

Georgia Technology Authority (GTA)

Georgia Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Program Documents & Communications

- 1. Will Volume 1 and Volume 2 be released after changes are made?**
Yes. Updated versions will be posted on GTA’s website, including Volume 1 submissions, public comments, NTIA submissions, and approved versions.
- 2. Will GTA release the scoring rubric?**
Yes. GTA will release the scoring rubric.
- 3. Will the webinar be accessible?**
Yes. Webinars that are recorded are posted on GTA’s website under the Broadband BEAD section.
- 4. What is the contact information for the BEAD Program?**
GTA staff can be reached at Broadband@gta.gov and the RSM compliance team can be reached at GABEAD@rsmus.com

Grant Eligibility & Coverage Areas

- 5. If an area has been approved for funding under the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF), is it eligible for BEAD funding?**
No. Areas with RDOF-approved funding are ineligible for BEAD funding.
- 6. How will rural and underserved areas be affected when companies are running fiber?**
FCC maps identify unserved and underserved locations. Areas with enforceable funding commitments or active private buildouts may be excluded based on the state challenge process.
- 7. Will high-cost areas be on hold until Round 1 fiber infrastructure is completed?**
Round 1 data and grant agreements will inform subsequent rounds. All locations will have funding commitments before the final NTIA proposal.

Environmental & Historic Preservation (EHP) & Pre-award Cost

- 8. What does the environmental and historic preservation entail?**
Environmental and historic preservation for BEAD includes the execution of processes to ensure program and project activities are done in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA is considered an “umbrella law” as it provides a framework within which all other environmental, historic, and cultural resources laws can be evaluated. NEPA, as well as the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), requires federal agencies to “stop, look, and listen” before making decisions that impact historic properties and the human environment. This can include activities such as attesting to an understanding of requirements, provision of narratives and justifications, conducting of field surveys, GIS reviews, certifications, consultations with Federal and State agencies, and other activities.

9. Once permits and approvals have been issued, what types of design changes must be reported? Specifically, do all material design changes require reporting, or only those that affect an environmental area identified in the APPEIT tool?

Once a project is underway, any modification requires submission of a budget or scope adjustment requests.

10. What is a sensitive area?

Sensitive areas are identified in the APPEIT tool using 60+ risk layers, including historic properties, federally owned land, and environmentally protected zones.

11. If our project follows existing utility corridors, could the tool still flag new environmental requirements?

Yes, it is possible. Regulatory requirements may have changed since older utilities were installed. The tool will flag current environmental intersections; the permitting agency will decide whether new requirements apply.

12. On the limited permissible activities, pre-award application costs are listed. How are those defined?

Based on the guidelines outlined by the NTIA, GTA will allow limited permissible activities under NEPA to proceed using award funds prior to the completion of the EHP review process, including the following:

- Pre-construction planning, including collecting information necessary to complete environmental reviews;
- Applications for environmental permits;
- Studies including, but not limited to, Environmental Assessments (EA), wetland delineations, biological assessments, archaeological surveys, and other environmental reviews and analyses;
- Administrative costs;
- Pre-award application costs;
- Activities supporting consultations required under the NHPA, the Endangered Species Act, and the Clean Water Act; and/or
- Limited, preliminary procurement, including the purchase or lease of equipment, or entering into binding contracts to do so; the purchase of applicable or conditional insurance; and/or funds used to secure land or building leases (including right -of-way easements).

Subgrantees that undertake unauthorized project activities in contravention of this Section proceed at their own risk and may face de-obligation of funding. Furthermore, subgrantees that incur costs prior to execution of final award agreement proceed at their own risk and may face rejection if deemed unallowable.

Budget & Matching Funds

13. What are eligible sources of match?

Funds from other federal programs generally may not be used as matching funds. However, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act expressly provides that matching funds for the BEAD program may come from a federal regional commission or authority or from funds to the extent permitted by the law, that were provided to an Eligible Entity or a subgrantee for the purpose of deploying broadband service under:

- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020;
- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Secure (CARES) Act of 2020;
- The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 or;
- The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
- Loan funding issued through a federal agency such as through the USDA ReConnect Program, may be used as match funding.

14. How will match be tracked?

Match funds will be tracked alongside each milestone payment request.

Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSL) & Testing

15. Is the field survey representative of make-ready engineering?

Yes. Field surveys confirm construction readiness and may be documented through a completed report.

16. When will the requirement for field surveys be set?

Field survey completion requirements will be set after project GIS line work is finalized and EHP clash detection has been completed. Areas requiring field survey will be identified during 1:1 meetings and grantees will provide a field survey report outlining the methodology used for the visit, observations and findings identified, as well as planned avoidance / mitigations / best practices for the affected areas.

Vendor Management

17. Where can I find vendor forms?

Vendor forms are located under the “Vendor Payment Management” page of the State Accounting Office website.

[Vendor Payment Management | State Accounting Office](#)

18. If I already have a state vendor number, do I need to register again?

Yes, you are required to complete the Vendor Management forms for the BEAD program.