



Department of
**Economic &
Community Development**

Digital Adoption
Grant Programs

THE CONNECTED COMMUNITY FACILITIES GRANTS PROGRAM

Program Details and Application Process

September 28, 2023

The background is a dark blue gradient. On the left side, there are several large, dark blue, five-pointed stars arranged in a circular pattern. A faint, larger circular pattern is also visible behind the stars. The word "Welcome!" is centered in the middle of the image in a white, sans-serif font.

Welcome!

Agenda

- A. Program Overview
- B. Eligibility Requirements
- C. Application Information
- D. The Application Review Process
- E. Summary
- F. Next Steps



Tag your questions in the chat!
#CCFQuestion



The background features a dark blue gradient with several lighter blue stars of varying sizes and orientations. A large, faint circular pattern is also visible, centered on the left side of the image.

A. Program Overview

High-Level Details

Period of performance:

- All contracts with grantees must be in effect by June 30, 2024.
- Funds must be expended by December 31, 2026.

Total \$	Max/Grant	Match Information	Program Goal
\$30M	\$2M	Grant covers ≤80% of eligible expenses; 20% required match by grantee	To construct and improve digital access through the creation of buildings or rehabbing spaces

Funds Matching

Each grant will cover up to 80% of eligible project expenses, with a required 20% match by the grantee. Below is an example of funds matching on a monthly invoice.

Grant	Grantee Match	Total	Total to be reimbursed	Ratio/Breakdown	Monthly Invoice	TNECD Reimbursement
\$1M	\$400k	\$1.4M	\$1.4M	TNECD pays 80% Grantee pays 20%	\$100K	$\$100K \times 80\% = \$80k$

Note: Please note that providing an additional match will not result in a higher score. Additionally, if a recipient has an additional match, they will receive a lower percentage of reimbursement per invoice.

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B. Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Grant Applicants

The following entities may apply for the Connected Community Facilities Grant:

- Units of local governments in the State of Tennessee, such as counties and municipalities, including government entities like public libraries
- Organizations, such as community anchor institutions, applying in partnership with the local government



Eligible Communities

Per CPF and SLFRF guidelines, an **automatically eligible county** is a **county with a Median Family Income at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines** for a default household size of 3 (**\$65,880**).

Please note that counties with AMIs above \$65,880 are still eligible to apply if they show that they are serving a **target population** (next slide).

Priority Communities: Additionally, per Governor Bill Lee's Executive Order 1, if an applicant serves an **“at-risk”** or **“distressed”** county (defined by the Appalachian Regional Commission), they will score 5 additional points.



Eligible Communities

Automatically Eligible TN Counties (AMIs at or below \$65,880)

- Anderson, \$53,801
- Bedford, \$57,149
- **Benton***, \$43,803
- **Bledsoe***, \$52,876
- Blount, \$65,007
- Bradley, \$57,804
- **Campbell***, \$45,339
- Cannon, \$61,229
- **Carroll***, \$50,397
- **Carter***, \$43,150
- Chester, \$55,727
- **Claiborne***, \$43,602
- **Clay***, \$40,165
- **Cocke***, \$44,218
- Coffee, \$58,226
- Crockett, \$52,319
- Cumberland, \$52,859
- **Decatur***, \$48,669
- DeKalb, \$53,624
- Dickson, \$60,090
- Dyer, \$53,619
- **Fentress***, \$41,056
- Franklin, \$59,316
- Gibson, \$49,691
- Giles, \$56,200
- Grainger, \$49,953
- **Greene***, \$50,427
- **Grundy***, \$46,206
- Hamblen, \$49,915
- Hamilton, \$63,921
- **Hancock***, \$34,308
- **Hardeman***, \$45,257
- Hardin, \$50,011
- **Hawkins***, \$47,543
- **Haywood***, \$47,271
- Henderson, \$52,656
- Henry, \$49,627
- Hickman, \$50,411
- **Houston***, \$49,761
- Humphreys, \$51,513
- **Jackson***, \$38,863
- Jefferson, \$55,369
- **Johnson***, \$41,709
- **Lake***, \$45,236
- **Lauderdale***, \$46,945
- Lawrence, \$51,475
- **Lewis***, \$43,831
- Lincoln, \$57,843
- **Macon***, \$46,912
- Madison, \$53,408
- Marion, \$54,613
- Marshall, \$58,984
- McMinn, \$52,397
- **McNairy***, \$46,340
- **Meigs***, \$55,670,
- Monroe, \$50,955
- Montgomery, \$60,380
- Moore, \$65,200
- **Morgan***, \$47,829
- Obion, \$47,491
- Overton, \$48,906
- **Perry***, \$48,526
- **Pickett***, \$43,731

TN Counties Serving Eligible Target Populations (AMIs above \$65,880)

- Polk, \$49,638
- Putnam, \$52,840
- **Rhea***, \$52,194
- Roane, \$61,116
- **Scott***, \$40,709
- **Sequatchie***, \$55,151
- Sevier, \$60,153
- Shelby, \$58,770
- Smith, \$50,546
- Stewart, \$51,035
- Sullivan, \$55,638
- Trousdale, \$60,577
- **Unicoi***, \$45,793
- Union, \$50,701
- **Van Buren***, \$51,645
- **Warren***, \$49,259
- Washington, \$56,325
- **Wayne***, \$48,720
- Weakley, \$48,405
- White, \$48,064
- Cheatham, \$69,873
- Davidson, \$71,223
- Fayette, \$71,734
- Knox, \$66,183
- Loudon, \$66,000
- Maury, \$71,932
- Robertson, \$70,481
- Rutherford, \$74,070
- Sumner, \$75,648
- Tipton, \$69,548
- Williamson, \$124,055
- Wilson, \$88,695

Note: The Area Median Incomes reflected above for each county are based on the [2022 TN County Profiles](#) (household size unknown).

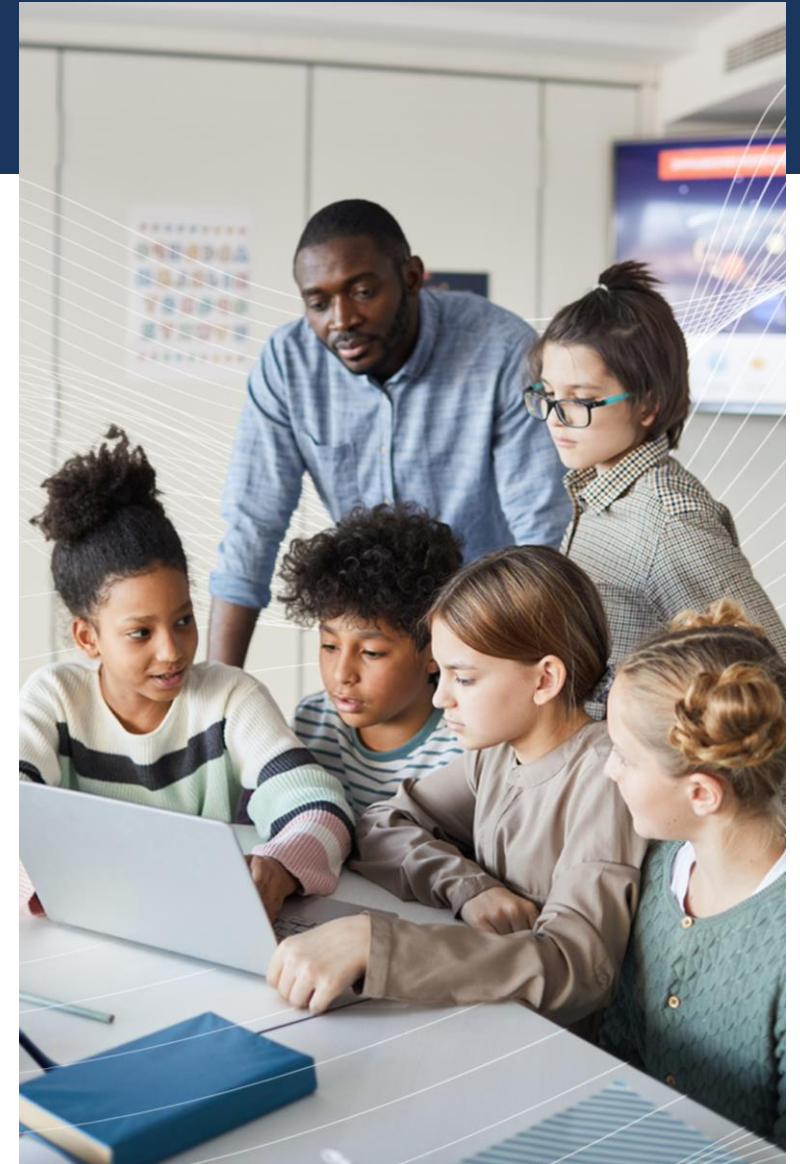
***Priority Communities:** These 35 counties are designated “at-risk” or “distressed” counties by the Appalachian Regional Commission in FY24 and will receive additional points in their scoring.

Target Population

Per SLFRF guidelines, the **target population** served directly by the grantee in a county with an AMI above \$65,880 must fall into **one** of the following 4 categories:

- **Households or populations at or below \$65,880 in annual income** (300% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for a default household size of 3, per 2022 US Treasury-provided estimates)
OR
- **Households that experienced unemployment or *increased* food or housing insecurity**
OR
- **Households that qualify for these programs:** Children's Health Insurance Program, Childcare Subsidies through the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Program, or Medicaid
OR
- **Households or populations residing in Qualified Census Tracts**

If none of these categories apply to the project, the applicant will be responsible for verifying that the individual end users of the proposed project satisfy the state and federal guidance through eligibility verification.



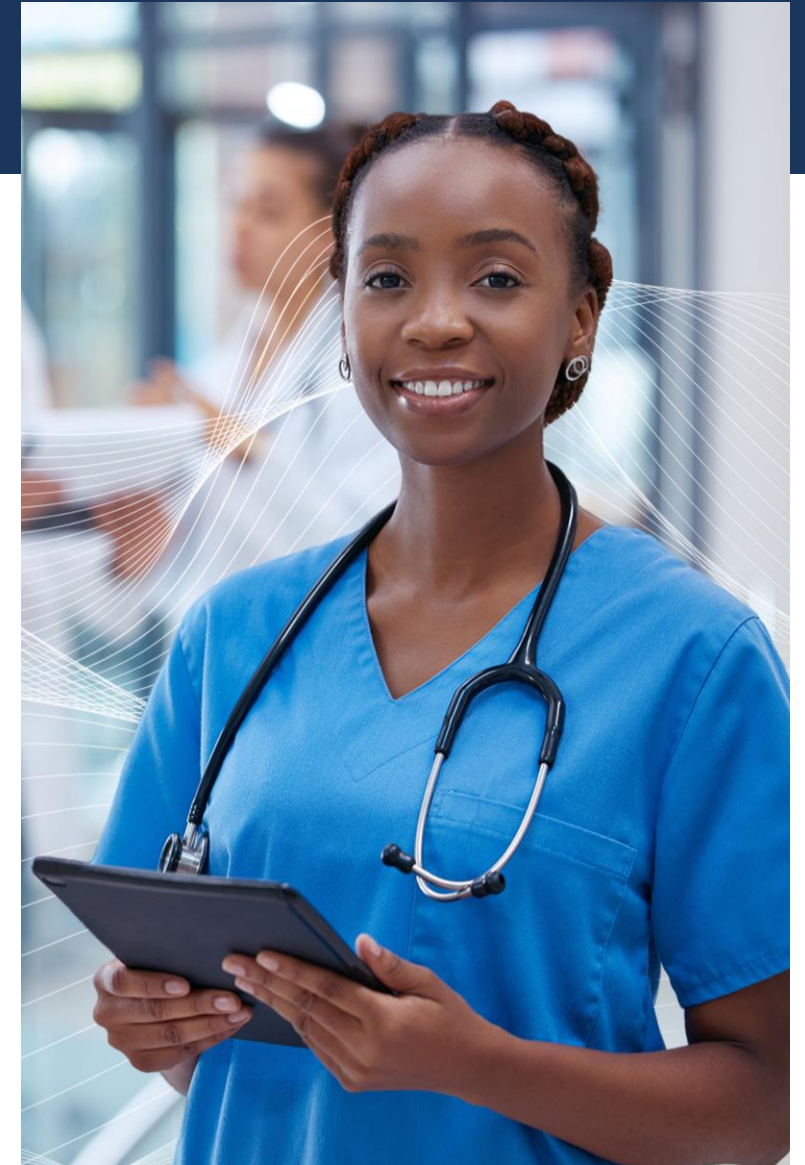
Use of Project Funds

Eligible uses

Grant funding can only be used to pay for necessary construction, acquisition, and improvement to build new community facilities or rehabilitate existing ones to provide services and broadband access within one building. Costs that appear excessive and/or without justification and costs not considered eligible will not be reimbursed.

Examples of eligible uses:

- Internal labor costs incurred as part of eligible project activities
 - Only reimbursable up to the proportion of employees' time spent exclusively on project activities during the period for which reimbursement is sought. Indirect costs are not reimbursable.
- Capital purchase (vehicles or equipment purchased at \geq \$5,000)
- Ancillary costs necessary to operationalize the capital assets
- Other miscellaneous upfront costs (with TNECD permission)
- Stored materials
- Tax Payments

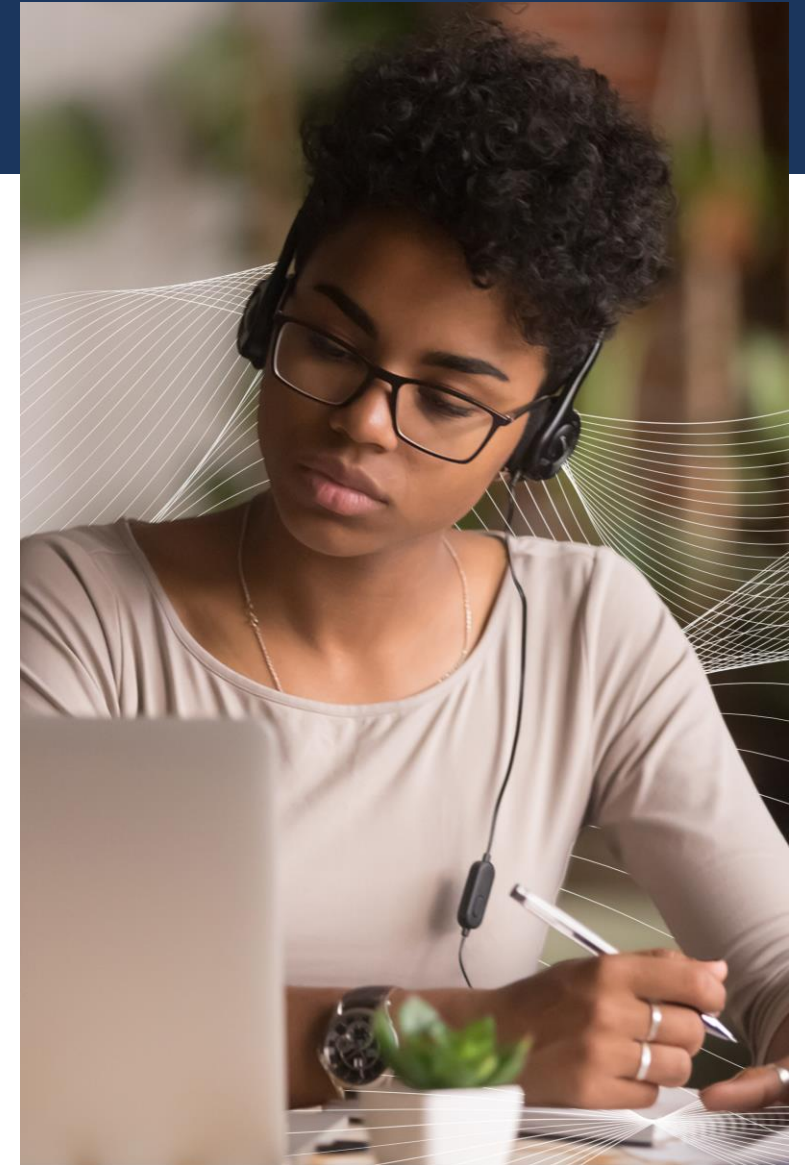


Allowable Costs

Each applicant must provide a breakdown for each cost and a detailed budget narrative explaining and justifying the expenditures by category. Following is a list of budget categories of allowable costs.

- Construction
- Architect/engineering fees
- Professional fees, grants, and awards
- Supplies, telephone, postage and shipping, equipment rental and maintenance, and printing
- Occupancy
- Grant/project administration (indirect expenses; limited to 6%, or the indirect cost rate if a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement is in place)
- Capital purchases
- Project contingency
- Other non-personnel

Note: Applicants are invited to suggest additional costs relevant to each of these categories with a justification. However, TNECD reserves the right to reject proposed costs that are not applicable to the grant.

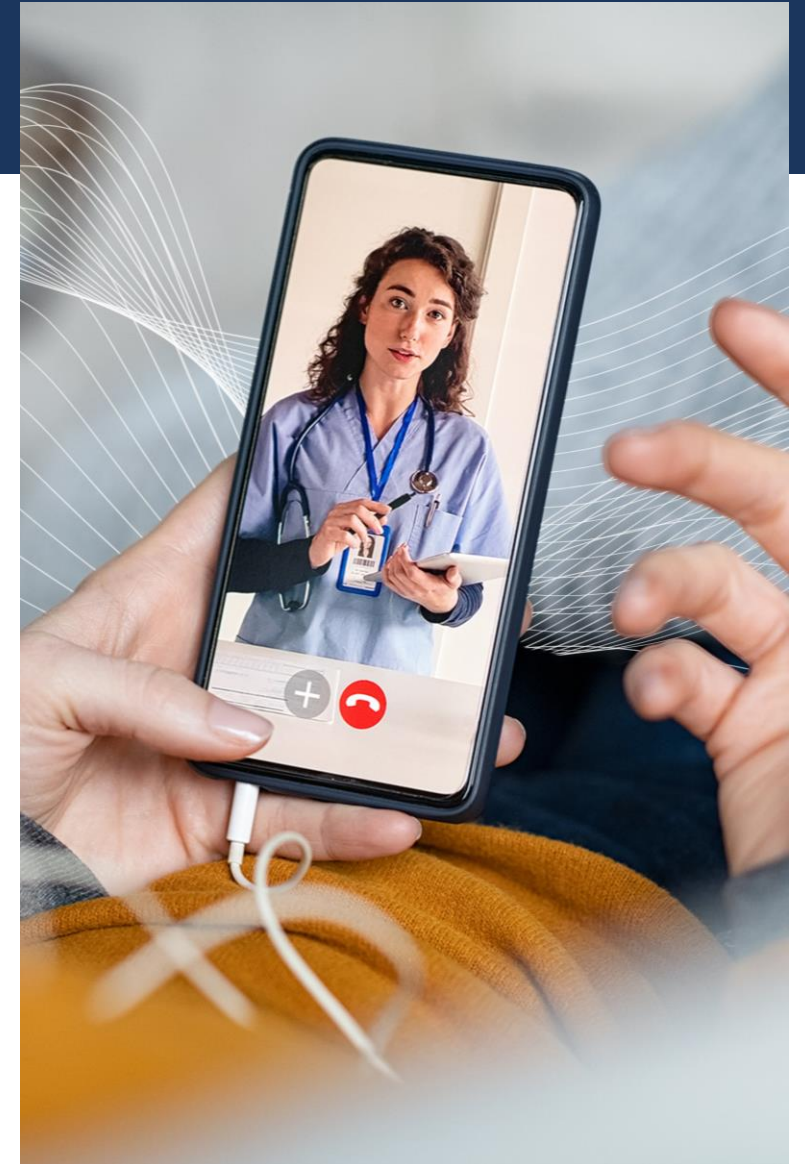


Use of Project Funds

Ineligible uses

Connected Communities Facilities funds may not be used for the following activities or initiatives:

- Operational and reoccurring expenses
- Fundraising activities
- Short-term operating leases
- Expenses incurred prior to award announcement
- Outstanding debt
- New debt
- Judicial, administrative, or regulatory proceedings
- Collective bargaining



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C. Application Information

Additional Uploads

The upload section of the application will allow applicants to upload the following required and optional documents:

- Project timeline (separate Excel spreadsheet; a template will be available at [TNECD's website](#))
- Procurement policy
- Grant Payment Setup form
- Proposed boundary map area
- Partnership agreement
- Additional construction/rehabilitate funding supporting documentation
- Miscellaneous supplemental documentation
- Community support letter(s)
- Community partner agreement(s)
- Community anchor institution (CAI) letter(s)
- Proof of project financing
- Any applicable local match letters of assurances
- Long-term lease agreement, if applicable

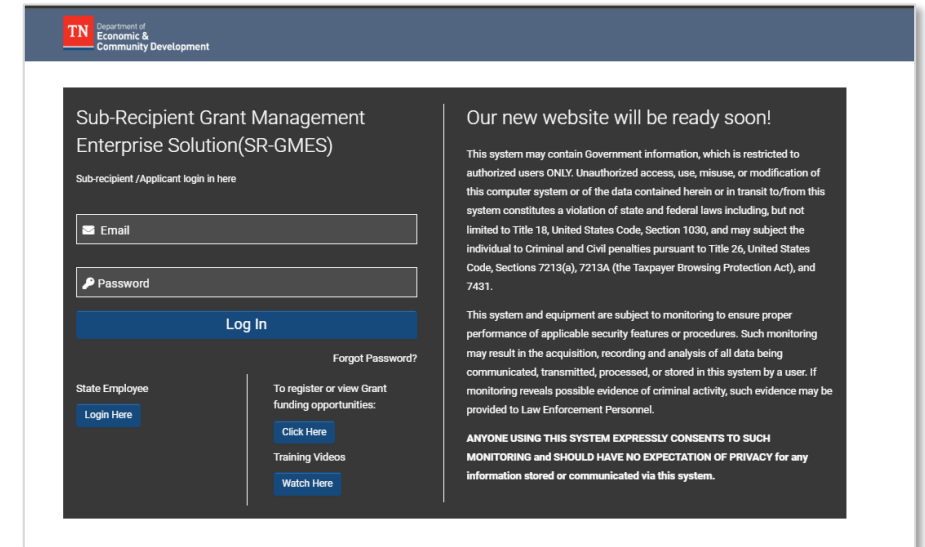


Content and Form of Applications

Applications will be submitted via the grant management software SmartSimple. Applicants will need to register with SmartSimple at https://ecd.grants.tn.gov/s_Login.jsp in order to access the grant application.



Submission Period: Oct. 2 to Nov. 15



SmartSimple Registration Page

Registering in SmartSimple

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL tn.gov/ecd/rural-development/broadband-office.html. The page header features the TN Department of Economic & Community Development logo, a search bar labeled "Search ECD", and a navigation menu with items: Advantages, Industries, Corporate Expansion, Small Business, Rural Development, News, Resources, and Grants. The main heading is "Broadband Office". Below this is a large banner image of trees with the text "Digital Opportunity Plan Public Comment". Navigation arrows are present on the left and right of the banner. Below the banner are three content cards: "Individual and Family Resources" (with sub-points: Get Help with Internet Bills, Find Low-Cost Wifi Options and Devices), "Providers Resources" (with sub-points: Funding Opportunities, Broadband Accessibility Grantee Report), and "Community Resources" (with sub-points: Digital Opportunity Listing Session Toolkit, Broadband Ready Communities). A small TN logo is in the bottom left corner.

Project Information

The applicant should be prepared to provide **identifying information** including:

- Legal entity name
- Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)
- System Award Management (SAM) ID
- Mailing address
- Primary contact information

The applicant will also need to provide **information about the following details:**

- Project descriptions
- Service area
- Implementation of the project area
- Facility information
- The project timeline, including an upload of a spreadsheet indicating key activities and milestones by quarter (template available at the [TNECD website](#); see right)

	2024				2025				2026				2027			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Fielding (Complete Pre-Grant)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Network Design	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
US Forest Service Land Use Permit - Amendment Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DNR Easement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TDEC Easement Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
City/County Franchise Agreements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
County and TDOT ROW Permits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Material Procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contractor Procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Material Receipt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Central Office Hut Construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Network Construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drop Construction Connections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, Specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Project Timeline Upload (Excel Spreadsheet)



D. The Application Review Process

Application Review

Two steps to the application review process:

- **Completeness review:** All applications will be assessed for eligibility and completeness to confirm that:
 - Administrative information is complete and correct
 - The applicant is in good standing with their other federally funded projects
 - The applicant adhered to application instructions, submitted budget and other supplementary attachments, and included their signed certification forms
- **Scoring review** (per next slide; **175 possible base points**)
 - **10 additional points are available** if separate criteria is applicable to the project

TNECD may take up to 7 to 10 business days (November 16 – December 11, 2023) to review the application for completeness. If TNECD determines that an application is incomplete, the applicant will be allowed 5 business days to make the necessary adjustments.

Application Scoring

Below are the scoring categories, expected information under each category, and respective maximum scores possible for each category.

Category	Scoring Criteria	Maximum Score
Services and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What services are offered in the proposed project? • Evaluate the cost of proposed services based upon the economic thresholds in the community. • Evaluate the quantity and quality of broadband adoption resources to be provided by the facility. • Evaluate the transportation plan and options proposed for accessing the facility. 	35 points
Project Design and Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there is a community need? • Is the project tailored to community needs? • Does the applicant demonstrate commitment to promote broadband access and adoption? 	30 points
Project Implementation and Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the financial feasibility of the project? • Has the applicant demonstrated ability to meet project milestones and timeline, and to meet project objectives requirements (enabling healthcare, work, and education) 	45 points

Application Scoring

Below are the scoring categories, expected information under each category, and respective maximum scores possible for each category.

Category	Scoring Criteria	Maximum Score
Community Development and Partnership	Evaluate the project's impact and plan for community development. What is the county's Broadband Ready Community status? Evaluate the applicant's partnerships with community and service providers. Evaluate the applicant's level of community support and outreach to the community.	65 points
Additional Possible Points	Is the county's economic designation "at-risk" or "distressed" in FY 2024 (Appalachian Regional Commission)? (5 points)	10 points
	Does the project refurbish a "National Register of Historical Places" facility? (5 points)	

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E. Summary

Key Points Discussed

- The purpose of the Connected Community Facilities Grant Program is to construct and improve digital access through the creation of buildings or rehabbing spaces.
 - \$30 million will be distributed in total, and up to **\$2 million is available per award**.
 - The grant covers up to 80% of eligible expenses, with a **required 20% match** by the grantee.
- Applicants must propose projects in an automatically eligible TN county (AMI at or below \$65,880) or an eligible target population within a county with an **AMI above \$65,880**.
 - ARC-designated **“at-risk”** or **“distressed” counties**, are eligible for additional points
- To prove eligibility, each application must submit a **detailed budget narrative**.
- The two parts of the application review are the **completeness review** and the **scoring review**.



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F. Next Steps

Resources and Key Dates

TNECD Broadband Office:	https://www.tn.gov/ecd/rural-development/broadband-office.html
TNECD Broadband Grant web page:	https://www.tn.gov/ecd/rural-development/broadband-office/grants.html
Contacts:	<p>Codi Drake, Broadband Grants Coordinator – Digital Opportunity Coordinator: codi.drake@tn.gov</p> <p>Brian Sanderlin, State Broadband Assistant Director: Brian.Sanderlin@tn.gov</p>
Grant application period: Award announcement date: Contract signature deadline: End of contract period:	<p>Oct. 2 to Nov. 15 March 2024 (tentative) June 30, 2024 (tentative) Dec. 31, 2026</p>



Take the Survey!

Please take a few minutes to share your feedback.

Post-event Survey Connected Community Facilities Grants: Program Details and Application Process





Department of
**Economic &
Community Development**

THANK YOU