



DIGITAL EQUITY OFFICE HOUR #2

Digital Equity Competitive
Program

August 30, 2024

broadband.as.gov



AGENDA

- 1 Introductions
- 2 Updates
 - Approved AS Digital Equity Plan
 - Digital Equity Capacity Grant
 - Digital Equity Competitive Grant
- 3 Resources
- 4 Q&A



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT**

EXECUTIVE ORDER 007 – 2023

**AN ORDER ESTABLISHING THE TERRITORIAL BROADBAND COORDINATION,
OPPORTUNITIES, REDEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OFFICE,
ESTABLISHING THE BROADBAND STEERING COMMITTEE, AND
REPEALING EXECUTIVE ORDER 006-2023**

Section 1: Authority

This executive order is hereby issued in accordance with the powers and authority granted to the Governor by Article IV, Sections 6 and 7 of the Revised Constitution of American Samoa, and the American Samoa Code Annotated, Section 4.0111 (b).

Section 2: Preamble

WHEREAS, access to broadband is essential to the prosperity and quality of life of everyone living in American Samoa;

WHEREAS, broadband is vital to commerce, the economic vitality of communities, and American Samoa's global competitiveness;

WHEREAS, President Biden announced the \$42.45 billion Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program which enable States and Territories to expand high-speed internet access by funding planning, infrastructure deployment and adoption programs in furtherance of the Administration's "Internet for All" initiative;

WHEREAS, broadband is vital to the delivery of education, health care, transportation services, public safety, emergency response, and other critical services;

WHEREAS, broadband is vital to creating an inclusive infrastructure that addresses the needs of people with disabilities, the elderly, minors and the community as a whole;

BCORD OFFICE

Established by Governor Lemanu by Executive Order 007-2023 under the Department of Commerce to coordinate and support territory-wide efforts on broadband to increase the affordability, availability, adoption and effectiveness of broadband internet. Through partnerships and collaborations, the BORD Office encourages investment in opportunities for broadband programs and initiatives that focus on improving the quality of life for the people of American Samoa based on its territorial strategic goals and objectives for broadband development.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Digital Literacy:** using information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information
- **Digital Inclusion:** activities that ensure all individuals and communities have access to information and communication technologies, and the literacy to use them
- **Digital Equity (DE):** all individuals and communities have the IT capacity needed for full participation in society, democracy and economy.¹ Includes access to:
 - Affordable, high-speed internet
 - Affordable, web-enabled technology
 - Effective training and support for digital skill development and use

DEFINITIONS:

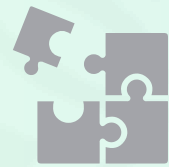
- **Equality:** the state of being equal in status, rights, opportunities, inherent worth, etc.
- **Equity:** is the idea of providing resources that meet the diverse needs of each individual so they may be successful.



DIGITAL EQUITY ACT

- Administered by National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA); Funded under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).
- Established 3 grant programs to promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all:

Completed Phase



State Planning Grant

\$60M formula funding program to develop digital equity plans

- Develop DE Plan

Current Phases



State Capacity Grant

\$1.44B formula funding program to implement programs & promote digital inclusion

- Put State DE Plan into Action!
- BCORD apply on behalf of American Samoa



Competitive Grant

\$1.25B to implement digital equity and inclusion activities

- Develop and carry out digital inclusion activities
- Apply directly to federal govt

American Samoa BROADBANDiNEI Digital Equity Plan

VISION: Ensure that all American Samoa residents have access to affordable, inclusive, accessible and secure resources and opportunities to become an effective part of the digital global village.

broadband.as.gov



American Samoa BROADBANDiNEI DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN

April 2024

American Samoa Government

OUR COVERED POPULATION

AMERICAN SAMOA DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN



Covered Households

Individuals who live in a household with an income below 150% of the poverty level



Individuals with Disabilities

Individuals with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits life activity



Rural Residents

Individuals residing in any town with less than 50,000 residents and not an urbanized area next to a town with 50,000 or more inhabitants



Aging Individuals

Individuals aged 60 years or older



Individuals with a Language Barrier

Individuals with a language barrier, including those who are English learners and have low levels of literacy



Racial or Ethnic Minorities

Individuals whose race or ethnicity is non-dominant within the US



Incarcerated Individuals

Inmates confined in prison or jail, other than those in a Federal correctional facility



Veterans

Individuals who served and were honorably discharged from the US military

TERRITORIAL GOALS FOR DIGITAL EQUITY

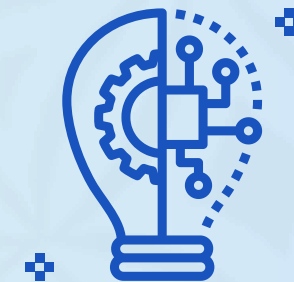
AMERICAN SAMOA DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN



Affordable
Broadband
Access



Responsible
Governance &
Strong
Institutions



Technology
Literacy



Cybersecurity

State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program



State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program



U.S. Department of Commerce,
National Telecommunications &
Information Administration (NTIA) |
National Funder

U.S. Territory | Administering Entity

Allocation \$2.1 million

local non-profit organizations

DIGITAL EQUITY CAPACITY GRANT

- Allocation Amount: ~ \$2.1 million
- Estimated max award amounts \$100,000 no floor
- No cost share
- Performance Period:
 - 2024 DE CAP NOFO - Period of Performance: 5 years
 - * 2025 DE CAP NOFO - Period of Performance: 5 years
 - * 2026 DE CAP NOFO - Period of Performance: 5 years

DIGITAL EQUITY CAPACITY GRANT

- Tentative Timeline
 - Oct - In-person workshops
 - Oct - Nov: application & selection process
 - Dec - Jan: awards. Pending NTIA Approval

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

- A political subdivision, agency, or instrumentality of a State, including an agency of a State that is responsible for administering or supervising adult education and literacy activities, or for providing public housing, in the State.
- An Indian Tribe, an Alaska Native entity, or a Native Hawaiian organization.
- A foundation, corporation, institution, or association that is-
 - a not-for-profit entity; and
 - not a school.
- A community anchor institution.
- A local educational agency.
- An entity that carries out a workforce development program.
- A partnership between any of the entities described in paragraphs (1) through (6).
- A partnership between-
 - an entity described in any of paragraphs (1) through (6); and
 - an entity that-
 - the Assistant Secretary, by rule, determines to be in the public interest; and
 - is not a school.

DIGITAL EQUITY CAPACITY GRANT

PROJECTS

- **Focus on Covered Populations:** The project should align with the Digital Equity Plan's goals and objectives, and the priorities of the Covered Populations being served, including subgroups within each Covered Population. Priority should be given to projects with the greatest potential impact, such as targeting Covered Households (i.e., low-income individuals) within other Covered Populations.
- **Long-lasting and Meaningful Change:** Digital Equity Plans are intended to address the systemic barriers and gaps to digital access. Projects/activities should reflect this goal and consider the sustainability of initiatives created through this funding.
- **Measurable Implementation Strategies:** Proposed programs and activities should be based on objectives that are measurable, achievable, sustainable, timebound, and are designed to address identified disparities directly and logically.

TENTATIVE PROJECT TYPES

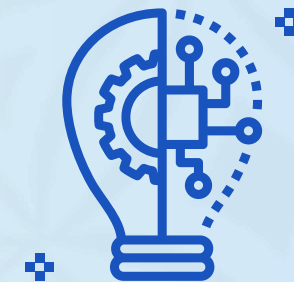
AMERICAN SAMOA DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN GOALS



Affordable
Broadband
Access



Responsible
Governance &
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Technology
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Cybersecurity

State Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program

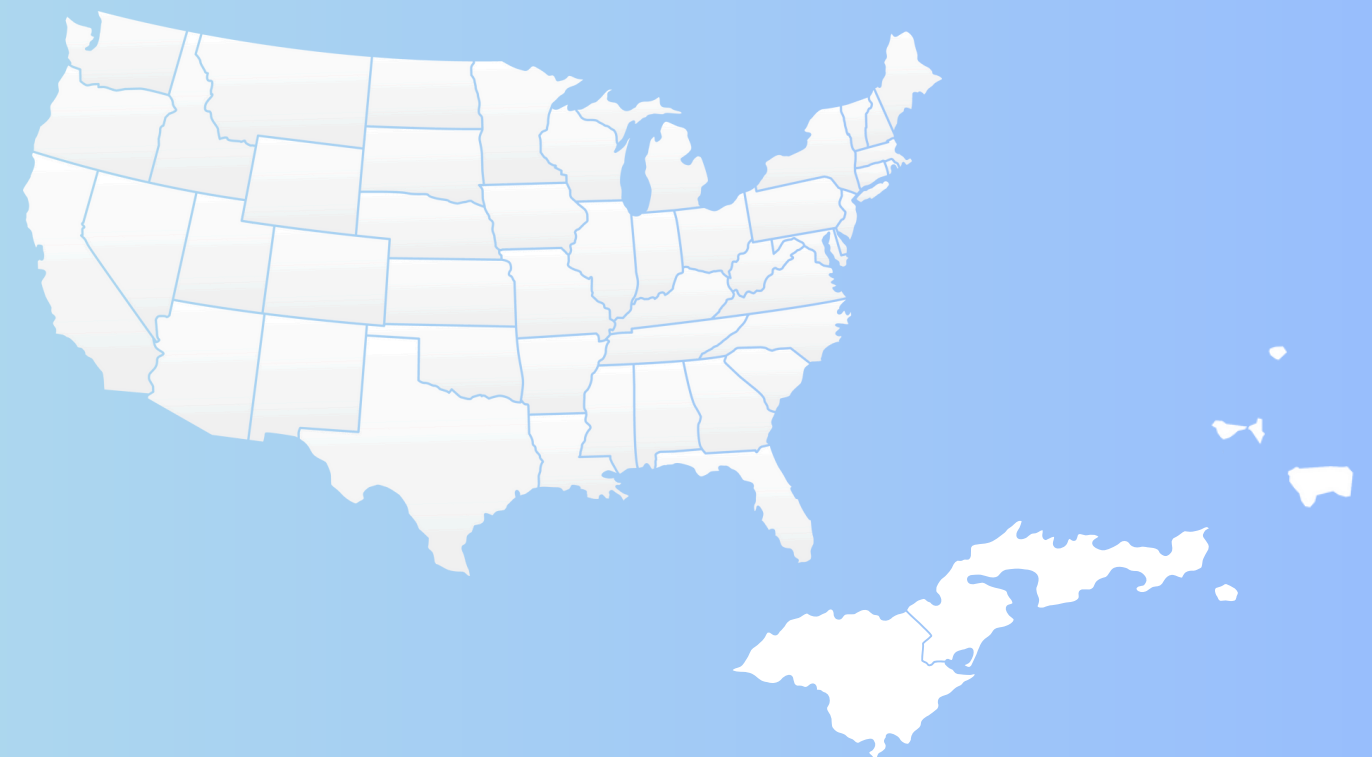


Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program



\$1.25 billion

**U.S. Department of Commerce,
National Telecommunications &
Information Administration (NTIA) |
National Funder**



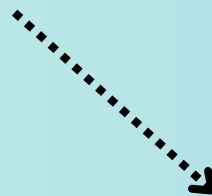
National Pool

Digital Equity Competitive Grant set aside for U.S. Territorial Governments



\$1.25 billion

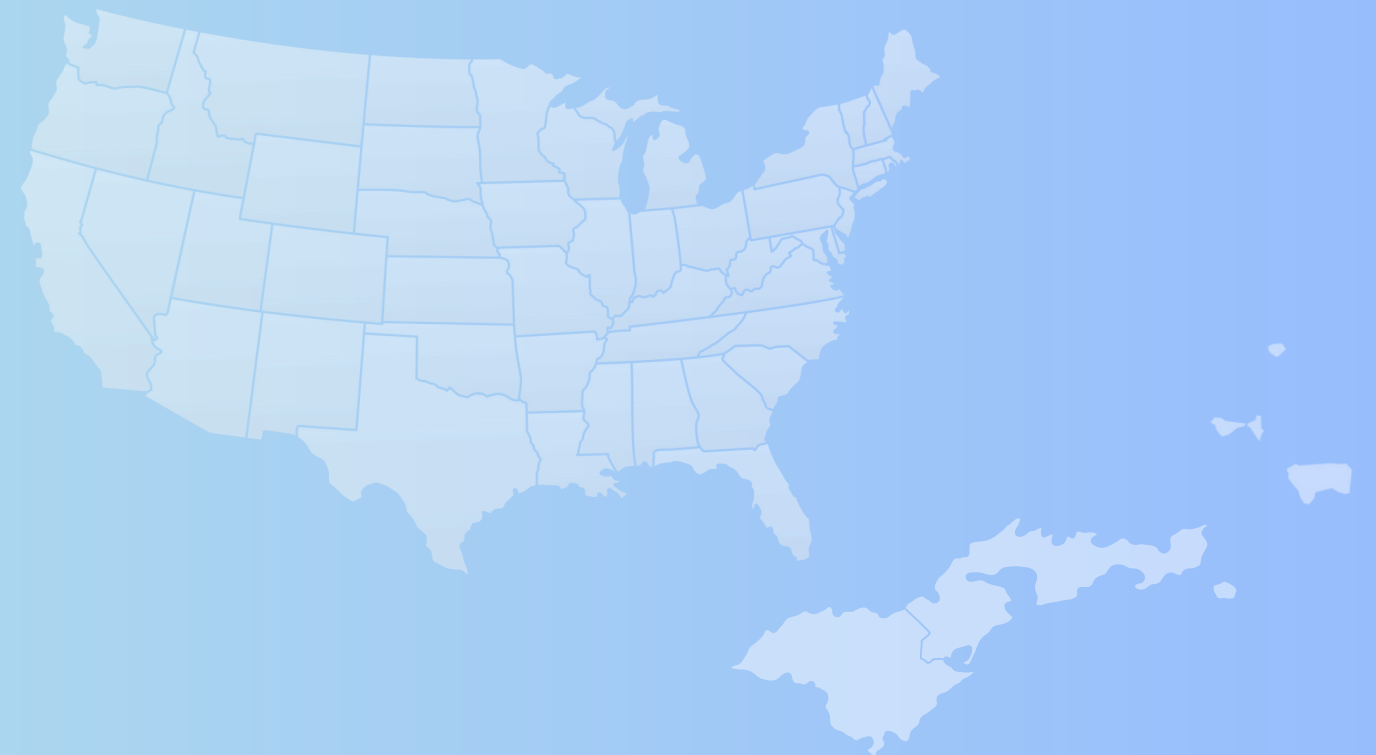
U.S. Department of Commerce,
National Telecommunications &
Information Administration (NTIA) |
National Funder



\$7.5 million

U.S. Territorial Governments

- American Samoa
- CNMI
- GUAM
- U.S. Virgin Islands



National Pool

DIGITAL EQUITY COMPETITIVE GRANT

Overview

- ~\$1.25 Billion
- Cost Sharing/Matching Requirement: 10%
- Expected award range: \$5m and \$12m
- 4 year performance period
- This funding range is not a required minimum or maximum, but Eligible Entities requesting award amounts outside that range must explain why

DIGITAL EQUITY COMPETITIVE GRANT

Caps

- 10% cap on evaluation, to measure and evaluate the activities supported with the grant amounts (NOFO, p. 20)
- 10% cap on administration, which includes both direct and indirect funds

Ineligible Uses

- Previously awarded federal or state grant funds to create a digital equity plan or implement digital inclusion activities must be used before using Competitive Grant Program funds.
- Profit, fee, or other incremental charges above the actual cost
- Funds may not be used for general research or academic studies of digital
 - equity

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

- A political subdivision, agency, or instrumentality of a State, including an agency of a State that is responsible for administering or supervising adult education and literacy activities, or for providing public housing, in the State.
- An Indian Tribe, an Alaska Native entity, or a Native Hawaiian organization.
- A foundation, corporation, institution, or association that is-
 - a not-for-profit entity; and
 - not a school.
- A community anchor institution.
- A local educational agency.
- An entity that carries out a workforce development program.
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DIGITAL EQUITY CAPACITY GRANT

PROJECTS/ ACTIVITIES

- **Focus on Covered Populations:** The project should align with the Digital Equity Plan's goals and objectives, and the priorities of the Covered Populations being served, including subgroups within each Covered Population. Priority should be given to projects with the greatest potential impact, such as targeting Covered Households (i.e., low-income individuals) within other Covered Populations.
- **Long-lasting and Meaningful Change:** Digital Equity Plans are intended to address the systemic barriers and gaps to digital access. Projects/activities should reflect this goal and consider the sustainability of initiatives created through this funding.
- **Measurable Implementation Strategies:** Proposed programs and activities should be based on objectives that are measurable, achievable, sustainable, timebound, and are designed to address identified disparities directly and logically.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

An Eligible Entity or U.S. Territory to which a Competitive Grant is awarded must use the grant funds to support not less than 1 of the allowable activities listed below. Applicants must comply with the requirements of 47 U.S.C. §1724(d)(2) of the Digital Equity Act and this NOFO. Grant funds may be used to support the following allowable activities:

- To **develop and implement digital inclusion activities** that benefit one or more of the Covered Populations.
- To **facilitate the adoption of broadband** by Covered Populations to provide educational and employment opportunities to those populations.
- To **implement training programs** for Covered Populations that cover basic, advanced, and applied skills or other workforce development programs, including, for example, digital inclusion projects that address online safety, and work to prevent online harassment and abuse.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

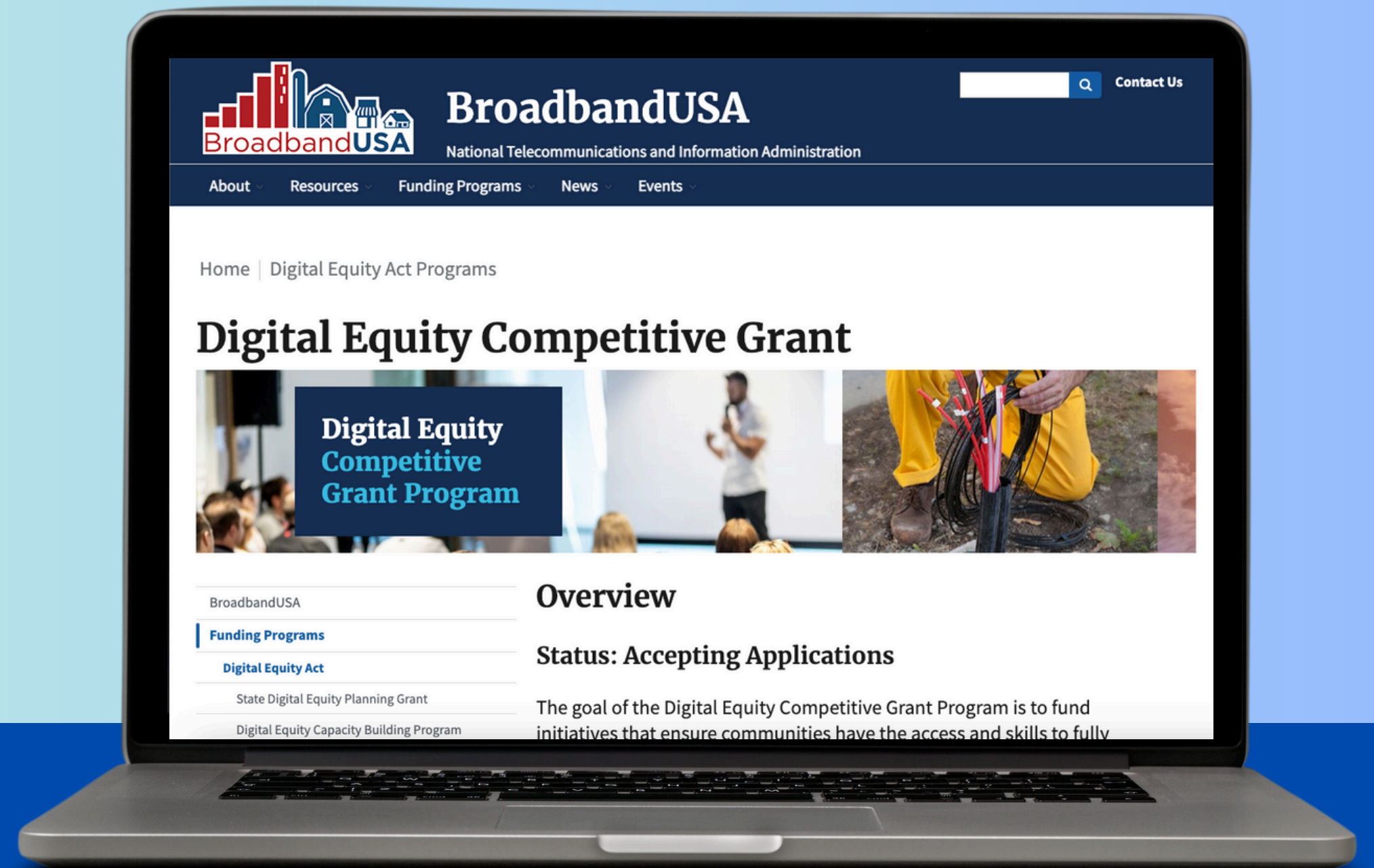
Applicants must comply with the requirements of 47 U.S.C. §1724(d)(2) of the Digital Equity Act and this NOFO. Grant funds may be used to support the following allowable activities:

- To **make available equipment**, instrumentation, networking capability hardware and software, or digital network technology for broadband services to Covered Populations at low or no cost.
- To **construct, upgrade, expand, or operate new or existing public access computing centers** for Covered Populations through community anchor institutions.
- To **undertake any other project or activity that the Assistant Secretary** finds to be consistent with the purposes for which the Program is established.

RESOURCES



NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION





NTIA RESOURCES

- [Broadbandusa.ntia.gov | Digital Equity Competitive Grant](https://broadbandusa.ntia.gov/digital-equity-competitive-grant)
 - Overview webinars and application resources
- [Digital Equity Competitive Grant Overview](#)
 - Application Information
 - Application Resources
 - Get Ready Materials
 - Program Documentation Resources
 - Who can Apply?
 - Notice of Funding Opportunity
- www.internetforall.gov
 - General Info about the Internet for All Initiative
- [Frequently Asked Questions & Answers](#)
 - Q&A



NTIA RESOURCES

Digital Equity Competitive Application Webinar: 5 part series

- [Digital Equity Competitive Application Webinar, Part 1: Standard Forms](#)
- [Digital Equity Competitive Application Webinar, Part 2: Registration, Partnerships, LOCs](#)
- [Digital Equity Competitive Application Webinar, Part 3: Project Narrative](#)
- [Digital Equity Competitive Application Webinar, Part 4: Plans \(Risk, Etc.\)](#)
- [Digital Equity Competitive Application Webinar, Part 5: Consolidated Budget Form](#)



NTIA RESOURCES

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Please direct programmatic inquiries to:

- Angela Thi Bennett
- Director of Digital Equity
- Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth
- National Telecommunications and Information Administration
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- 1401 Constitution Avenue,
- NW Washington, DC 20230
- Phone: (202) 482-2048
- Email: digitalequity@ntia.gov

Please direct grant management inquiries to:

- Darren Olson
- Grants Officer
- Grants Management Division
- National Institute of Standards and Technology
- 325 Broadway Boulder,
- CO 80305
- Phone: (720) 693-0465
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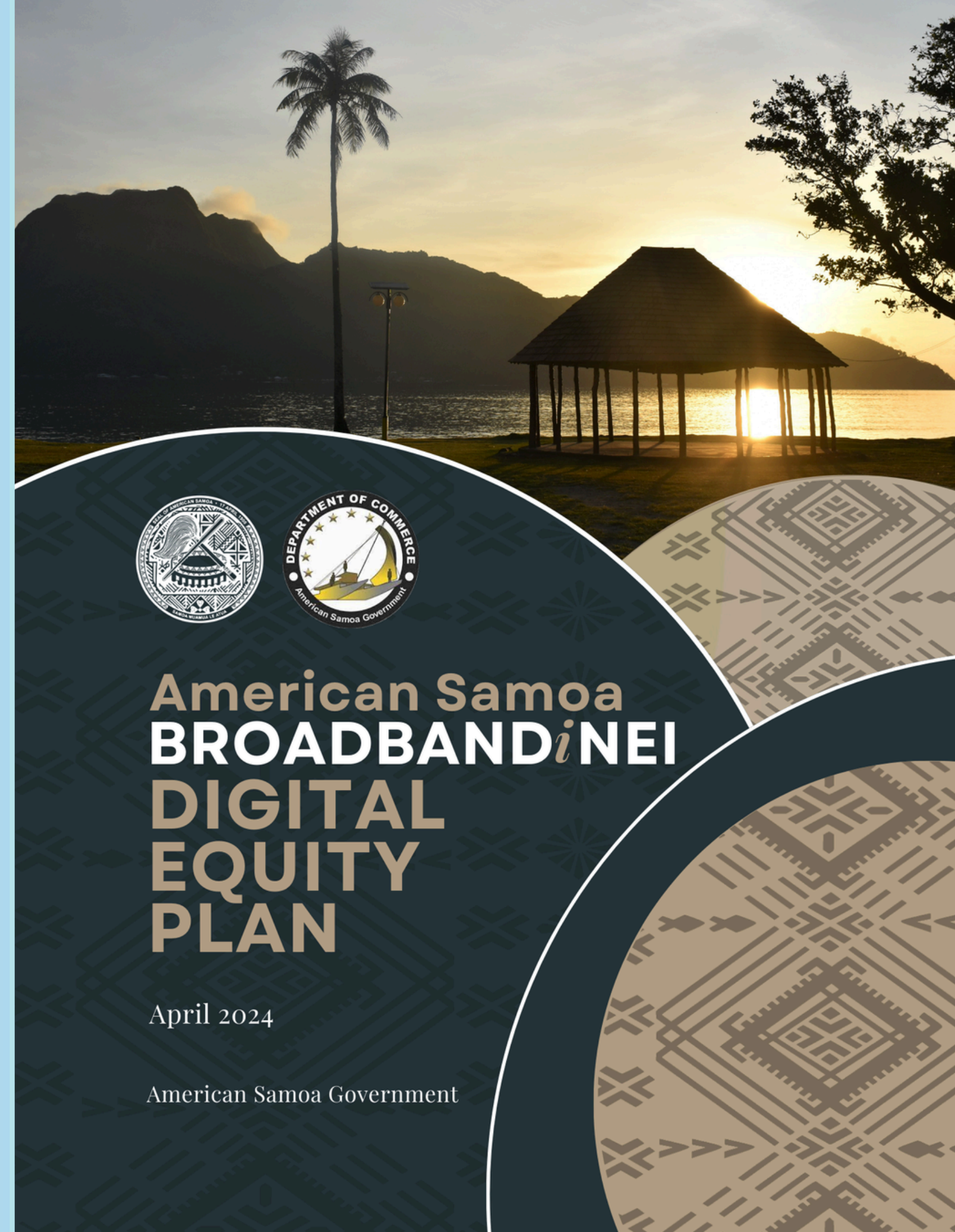
Please direct media inquiries to:

- Charles Meisch
- Director of Public Affairs
- Office of Public Affairs
- National Telecommunications and Information Administration
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- 1401 Constitution Avenue NW,
- Room 4897
- Washington, DC 20230
- Phone: (202) 482-7002
- Email: press@ntia.doc.gov

American Samoa BROADBANDiNEI Digital Equity Plan

Download a copy of the DEq plan at our
website at broadband.as.gov

broadband.as.gov



American Samoa BROADBANDiNEI DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN



April 2024

American Samoa Government

Territorial Broadband Strategy

Download a copy of the ASTBS at our website
at broadband.as.gov

broadband.as.gov



**The 2021-2026 Territorial
Broadband Strategy**
American Samoa Territorial
Broadband Strategy Working Group

NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE



<https://www.digitalinclusion.org/>





NDIA RESOURCES

- **NDIA Resources**

- [NDIA Digital Equity Competitive Grant NOFO](#)
- [Digital Inclusion 101](#)
- [Digital Inclusion Startup Manual](#)
- [Coalition Guidebook](#)
- [Digital Navigator Model](#)
- [Digital terms & definitions](#)

- **NDIA Blog**

- [It's time to prepare your Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program Applications](#)

- **NDIA webinars**

- [NDIA Digital Equity Competitive Grant NOFO](#)
- [Digital Inclusion 101 August 2024 webinar](#)
- [AI & Digital Equity: Net Inclusion Panel video](#)

QUESTIONS?



Fa'afetai Lava!

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Program Assistant



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