

Oklahoma ARPA CPF Broadband Investment Grant Program

Questions and Responses

Please note: This FAQ is an evolving document. As such, information provided in earlier versions might be modified or eliminated in later iterations. Previous versions should be disregarded, and the latest version should be used exclusively.

This FAQ was developed as a broad public resource and is intended to be strictly informational. The answers contained in this FAQ will not include complete information as the questions posed do not provide complete information. This document may be consulted as a reference but should not be relied on for a complete assessment. The OBO encourages potential applicants to consult their legal counsel in finding answers to these questions.

Updated: 3:45pm CT, July 8, 2024

1. With ACP winding down and funding expected to be exhausted by May 2024, is the requirement for an ISP to accept ACP still applicable?

Yes, at this time ISPs applying for the CPF program are required to offer a low-cost option as well as participate in the ACP program.

2. Please define low-cost option.

As outlined in the [scoring criteria](#), applicants that provide a low-cost plan option for less than or equal to \$30, will receive 2.5 points. Comparatively, applicants that provide a low-cost plan that covers more than 50% of a plan with a \$30 ACP subsidy included, will receive 1.25 points.

3. In the third paragraph on page 3 of the [NOFO](#), ISPs are required to design to all serviceable locations in an area but provide service to unserved/underserved locations. Please clarify if design is required for all BSLs and not just those that are unserved or underserved.

Design is not required for served locations. Only unserved and underserved locations per the FCC Broadband Availability Map will be considered for funding. As such, please only include unserved and underserved locations as defined by the FCC.

4. The [CPF Scoring Criteria](#) references Community Support Meetings. Please clarify what constitutes a Community Support Meeting. Would the following meet the requirement? 1. Meeting with an elected official; 2. Meeting with the president of a HOA; 3. Meeting with a school superintendent or school board member.

These examples meet the requirement as would any meetings conducted with members of the community.

5. Is there a limit to the number of proposals that can be submitted?

There is not a limit to the number of proposals that may be submitted by a single entity. Entities may submit more than one proposal for the same county, but please ensure that all proposals submitted do not cross into other counties.

6. Would OBO make successfully contested locations from ARPA SLFRF eligible again in ARPA-CPF if construction has not started for those locations in the last 6 months since the contests were made?

Locations considered unserved or underserved have been posted to the [CPF page](#) on the OBO website, any ISP may contest any proposed location during the Overbuild Prevention Contest Process.

7. The OBO has provided locations considered unserved/underserved on its website. ISPs will only be allowed to propose building to these locations. Would OBO allow contests of locations that are NOT in this list but are known to be unserved/underserved?

Only locations that are noted as unserved or underserved on the FCC Broadband Availability Map will be considered for funding.

8. The Capital Projects Fund Notice of Funding Opportunity states that every O-BIG CPF Grant Program must have a minimum 25% funding match; however, the CPF scoring criteria indicates that a match of less than 25% will receive 0 points in the matching fund amount category. Can the OBO confirm that each project submitted must have a minimum 25% funding match?

Yes, each project submitted for the CPF O-BIG grant must include at least a 25% match.

9. Relating to the Project Readiness category within the CPF scoring criteria, can the OBO confirm how many points will be associated with a project that can begin construction in less than 6 months following grant award, but more than 120 days following grant award?

If a proposed application has demonstrated the project will not begin construction within 120 days but will be shovel ready and begin construction in no less than 6 to 8 months, then the application will receive 12 points.

10. In the APRA-CPF NOFO, it mentions "*Financial viability includes the applicants most current audited financial statements.*" Is this a requirement or can we present audited financials after the award process?

This is required during the application process for scoring purposes. Please refer to the [CPF Scoring Criteria](#), specifically Table 4 for "Project Sustainability."

11. Is there a way for ISPs to download location data to determine which locations are eligible?

Yes, use the following link to find downloadable KMZ files from ARPA SLFRF:
<https://oklahoma.gov/broadband/grant-programs/arpa-slfrf.html>

ISPs can also find unserved/underserved data on the CPF page: <https://oklahoma.gov/broadband/grant-programs/capital-projects-fund.html>

Note: locations from SLFRF KMZs will need to be subtracted from the unserved/underserved data

12. The ARPA-CPF NOFO states, “Applicants must certify that the applicant’s network design is technically feasible and capable, upon completion of the project, *by providing certification from a Professional Engineer* or by using an in-house engineer who designs and oversees the implementation of network designs in the regular course of business.”

Does the Engineer need to be certified in the State of Oklahoma to provide the required certification or can they be certified in any state?

The engineer needs to be certified in Oklahoma.

13. In the CPF NOFO, under Section VII Eligible Project Costs, it states that *infrastructure for backhaul, middle, and last mile networks* are eligible costs. Must a project also contain last mile connections to be eligible?

Projects are required to make last mile connections.

14. One of the application requirements states, *Applicant provides fabric ID and addresses of locations currently unserved and underserved in the project service area*. To obtain and provide this information, the applicant would have to register (Tier D License) as an ISP with the FCC. Is it a requirement for this application that we are an ISP in order to apply?

Yes, applicants must be ISPs in order to apply. Our contest rules address this in definition (18). ISPs are defined as follows: "Internet Service Provider" or "ISP" means an entity that provides Broadband Service, including, but not limited to, a for-profit, a non-profit, cooperative, local government, municipality, or tribal entity.

A Tier D License is required in order for applicants to properly provide fabric and address information. Additionally, Treasury requires quarterly reporting using standardized FCC identifiers for each project, including fabric IDs for the broadband serviceable fabric locations and a FCC issued provider ID number.

15. In middle mile networks, locations of any customer of a partnering ISP would then be supported. How do applicants best capture that information? Would letters of support stating customers and service areas suffice?

Middle mile projects will not be accepted or awarded; however, some middle-mile related costs may be eligible within last mile projects.

16. If a middle mile project is proposed, is it a requirement that applicants are, will become or will partner with an ISP?

Middle mile projects will not be accepted or awarded.

17. Please define match. Does a 50% match mean 50% of awarded funds? Example: If the award is \$100,000 would the match need to be \$50,000 for 50%?

If the project total cost (grant+match) is \$100,000, the match would need to be \$25,000 to reach the 25% minimum match requirement. In your example, if the project total cost is \$100,000, a match of \$50,000 would constitute a 50% match.

18. When is the due date for CPF applications?

The office will post publicly on its website the due date for the CPF application. Please note, the CPF Registration is now open, and an eligible applicant must be registered in order to apply.

19. Will locations that were successfully challenged in ARPA SLFRF be included in the list of eligible locations for CPF? Will ISPs need to challenge those locations again?

Locations that were successfully challenged in SLFRF are likely not eligible, depending on why they were found to be a successful challenge. The OBO will not be prescreening locations that were successfully contested in SLFRF. The OBO will have a [new contest process for CPF](#).

20. The scoring criteria states, “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” – *what evidence is sufficient?*

Some examples of evidence of critical need include, but are not limited to, explanation(s) of how the proposed project will address the communities need(s) related to access, affordability, reliability, and/or consistency.

21. What speeds need to be offered for the low-cost option?

Speeds of no less than 100/100 Mbps with no data cap are required for the low-cost option.

22. Does the Proposed Project Cost Breakdown include just the Grant amount or is this the total budget with both Grant amount and matching funds amount? (See image below)

Proposed Project Cost Breakdown		
Total Requested Amount	\$ XXXXX	Total of all below sections
	\$ XXXXX (Total for Section)	Details
<i>Example:</i>	<i>Example:</i> \$35.00/hour x 4 hours/day x 5 days/month x 12 months = \$8,400.	<i>Example:</i> The installer will be responsible for ...

The Proposed Project Cost Breakdown is the total project budget with *both* requested grant amount and matching funds.

23. Could an RUS Loan be used as matching funds for the grant?

A RUS Loan may *not* be used as matching funds for Oklahoma’s CPF grant program.

24. Is there a project maximum funding amount for the CPF applications?

There is no maximum, however; please keep in mind that projects are limited to a single county.

25. What FCC fabric version will be used for CPF?

Version 4 of the FCC fabric data will be used to account for accuracy and efficiency throughout the CPF application and the overbuild prevention processes. Participating ISPs are urged to visit the [CPF webpage](#) to download the lists of unserved and underserved location IDs.

26. Are locations which overlap RDOF funded areas, but have not been built out by the RDOF awardee, considered eligible for CPF funding?

That would be considered an enforceable commitment and those locations already receiving federal funding would not qualify for CPF.

27. In reading through the Notice of Funding, the FAQ, and the CPF registration website, it appears that only ISPs are eligible to apply, although the Department of Treasury “Guidance for the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund for States, Territories, & Freely Associated States” indicates tribal governments are eligible to apply. Would the OBO please clarify eligible applicants?

Tribal governments had their own portion of CPF that could be applied for directly through the Department of Treasury. Additionally, Tribes that are ISPs or who have partnered with ISPs are encouraged to apply for Oklahoma’s CPF program.

28. On the Frequently Asked Questions page, item #5 states that multiple proposals can be submitted by a single entity but that proposals should not cross into other counties.

Would the OBO please clarify this? The Choctaw Nation Reservation crosses 13 different counties, and any project proposed may be within a county, or span multiple counties in order to bring broadband connectivity to rural communities.

A single project application cannot cross county lines however, there is no limit for the number of applications that can be submitted. In this particular example, please fill out 13 applications for the 13 counties that you are applying to serve.

29. The NOFO states “A proposed project area is limited to a county; multiple counties will require separate applications.”

In areas where the road is along the county line, the ISP’s distribution line would also run along the county line, serving locations on either side of the road. Because of this, the project then serves locations in 2 different counties. How should this be addressed when application areas are defined by county?

Each application is tied to the locations that will be served within each county. Please only include the location and budget information in an application for the particular county.

30. Are CAI locations eligible for funding through ARPA CPF? Can an application be made to serve mainly CAIs with some BSLs?

Yes, if the CAI is an unserved/underserved location, it is eligible for funding.

31. Some locations on the unserved/underserved list appear to be enforceable commitments from other federal programs. Is the OBO aware of this and what should an ISP do to ensure location committed to another program are not awarded during CPF?

As contemplated in HB3363 (2022), the Oklahoma Broadband Office is to utilize the FCC’s map to determined unserved and underserved locations, which is also a requirement of US Treasury. For any locations that are being shown as unserved and underserved, it is the responsibility of the ISP to contest them if they are, in fact, served via current service, planned service, or an enforceable commitment.

32. How should an ISP use the location data on the OBO’s CPF webpage?

The lists of unserved and underserved locations are not specific to a single county. An ISP cannot submit the entire list into the CPF portal because those locations cross county boundaries. ISPs must also ensure there is no title or wording in the top row of the column. (View image)

	A	B	C
1	location_id		
2	1025257302		
3	1025257595		
4	1025279869		
5	1025282029		
6	1025285189		
7	1025288366		
8	1025288389		
9	1025289644		
10	1026404549		
11	1026414443		
12	1026418990		
13	1028417757		
14	1028418141		
15	1025258135		
16	1025258288		
17	1025265826		

33. Can a public wi-fi project be eligible for CPF funding?

Open access networks are eligible for funding.

34. Question #4 in the application portal reads: *Please provide a description of the project area (e.g., residential location, business, or community anchor institution.) For Treasury reporting purposes, include the address, fabric ID number (Broadband Serviceable Fabric Locations), the latitude/longitude at the structure where service will be installed (broken out by type; residential, business, or community anchor institution), and the technology used to offer service at the location.*

A text box is included with this question indicating a narrative response is required. Should there be an option to upload a file instead? When providing this information for other grant funding rounds, it has been provided as an attachment.

The OBO will not be providing a Broadband Location Data Template for the CPF application, as the CPF portal replaced the need for it. Applicants can answer using aggregate numbers related to their projects

such as, total number of locations, technology type used for locations, and how many locations are businesses, residential or community anchor institutions.

35. Will the Broadband Office be providing any templates for submission in CPF as it did for ARPA SLFRF?

Please refer to the CPF Application Primer, Scoring Criteria, and Emergency Rule on the OBO's [CPF webpage](#) for descriptions of the documents to be uploaded with the CPF application.

36. The unserved and underserved .csv files added to the OBO CPF page on June 24 eliminated numerous location IDs that were included on previous versions. Why?

From data provided by the federal government, the updated files remove location IDs that are included in enforceable commitments from broadband expansion grant programs, including those administered by federal agencies.

37. The CPF application primer states that responses to the narrative questions should be limited to 200 words. The portal does not appear to limit narrative responses. Will longer responses be accepted through the portal, or will responses be cut off at 200 words?

Longer responses will be accepted but please try to limit the number of characters for ease of scoring and review.

38. Can all the locations from the unserved and underserved lists be found in v4 fabric data?

Yes, all locations from those lists can be found within v4 fabric data.

39. The invitation to the portal label it as the "Challenge" portal for the ARPA CPF process. Will ISPs need a separate invitation for the Overbuild Prevention Process?

No, the login information will be the same for the Overbuild Prevention Process.

40. On page 3 of the [OBIG NOFO](#), it states, "If the applicant's broadband infrastructure project is within or traverses a Tribal area, the applicant must request Tribal consent, as shown through written documentation from the appropriate Tribal official and submitted with their application."

This requirement affects **all** applicants applying for projects on tribal lands throughout the state. Does this mean that the Tribal Council must provide a resolution of consent, or would a Letter of Support signed by the Tribal Chief be sufficient?

Yes, a letter of support would be sufficient, but not required at the time of application. Documentation of notice being sent to the tribal entity is all that is required at the time of application.

41. Paragraph 2, Page 3, of the [OBIG NOFO](#) reads in part (**emphasis added**), "According to the Treasury, the OBO may award funds to subawardees, such as other levels or units of government (e.g., municipalities or counties), non-profits, or private entities. For example, a subawardee of a broadband infrastructure project may include co-operatives, electric utilities, and **other entities that build or operate broadband networks, including networks that are owned, operated by, or affiliated with local governments.**"

Does this language allow a Special Purpose Entity, LLC that has an ISP service provider as a member qualify as an Applicant for CPF?

The CPF Overbuild Prevention Contest Process rules, found here, [CPF-Overbuild-Prevention-Rules.pdf](#), define an applicant in definition 3 as an “ISP that submits a valid Proposal for grant funding to the OBO during Project submission period.” An ISP is further defined in definition 18 to mean “an entity that provides Broadband Service, including, but not limited to, a for-profit, a non-profit, cooperative, local government, municipality or tribal entity.” The two critical parts of the definitions that would need to be considered are 1) does this entity provide Broadband Service and 2) is it submitting a valid proposal.

42. Is the waiver of Tribal Consent for BEAD applicable to CPF?

No, the Tribal Consent waiver is only applicable to the BEAD program as it is allowable by a different federal agency (NTIA) than the federal agency administering CPF (US Dept. Of Treasury).

43. On page 9 of the NOFO, it states, “Applications should include a letter of support or commitment from the appropriate community, local government, and/or tribal entity.” Given the two-week submittal period, can the application be submitted without a letter of support or commitment from the tribal entity?

Documentation of notice being sent to the tribal entity is all that is required at the time of application.

44. Now that the ACP program is no longer funded by the federal government, is the ACP participation language still applicable in questions 70 and 71? Should ISPs now respond "No" to question 70?

Per the US Department of Treasury, applicants must still participate in the ACP program. Please see question 1 of this FAQ.

45. Some of the locations on the unserved/underserved list appear to be served. How should ISPs prevent those from being funded?

If an ISP considers locations to be served, the Overbuild Prevention Process will allow for ISPs to contest locations within proposed projects.

46. With v5 of the FCC fabric released since the launch of the application portal, should ISPs use the data from OBO’s website or the new fabric data?

Please continue using the data that is listed on the OBO’s website.

47. Are CAIs with less than 1Gbps eligible to be funded by ARPA-CPF? In the portal, CAIs are marked ineligible and kicked out of the application.

CAIs for the purposes of the CPF program are considered served at 100/20 Mbps. Only in the BEAD program are CAIs eligible to receive funding to improve speeds to 1Gbps symmetrical.

48. In the NOFO it asks for 3 years of financial audits. If the company was formed in 2023 will financials audits from inception be sufficient?

Any audit materials from the last 3 financial audits should be submitted.

49. How do ISPs prove their engineers are certified in Oklahoma?

There will be a question in the certification section of the application that addresses this topic.

50. When is the deadline to submit applications through the portal?

Applications must be completed and submitted by 11:59 p.m. CT, Monday, July 8, 2024.

51. Is rolling matching accepted, meaning can the matching be paid as the project progresses? Is in-kind matching acceptable?

Yes, the matching schedule will be requested post award and may be done on a rolling basis. In-kind matching is allowable within Oklahoma's CPF program.

52. Can an applicant include middle mile infrastructure in their last-mile application?

Yes, an applicant can include all necessary infrastructure to complete last-mile connections.