through the **Administering Entity Grants Office** and learn more using the program specific resources below. *Sub-grantees may use BEAD funds **to deploy network infrastructure***

- ☐ **Advocate** for vulnerable communities to ensure their specific needs are being accounted and addressed.

- ☐ Reach out to the **state broadband office** to get involved with the planning process and stay involved across the timeline. Find your state broadband office using the **SBLN resource** linked below.

State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program (DEA)

- ☐ Collaborate with Administering Entities in the **planning** process, as states *must* include local digital equity plans.

- ☐ Share **specialized local insights on adoption and affordability** into DEA plans, The NOFO highlights that it is **required** of states to include **local digital equity** plans.

- ☐ Apply to be a **subgrantee** soon**,** if eligible, as defined in the NOFO. Localities can apply through the **Eligible Entity Grants Office** and learn more using the program specific resources below. *Sub-grantees must use their funds to **assist in the development of the State Digital Equity Plan.***

- ☐ Reach out to the **state broadband office** to get involved with the planning process and stay involved. Find your state broadband office using the **SBLN resource**.

Middle Mile Grant

- ☐ **Collaborate** with Eligible Entities in the **planning** process.

- ☐ Most importantly, localities can **directly apply for the Middle Mile program**. Local governments can learn more on applying using the MM Program resource below.

- ☐ Applicants may use funds for: construction of telecommunications equipment, engineering, personnel costs, pre-application expenses, and other costs necessary to carrying out program activities.

- ☐ Explore **partnerships and collaboration opportunities with groups with shared visions/goals** on applications.

- ☐ Reach out to the **state broadband office** to learn more about MM and how it interacts with other programs. Find your state broadband office using the **SBLN resource**.

Resources

Information about all the programs, including the application process	Information about States and Territories Broadband Program and Points of Contact	Information about the BEAD program, including timeline	Information about the DEA program, including timeline	Information about the MM program, including timeline
Internetforall.gov	**State Broadband Leaders Network (SBLN)**	**BEAD Program**	**DEA Program**	**MM Program**