



ReConnect Program Introduction and Overview

USDA RUS ReConnect Program



Understanding ReConnect

An introduction to eligibility, the application process and other critical information in the FOA

2018
Consolidated
Appropriations
Act

\$600 million
in funding



\$550 million
in funding

2019
Consolidated
Appropriations
Act

ReConnect Program

Pilot program that
provides loans and
grants to extend
broadband service
to rural areas.

Assist rural areas that do not have
sufficient access (10/1) to broadband.

Minimum requirements:
25Mbps down/3Mbps up



LOAN



COMBO



GRANT

Buildout
Speed

25/3 Mbps minimum

25/3 Mbps minimum,
incentive for higher speeds

25/3 Mbps minimum,
incentive for higher speeds

Terms

Max award: \$50 million
2% Interest Rate

Max award: \$50 million
50/50 Loan/Grant
UST Rate

Max award: \$25 million
25% match

Application
Review

Open (non-competitive)

Competitive Scoring

Competitive Scoring

Round 1
Federal
Funds

\$200 million

\$100 million grant +
\$100 million loan

\$200 million

Evaluation and Processing Procedures

Loans

- Loans are accepted, evaluated and processed on a rolling basis

Combo Loan/Grant

- Combination Loan/Grant will be evaluated and scored in a competitive process

Grant

- Grants are evaluated and scored in a competitive process



Who Can Apply?

- States, local governments, or any agency, subdivision, instrumentality, or political subdivision thereof
- A territory or possession of the United States
- An Indian tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act)
- Non-profit entities
- For-profit corporations
- Limited liability companies
- Cooperative or mutual organizations



Application Eligibility Factors

- 2 years of historical unqualified, audited Financial Statements
- Fully complete application
- Timely buildout completion
- Financial feasibility and sustainability
- Technical feasibility
- Service areas
- Fully funded



Eligible Costs

- The construction or improvement of facilities, including buildings and land, required to provide broadband service
- Pre-application expenses (not to exceed 5% of the total award). Costs must be incurred after the publication date of the FOA and be documented
- Costs must be reasonable, allocable, and necessary
- Applications that propose to use any portion of the award or matching funds for any ineligible cost may be rejected



For 100% loans only

The acquisition of an existing system that does not currently provide sufficient access to broadband (limited to 40% of the total loan amount).

Competitive Scoring



**Rurality of
proposed funded
service area**



Farms served



**Performance of
the offered
service**



Business



**Healthcare
centers**



**Educational
facilities**



**Critical
community
facilities**



Tribal lands



**State broadband
activity**

Points Breakdown

- Rurality (population density of 6 people or less) – 25 points
- Farms – 1 point each, up to 20 points
- Performance of service (100/100 Mbps)– 20 points
- Businesses – 1 point each, up to 15 points
- Healthcare Centers – 1 point each, up to 15 points
- Educational Facilities – 1 point each, up to 15 points
- Critical Community Facilities – 1 point each, up to 15 points
- Tribal Lands – 5 points
- State Broadband Activity – up to 20 points

Found in the FOA, Section VII. Application Evaluation Criteria

Application Deadlines

- 100% Grant: May 31, 2019
- 50/50 Loan-Grant: June 21, 2019
- 100% Loan: July 12, 2019

Program Status and Outreach

ReConnect Outreach



Six Technical Assistance Pre-Award Workshops

The workshops gave **447 prospective applicants** the opportunity to learn more about the ReConnect Program.



13 Technical Assistance Webinars

Organized regularly, the webinars engaged **2,480 external participants** interested in the ReConnect Program.



Ongoing Help Desk Support

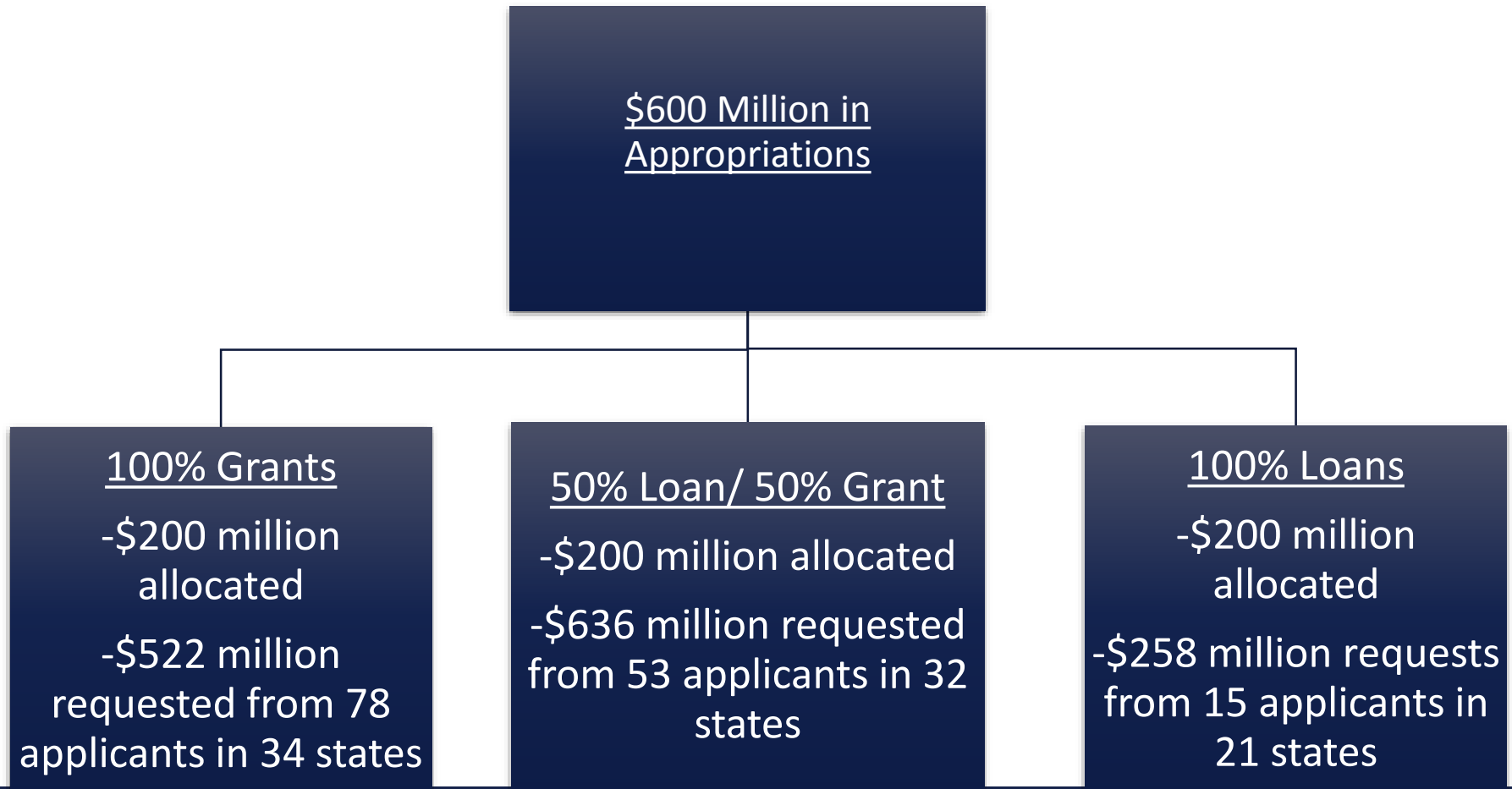
The technical assistance team answered **1,167 questions** received via the Contact Us form on the ReConnect website and through the ReConnect application system.



Workshops Participation



Round 1 Funding



Late 2019 and the Future

- Congress appropriated \$550 Million in additional funding for FY 2019
- USDA expects another Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) to be released in late 2019
 - Requirements and other program details may change in future FOAs





Application Considerations

Key considerations when preparing for the application process

Starting your Application



Online Applications

All applications must be submitted through the online system at <https://reconnect.usda.gov>



System Registration Requirements

- Taxpayer ID Number
- DUNS number
- SAM.gov registration
- USDA Level II eAuthentication

Available Resources

What resources are available and how you can get help during the application process

Available Resources

Resources

- ReConnect website <https://reconnect.usda.gov>
- Fact Sheets and FAQs

OneRD Coordination

- Resources across RD
- Help Desk
- Technical Assistance and Support to Applicants



E-Connectivity Toolkit

On February 6th the USDA Launched its new e-Connectivity Resource Guide

- Features 27 USDA programs that support broadband deployment
- Provides information in an easy-to-use resource guide
- Highlights how e-Connectivity resources are being used today to increase access to broadband service in rural communities



For help or questions contact us at

ReConnect Support Desk

<https://reconnect.usda.gov>

