Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Grant: Workforce Development

Notice of Funding Opportunity

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1. Introduction

The Virgin Islands Broadband Office (VIBO), a division of the Office of Management and Budget, is pleased to announce the availability of funding for the **Workforce Development Trainings and Explorations for Broadband** through the **Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program**.

The BEAD program aims to close the digital divide and expand broadband access across the United States. This funding opportunity is part of the Virgin Islands' efforts to support the expansion of broadband infrastructure and address the growing need for a skilled workforce in broadband-related fields.

The Virgin Islands Broadband Office seeks proposals from qualified entities to develop and implement comprehensive workforce training programs and career exploration initiatives. These efforts will prepare the local workforce to meet the increasing demand for skilled professionals in broadband infrastructure development, maintenance, and digital support services. The goal of this initiative is to provide critical training to residents, create new employment opportunities, and foster long-term economic growth, while supporting the overall objectives of the BEAD program.

2. Scope of Work

To enhance existing Workforce Development initiatives, the VIBO is issuing this NOFO to select one or more subgrantees to design and implement new broadband Workforce Training programs. This NOFO outlines distinct types of programs for which applicants can seek funding. Respondents are encouraged to apply for one or more programs based on their expertise and the specific populations they plan to target. Suggested approaches for each of these three programs are provided within this NOFO.

2.1. Project Objectives

The objective of the VIBO is to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in a digital world. This initiative aims to bridge the digital divide by developing a highly skilled workforce capable of competing in deployment and non-deployment career fields. The program seeks to provide training and certification opportunities that will create pathways for diverse talent, ensuring inclusive workforce participation. By fostering local expertise, the BEAD Grant Workforce Development program will play a pivotal role in promoting economic growth, enhancing digital equity, and contributing to the long-term sustainability of broadband access across the nation.

The key objectives for this initiative include:

1. **Develop and Implement Broadband Workforce Training Programs**:
   Design and deliver training programs focused on broadband-related technical skills. These may include broadband installation, network maintenance, troubleshooting, cybersecurity, digital literacy, and more specialized skills such as fiber optics installation and network management.

2. **Create Exploration Programs**:
    Offer pathways for individuals to explore careers in broadband and related fields. These programs should introduce participants to key roles in broadband technology, including network support, customer service, cybersecurity, and other technology-oriented careers.

3. **Support Industry Partnerships**:
    Establish collaborations with local employers, industry leaders, community organizations, and educational institutions to create a robust ecosystem of broadband-related opportunities. This could include internships, mentorships, job placement programs, and other workforce development efforts.

4. **Provide Sustainable and Scalable Programs**:
    Ensure that the training programs are adaptable to emerging broadband technologies and scalable to meet growing demand in the broadband sector. The initiative should build a foundation for long-term workforce development that can evolve as the broadband industry grows.

5. **Improve Broadband Coverage and Access**:
    Align training outcomes with the broader goals of expanding broadband access and improving broadband infrastructure across the U.S. Virgin Islands. Well-trained workers will contribute directly to enhancing broadband access, thereby advancing equity and inclusion in the region.

2.2. Project Outcomes

The outcomes of the BEAD Grant Workforce Development program will include the creation of a well-trained, diverse workforce capable of meeting the growing demand of a digital world. The program aims to train and certify a significant number of individuals, with a focus on underserved communities, ensuring access to high-quality, sustainable career opportunities in the broadband and digital sector. Successful outcomes will also include improved local capacity for broadband deployment and maintenance, enhanced digital equity, and long-term economic growth in underserved areas. Through these efforts, the BEAD Grant program will contribute to the expansion of broadband access and digital equity, driving both community development and national connectivity goals.

The expected outcomes of the initiative include:

*   **A certified, skilled workforce** capable of supporting broadband infrastructure projects in the Virgin Islands.

*   **Increased employment opportunities** in the broadband industry for residents.

*   **Enhanced broadband access and equity** throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands, driven by skilled workers contributing to broadband expansion efforts.

*   A **long-term capacity-building impact** on the local workforce, with scalable, sustainable workforce solutions designed to meet the evolving needs of the broadband industry.

2.3. Eligible Program Examples

Examples of programs include but are not limited to the following:

Broadband Technician Training Program

- **Overview:** A local training program designed to provide individuals with the technical skills necessary to work as broadband technicians, including fiber optic installation, network maintenance, and troubleshooting.

- **Target Audience:** High school graduates, veterans, underserved populations, and job seekers in the USVI.

- **Focus:** Fiber optic installation, broadband network troubleshooting, and broadband equipment maintenance.

Fiber Optic Technician Certification Programs

- **Overview:** Partnering with national certification bodies like **The Fiber Optic Association (FOA)** to offer certification programs in fiber optic technologies.

- **Target Audience:** Individuals interested in specialized broadband roles, including fiber optic splicing and testing.

- **Focus:** Fiber optic installation, network construction, maintenance, and splicing certifications.

Broadband Apprenticeship Programs

- **Overview:** Apprenticeship programs for broadband technicians, offering a combination of on-the-job training and classroom education.

- **Target Audience:** Young adults, veterans, and individuals looking to transition to a broadband-related career.

- **Focus:** Broadband infrastructure installation, troubleshooting, maintenance, and customer support.

USVI Digital Literacy and Broadband Skills Training Program for Job Placement

- Overview: A digital literacy program focusing on basic broadband-related skills to enhance access to broadband technologies and improve digital equity across the islands.

- Target Audience: Residents with limited or no prior experience with broadband, including older adults and individuals in rural areas.

- Focus: Internet access, digital tools, online communication, and basic troubleshooting.

Veterans Broadband Workforce Development Program

- **Overview:** A program targeting veterans transitioning to civilian life by providing specialized training in broadband and telecommunications fields.

- **Target Audience:** Veterans living in the USVI seeking career transition support.

- **Focus:** Broadband infrastructure installation, customer service, network repair, and fiber optics.

Broadband and Telecommunications Business Incubator Program

- **Overview:** A program that helps foster local broadband businesses by providing training in entrepreneurship and technology management, encouraging the growth of broadband-related startups.

- **Target Audience:** Entrepreneurs and small businesses looking to enter the broadband or telecommunications sector in the USVI.

- **Focus:** Business management, network design, broadband customer service, and technology innovation.

Telecommunications and Broadband Network Engineering Training

- **Overview:** Offer programs that teach individuals advanced skills in broadband network engineering, including the design, installation, and management of broadband networks.

- **Target Audience:** Engineering students, professionals looking to reskill, and high school graduates interested in telecommunications.

- **Focus:** Network engineering, wireless broadband technologies, broadband infrastructure development, and cybersecurity.

High School and College/ University Broadband Explorations and Internship Programs

- **Overview:** A youth-focused program designed to offer University and high school students internships with local broadband service providers and network installation companies.

- **Target Audience:** University and High school students in the USVI.

- **Focus:** Exposure to broadband technology, on-the-job training, fiber optic installation, and network troubleshooting.

Broadband Network Support and Customer Service Training

- **Overview:** A program designed to train individuals in network support and customer service roles within the broadband industry, ensuring quality service delivery.

- **Target Audience:** Individuals interested in customer-facing roles within broadband service providers or support centers.

- **Focus:** Customer service skills, troubleshooting, billing, and broadband network support.

USVI Broadband Workforce Development Scholarships

- **Overview:** A scholarship program to provide financial support for individuals pursuing broadband-related certification programs or associate degrees in broadband technology, network installation, or telecom engineering.

- **Target Audience:** High school graduates, low-income individuals, and community members seeking to enter broadband-related fields.

- **Focus:** Fiber optics, network administration, broadband infrastructure, and telecommunications engineering.

Wireless and Satellite Broadband Technician Training

- **Overview:** A program to train individuals on the deployment and maintenance of wireless and satellite broadband systems, especially important for serving remote and island communities in the USVI.

- **Target Audience:** Individuals seeking specialized skills in wireless broadband and satellite communication systems.

- **Focus:** Wireless network installation, satellite broadband services, and troubleshooting.

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3. Funding Mechanism and Disbursements

The BEAD Grant Workforce Development program will utilize a competitive funding mechanism to support state and local entities, educational institutions, and workforce development organizations in their efforts to train individuals for broadband-related careers. Disbursements will be made based on the successful submission of project proposals that align with the program's goals of enhancing broadband access and developing a skilled workforce. Fundings will follow a performance-based disbursement tied to measurable milestones such as the initiation of program, number of individuals trained, certifications awarded, and employment placements. This approach ensures accountability and encourages continuous progress toward meeting the workforce demands of broadband expansion.

3.1. Funding Availability

VIBO will provide funding to selected applicants to support the development and implementation of workforce training programs. The final award amount will be capped at $500,000.00 per award. Applications will be evaluated based on the scale and scope of the proposed project, as well as the quality of the application.

3.2. Funding Disbursement

Funds will be disbursed on a **reimbursement basis** in accordance with a mutually agreed-upon work plan. The disbursement process will occur after the completion of approved milestones, which may include:

- **Initial setup and curriculum development (Due within 90 days of award)**

- **Program launch and participant recruitment**

- **Ongoing program delivery**

- **Completion of evaluations and final reports**

Recipients will be required to submit periodic reports that detail progress toward project milestones, and funding will be released based on the satisfactory completion of each milestone.

3.3. Allowable Use of Funds

Allowable uses of funds under the BEAD Grant Workforce Development program include the development and delivery of training curricula, certification programs, and apprenticeships designed to build the necessary skills for broadband infrastructure deployment, maintenance, and support. Funds may be used for hiring qualified instructors, purchasing equipment and technology for training purposes, and establishing training facilities in underserved communities. Additionally, grant recipients can allocate funds to create partnerships with local employers, workforce development organizations, and educational institutions to enhance career pathways for individuals. Funds can also support outreach and recruitment efforts to ensure diverse participation, as well as the provision of support services such as job placement assistance and ongoing professional development for participants.

Funds may be used for the following purposes:

- **Personnel Costs**: Salaries and wages for **qualified staff** responsible for developing and delivering the training programs.

- **Training Materials and Curriculum Development**: Expenses related to creating or purchasing educational materials, training software, and simulation tools.

- **Facilities and Equipment**: Rental costs for training facilities, equipment for broadband technology, and other resources needed for program delivery.

- **Marketing and Outreach**: Costs associated with outreach campaigns to recruit participants, raise awareness of the programs, and engage communities.

- **Evaluation and Reporting**: Costs for assessing the program's effectiveness and preparing final reports to VIBO.

3.4. Non-allowable uses of funds

Non-allowable uses of funds under the BEAD Grant Workforce Development program include any expenditures not directly related to the development, delivery, or enhancement of broadband and digital workforce training and certification programs. Funds may not be used for general administrative costs, including overhead or office supplies unrelated to training activities. Additionally, funds cannot be used for non-broadband related workforce development initiatives or activities that do not directly contribute to the expansion of broadband and digital literacy. Funding cannot be used for the purchase of land or construction of permanent facilities.

Other examples include:

- Administrative costs unrelated to program delivery

- Lobbying or advocacy expenses

- Non-educational or non-program-related expenses

4. Work Plan

Applicants are required to submit a work plan as part of their application. A work plan is a detailed document or framework that outlines the tasks, activities, goals, and timelines required to complete a specific project or initiative. It serves as a roadmap for how the project will be executed and helps guide the team in managing resources, monitoring progress, and achieving objectives effectively.

Applicants must submit a detailed **work plan** that includes the following:

- **Program Design**: A description of the training and exploration programs, including the target audience, content, format, and intended outcomes.

- **Implementation Timeline**: A timeline outlining each phase of the project, from initial planning through to program completion.

- **Key Milestones**: Clear milestones to track the progress of the project, including training development, participant recruitment, program delivery, and final evaluation.

- **Expected Outcomes**: Detailed, measurable outcomes that align with the project's objectives and deliverables.

- **Evaluation Framework**: A comprehensive evaluation plan that assesses both the short-term and long-term effectiveness of the program, including participant success rates, job placement, and impact on broadband access.

A well-prepared work plan helps ensure that all team members understand their roles, keeps the project on track, and ensures that resources are allocated efficiently to meet deadlines and goals.

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5. Key Requirements and Transparency

The BEAD Grant Workforce Development program requires recipients to ensure that funds are used efficiently and transparently to achieve the program's goals of building a skilled broadband workforce. Key requirements include strict adherence to established project timelines, clear reporting on training milestones, and the documentation of all expenses related to the use of grant funds. Recipients must implement measures to ensure equitable access to training programs, especially for underserved and underrepresented communities. Transparency will be maintained through regular reporting to funding agencies, including detailed financial and program progress updates, which will be made publicly available as required. Additionally, recipients must adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, including those related to non-discrimination and financial accountability, to ensure that the funds are used for their intended purpose of workforce development in the broadband sector.

5.1.   Eligibility

Proposals will be accepted from:

- Educational institutions (including vocational schools, community colleges, and universities)

- Workforce development agencies

- Government Agencies

- Non-profit organizations with a focus on broadband or workforce development

- Private sector entities with expertise in broadband technologies or training program delivery

5.2.   Compliance

All activities funded under this initiative must comply with federal, territorial, and local regulations, including all applicable guidelines and requirements set forth in the BEAD program. This includes adherence to nondiscrimination policies, environmental protections, and relevant labor laws. All subrecipients are required to adhere to the Department of Commerce Terms and Conditions outline in the IIJA, BEAD NOFO, 2 CFR 200.

5.3.   Transparency and Accountability

The Infrastructure Act contains robust reporting requirements for Eligible Entities and subgrantees, and requires NTIA, the Commission, and other agencies to coordinate to make information regarding federal broadband funding, low-cost plans, and other aspects of the BEAD Program readily available to and understandable by the public. NTIA will fully fulfill its obligations possible. Recipients of U.S. Department of Commerce and NTIA grants also should be cognizant of the access to records requirements set forth at 2 C.F.R. § 200.337.

Recipients of funding must maintain transparency and accountability in their use of funds. All financial records and expenditures must be publicly reported on a quarterly basis. This will include details on how funds are being used, progress toward milestones, and key program outcomes.

Subgrantees play a vital role in ensuring the successful implementation of the BEAD Program, with a responsibility to uphold transparency, accountability, and oversight. Their efforts are essential to achieve, among other objectives:

1. Minimizing opportunities for waste, fraud, and abuse.

2. Ensuring that grant recipients use funds to further the Program's goals, in compliance with the Infrastructure Act, 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards), the terms and conditions of the award, and relevant laws.

3. Providing the public with the ability to understand and monitor the grants and subgrants issued under the Program.

Subgrantees are also required to:

1. Meet the reporting requirements outlined in Section I.E of the BEAD NOFO.

2. Adhere to the obligations outlined in 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions.

3. Set up and publicly share contact details (telephone numbers and email addresses) for their internal ethics office or a comparable entity to report any incidents of waste, fraud, or abuse related to the Program. Subgrantees must provide copies of materials used for this purpose if requested by the Federal Program Officer.

5.4. Reporting

The eligible entity and subgrantees will be required to comply with reporting requirements. Subgrantees must submit quarterly reports, to monitor the effectiveness of the funds used. Each report should detail the types of projects and activities funded by the subgrant, along with the duration of the subgrant. A reporting template will be provided to all subgrantees. The report should include:

Summary of Activities Conducted: An outline of key activities carried out during the reporting period, as described in the project's scope.

Number of Participants Engaged and Demographics: Data on the number of individuals who participated in programs, trainings, or events, including their engagement status (completed or in progress).

List of Supporting Organizations: Identification of any community groups, industry partners, or educational institutions that supported the efforts, detailing their roles and contributions.

Resources and Materials Utilized: A description of any curriculum, training materials, equipment, or resources developed or used in the program.

Outcomes Achieved: Key achievements, such as certifications awarded, workshops held, or other milestones met during the reporting period.

Employment and Placement Outcomes: The number of participants who secured employment, apprenticeships, or internships in the broadband industry, along with their employers' names.

Outreach and Marketing Efforts: A summary of promotional campaigns, including the channels used (e.g., social media, community events, partnerships), and relevant engagement metrics.

Technical Support and Participant Services Provided: A description of services like mentorship, counseling, and technical assistance provided to participants, along with impact metrics.

Continuous Improvement and Lessons Learned: Insights gained during the reporting period, such as successful engagement strategies, relationship management with industry partners, or improvements in delivery methods.

Budget Update: Recipients will be required to keep detailed records of their expenditures and provide access to these records for audits or evaluations by VIBO or other authorized entities. The report should include an excel spreadsheet with an itemized account of expenses incurred during the reporting period and the overall project duration.

5.5. Single Audit Requirement

Single Audits are required from all recipients who expend $750,000.00 or more in aggregate federal financial assistance within their fiscal year.

• Single Audits are comprised of two main sections:

1. Financial Statements: Audit of a recipient's financial statements, policies, documentation, and system of internal controls

2. Programmatic Compliance Evaluation: Test of a recipient's compliance with the requirements of their federal awards which often assesses the effectiveness of award spending and evaluate performance progress

Note: 2 CFR updates published in the Federal Register on April 22, 2024 are not applicable to the BEAD grant.

For-profit organizations and foreign entities are NOT subject to Single Audits unless required due to unique circumstances. The agreement with the for-profit subrecipient must describe applicable compliance requirements and the for-profit subrecipient's compliance responsibility. Methods to ensure compliance for Federal awards made to for-profit subrecipients may include pre-award audits, monitoring during the agreement, and post-award audits." 2 CFR 200.501 (h).

5.6 Funding Availability and Limitation of Liability

Funding for the Program is contingent upon the continued availability of appropriations. Publication of this NOFO does not oblige NTIA, NIST or the Department of Commerce to award any specific project or other eligible activity or to obligate any available funds. NTIA will recommend for funding only projects and other eligible activities that are deemed likely to achieve the BEAD Program goals and for which funds are available

6. Proposal Submission

Interested applicants must submit their proposals electronically to the Virgin Islands Broadband Office (VIBO) through the designated submission portal at https://omb.vi.gov/bead/. The submission should include:

1. **A completed application form** (available on the submission portal)

2. **A detailed work plan** as outlined above

3. **A budget proposal**, including a breakdown of projected costs

4. **A timeline for project delivery**

5. **Evidence of organizational capacity and relevant past performance**

6. **Letters of support** from local employers, community organizations, or other stakeholders (if applicable)

7. **Supporting Documentation** to include Business Licenses, GVI Vendor Number, Certificate of Good Standing, Letter of Credit, SAM Registration, Cash Flow Statement, Org Chart, Resume of

Proposed Program Personnel.

Potential subgrantees must submit their responses to the Vibo.vi.gov website as a single PDF file, with a maximum size of 10 MB.

If a potential subgrantee decides to amend their submitted proposal, they must submit the entire revised proposal, labeled as "Amended Proposal," before the submission deadline. The VIBO will treat amended proposals as replacements for all previous submissions.

6.1. Questions & Answers

Any questions regarding this NOFO or the evaluation process must be submitted in writing via email to bead@omb.vi.gov , with the subject line "Q&A NOFO Workforce Development." Telephone inquiries will not be accepted. Answers to questions will be posted on the VIBO website at https://www.Vibo.vi.gov. Questions must be submitted by April 10, 2025, at 4:30 PM, and answers will be provided by April 11, 2024, at 4:30 PM. The OMB reserves the right to extend this deadline depending on the volume and timing of questions.

Expression of Interest

The VIBO encourages potential Proponents to express their interest in this program by emailing bead@omb.vi.gov by April 13, 2025, at 4:30 PM. The email should include the following details:

Name of the Proponent Entity

Name of the Point of Contact, including email and phone number

Subject line: "Workforce Training NOFO | Interest from [Proponent Entity Name]"

Please note, submitting an Expression of Interest does not obligate the Proponent to submit a proposal.

Webinar

The VIBO will host a Webinar to present the program and answer questions from interested entities on April 10, 2025. A link to the Webinar will be posted on the VIBO website https://www.Vibo.vi.gov/ and sent to organizations that have expressed interest as outlined in the previous section. Answers to questions raised during the Webinar will be included in the Q&A document, which will be published on April 13, 2025, to ensure transparency and equal access to information.

Allowed and Prohibited Communications

Only questions and requests for clarifications related to this NOFO, as per the Questions and Answers section, will be accepted. Communications from prospective subgrantees with VIBO officials, OMB, other government entities, the Government of the Virgin Islands, or any associated parties regarding this NOFO or its selection process are prohibited during the submission and selection phases. Non-compliance with this rule may result in the disqualification of applications. Verbal inquiries or emails sent to unlisted addresses will not be considered by the VIBO.

6.2. Submission Deadline

Proposals must be submitted by **April 28, 2025**. Late submissions will not be considered. All submissions must be made through the official VIBO portal.

7. Proposal Evaluation and Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated based on a set of established criteria to ensure that only high-quality projects receive BEAD funding. The evaluation will consider the following factors:

Total Points: 100

Technical Merit (45 points possible)

- **Project purpose (15 points):** Reviewers will consider the extent to which potential subgrantees propose a project that aligns with one or more of the program's objectives. Reviewers will consider how proposed projects will prioritize the needs of the community and the project outcomes of the proposed program, especially those projects that align with the goals of the Vision 2040 plan.

- **Project Impact and Reach (15 points):** Applications will receive full points for this section if a proposed project can demonstrate specific needs in a service area that VIBO has identified as low-income and/or unserved. The locations will be identified on a service area map that will be published on the BEAD website. Prospective subgrantees will need to provide comprehensive community statistics that reflect the potential need in the community for the proposed program, including but not limited to the estimated number of households or residents that may benefit from the program, the demographics of the impacted community (social, education, age, financial, and any covered populations as identified in the Digital Equity Act. Subgrantees will need to provide context as to how and why they selected their proposed project area.

- **Project feasibility (15 points):** Potential subgrantees will be scored on the comprehensiveness and appropriateness of the project, including the clarity and level of detail of the proposed project plan. Reviewers will assess the extent to which proposed programs stimulate the adoption of broadband for telehealth, distance learning, telework and entrepreneurship, economic growth, and job creation. Reviewers will also consider the reasonableness of the program timeline and the likeliness of program success.

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Qualifications and Expertise (20 points possible)

- **Technical and operational capability (10 points):** Potential subgrantees will need to, at minimum, demonstrate capability of operating the proposed program with appropriately skilled staffing with high technical understanding of proposed digital literacy activities.

- **Financial and managerial capacity (10 points):** Potential subgrantees will need to show proof of financial good standing and must demonstrate a substantial workforce able to fulfill the needs of the proposed program in a timely manner.

Local Coordination (10 points possible)

- **Proof of community engagement in proposed service area (5 points):** Potential subgrantees will need to provide record that they engaged the community for which they are submitting a

proposal to serve, documenting that they considered the needs of the community when developing their proposal. Potential subgrantees who do not provide proof of engagement will receive no points in the category.

- **Letter(s) of support (5 points):** Potential subgrantees are requested to submit at least one letter of support from collaborating organizations (e.g., CAI where proposed services will be implemented). All collaborating organizations are encouraged to submit a letter of support in the application package submitted by the potential subgrantee for full points. Potential subgrantees who do not submit any letter(s) of support will receive no points in this category.

Project Budget (15 points possible)

- **Cost Efficiency (10 points):** When assessing points for cost efficiency of the budget, there shall be a maximum number of points awarded to the lowest priced bidder. The points allocated to higher-priced bidders should be equal to the lowest bidder's price multiplied by the maximum points available for price, divided by the higher proposal price. In instances where projects are vastly different in scope, points will be awarded to potential subgrantees that address the needs of impacted community and/or service areas.

- **Budget Transparency (5 points):** the lowest score will be given to proposals that are deemed to have vague or unclear budget allocations, lacking sufficient detail or justification for expenses. A moderate scoring will be used to reflect a clear budget with reasonable line items and justifications for most expenditures. The maximum score is awarded for a detailed and transparent budget, where every major expenditure is clearly documented with well-supported justifications, demonstrating a strong level of planning and financial transparency.

Other (10 points possible) – The VIBO will assess an additional 10 points to projects that are similar in scope to determine which will be funded to avoid duplicative initiatives.

- **Minority Business Enterprise, Woman Business Enterprise, or Labor Surplus Area Firm (5 points):** Full points will be awarded to any potential subgrantee meeting one of these designations.

- **Sustainability (5 points):** Potential subgrantees will need to provide a project sustainability plan after the end of the BEAD funding term (June 2032). Points will be awarded based on a succinct plan for project continuity passed 2032, and how the funded program will be maintained financially and operationally.

Scoring Summary:

Category	Maximum Points
Technical Merit (45 points possible)	
Project purpose	15
Project Impact and Reach	15
Project feasibility	15
Qualifications and Expertise (20 points possible)	
Technical and operational capability	10
Financial and managerial capacity	10
Local Coordination (10 points possible)	
Proof of community engagement in proposed service area	5
Letter(s) of support	5
Project Budget (15 points possible)	
Cost Efficiency	10
Budget Transparency	5
Other (10 points possible)	
Minority Business Enterprise, Woman Business Enterprise, or Labor Surplus Area Firm	5
Sustainability	5
Total	**100**

In the event the review team identifies two or more competing proposals with the same or similar project scopes, five additional points will be awarded to the applicant that demonstrates how the project will adopt environmentally friendly approaches like energy efficient technology and practices and utilization of renewable energy sources wherever possible. Should such criteria apply, the reasonableness of the budget criteria identified above will be utilized in scoring as the determining factor.

Reviewers will score all submitted proposals that make it through the initial vetting phase and risk assessment using the scoring template above. The VIBO will select the potential subgrantees who average the highest score and do not overlap project locations. The broadband office will approve and fund proposals from

the highest score on down until all available funds are expended. Safeguards will be implemented to ensure diversity and inclusion of all goals and communities/geographic regions of the territory benefit.

The evaluation committee may request additional clarifications or interviews with applicants following the initial review of proposals.

7.1. Selection Timeline

• **Proposal Submission Deadline**: April 28, 2025
• **Evaluation Period**: April 28 - May 9, 2025
• **Award Notification**: May 10 – May 16, 2025
• **Project Start Date**: October 1, 2025

Once evaluations are completed, potential subgrantees will have a predetermined amount of time to conclude contract execution. Failure to comply with VIBO's request for documents, signature, or other delay-inducing situations, may result in the selection of another subgrantee.
For further information or clarification, please contact the Virgin Islands Broadband Office at
bead@omb.vi.gov .

8. Timeline: Important Dates & Deadlines

• **Publication of NOFO**: March 28, 2025
• **Questions & Answers Submission Deadline**: April 10, 2025
• **Proposal Submission Deadline**: April 28, 2025
• **Submission of VIBO Responses to Questions:** April 11, 2025
• **Evaluation Period**: April 28 - May 9, 2025
• **Award Notification**: May 10 – May 16, 2025
• **Project Start Date**: October 1, 2025
• **Project Duration:** 2025-2032

This expanded NOFO provides detailed guidance on the objectives, requirements, and timelines for applicants, ensuring a structured and transparent process for those seeking funding to develop broadband workforce training programs in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

9. Appendix 1 – Work Plan and Budget

Registration number of the organization (EIN)	
Copy of Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov	
Address of principal offices	
Name of the point of contact	
Email of the point of contact	
Phone of the point of contact	
Name of the legal representative	
Position of legal representative	
Legal status of legal representative	
City of residence of legal representative	
Email of the legal representative	
Phone of the legal representative	

Please indicate which program(s) you are applying for :

Overall approach
Please describe your organization and explain what is your overall plan / approach to be able to deliver on the goals of the program.

Program Design and Innovation
1. Detail your organization's experience in training / education and workforce development, including examples of specific projects / programs developed or implemented.
2. Explain how your program will be accessible to various student groups, including underrepresented populations. Highlight any wrap-around services you will provide (e.g., counseling, mentorship, or job placement assistance). Please describe the eligibility criteria that will be applied to evaluate students to be accepted in your program(s).
3. Describe your specific approach to targeting and engaging women in your program.
4. Explain any innovative solutions or methods your program will use to capture the attention and interest of students and promote careers in the broadband sector. Please explain why that approach is innovative.

Joint Development
1. Describe how your program has been developed with input from industry professionals and/or key stakeholders to ensure that the program addresses real workforce development needs in the Virgin Islands.
2. Explain any partnerships you have with employers, training providers, or industry associations that will support the development and implementation of the program.
3. Describe the commitment of your organization's leadership to the program, as well as their engagement in its development and implementation

Cost- Efficacy and Efficiency

Detail your plan for scaling the program in the future.

Sustainability and Affordability
1. Explain your plans to ensure your program(s) will be free or low-cost.
2. Provide a plan for how your program(s) will remain sustainable after this funding period.
3. Describe how your program(s) will incorporate paid work experience opportunities for participants (if applicable)

Proposed Program Budget and Total Outcomes – please fill out and provide detail via attachment

Instructions: The table below provides an example on a manner in which you can submit the Program Budget requirement. Proposed subgrantees can submit their Proposed Budget in the format and way they deem more appropriate. However, the Proposed Budget should have clear information, including a split per year, per program applying for, and a proposed disbursement schedule for each. Please include the total expected program cost and requested funding by fiscal year (Federal Fiscal Year begins on October 1 and ends on September 30 of the following year).

Overall Program Cost:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
$	$	$	$	$	$

Item Name	Cost Per Unit	Quantity	Total	Note/Explanation
Curriculum & Training				
E.g., cost of training session for (XX participants)	$50,000	4	$200,000	E.g., cost of staffing and deploying trainers
Community Outreach				
Program Management				

# dedicated resources				E.g., compensation for planned staff hired
Equipment and Materials				

Certification
Please provide below a certification and signature that all the information provided, including appendixes and attachments, is true and accurate.