New Jersey Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application
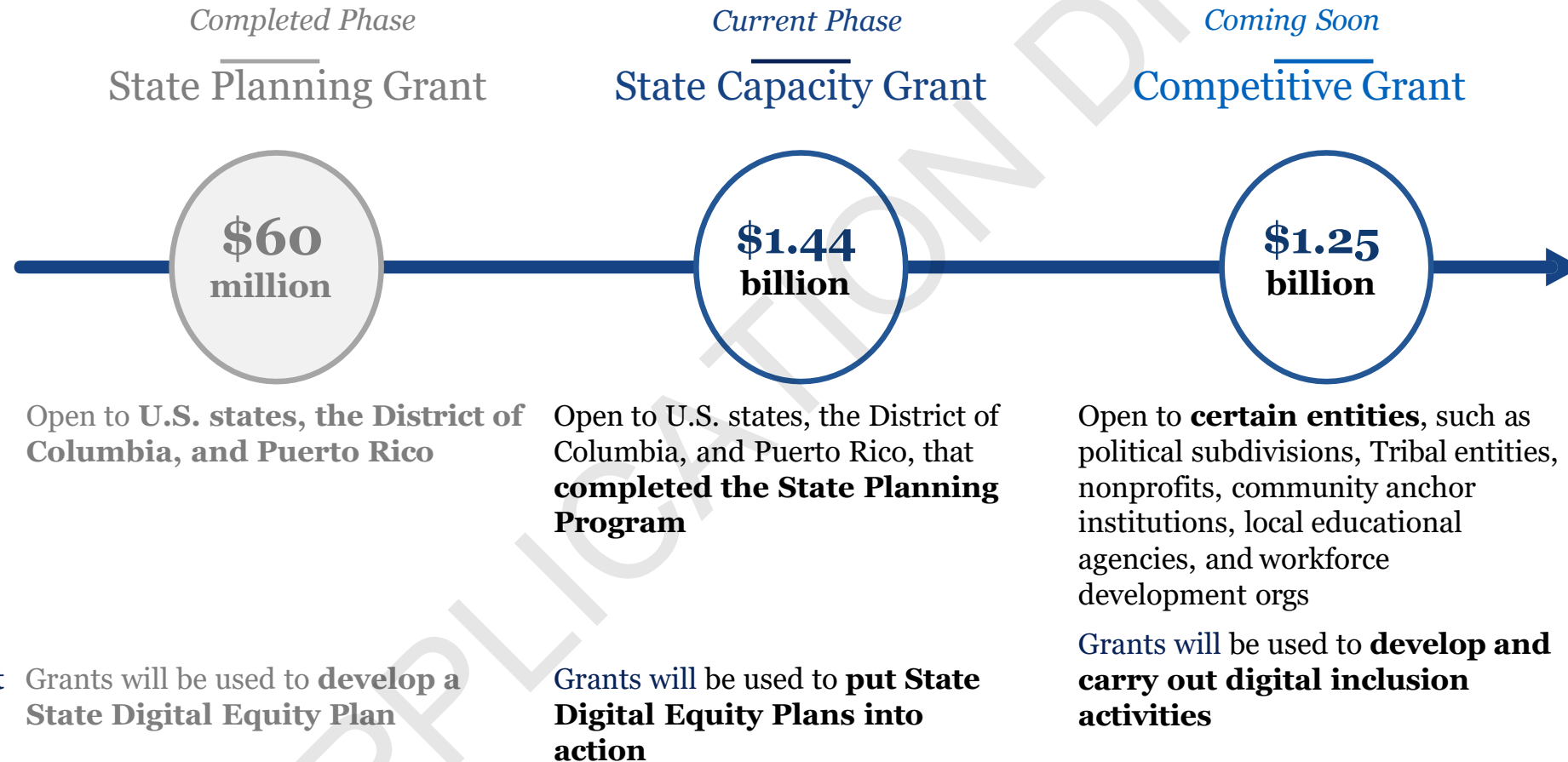
Plan summary and overview

1 Overview of the Digital Equity Programs
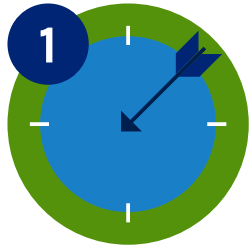
Three Programs to Promote Digital Inclusion & Advance Equity

	Completed Phase	*Current Phase*	*Coming Soon*
	State Planning Grant	State Capacity Grant	Competitive Grant
	$60 million	**$1.44 billion**	**$1.25 billion**
Who	Open to **U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico**	Open to U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, that **completed the State Planning Program**	Open to **certain entities**, such as political subdivisions, Tribal entities, nonprofits, community anchor institutions, local educational agencies, and workforce development orgs
What	Grants will be used to **develop a State Digital Equity Plan**	Grants will be used to **put State Digital Equity Plans into action**	Grants will be used to **develop and carry out digital inclusion activities**

New Jersey has defined a vision for digital equity and four corresponding goals

New Jersey's digital equity vision is for every resident to have the confidence and competence to harness the power of the internet, devices, and digitally accessible services. Digital equity can help New Jersey bridge economic and achievement disparities among all residents, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives with dignity.

Goals

1 Ensure access to **affordable high-speed Internet** for every New Jerseyan

2 Ensure that every New Jerseyan has the **confidence and competence** they need to use computers and the internet to achieve their goals
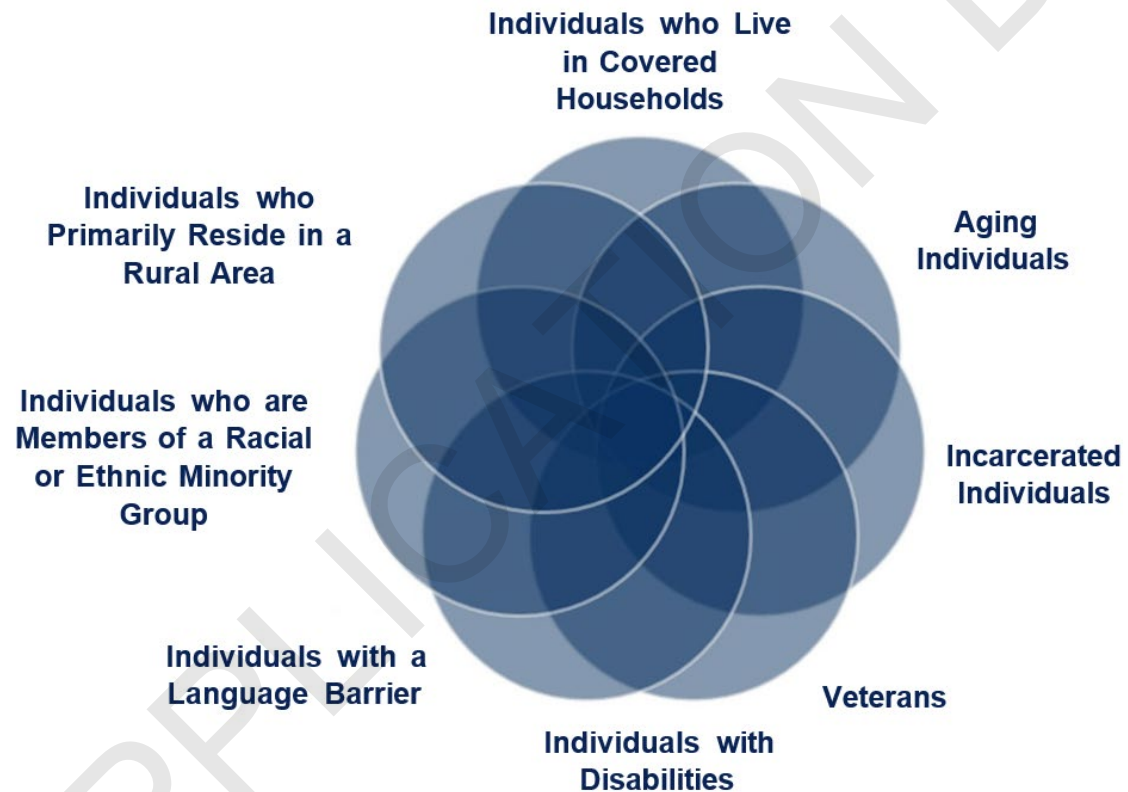
3 Ensure that every New Jerseyan has **access to devices, software, assistive technologies, training, and technical support**

4 Ensure that every New Jerseyan has **efficient and effective digital experiences** with state government

Intersectionality of Covered Populations

Individuals can embody multiple identities. The Capacity Grant Program is intended to support States and Territories as they serve Covered Populations, many of which may have overlapping identities and needs.

Internet For All

2 New Jersey's Draft Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application

Use of Digital Equity Funds

Eligible States and Territories must use their State Digital Equity Capacity Grant funds for specific purposes that are outlined in the NOFO. **Those with a * indicate additional guidance will be provided.**

ELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDS:

Updating or Maintaining Plans

Making Subgrants*

Implementing Plans

Evaluation*

Administrative Costs*

30   Internet For All

1. SDECGP NOFO Section II.C.3.a

3 New Jersey's Use of Digital Equity Funds

Project activities and timelines, key milestones, start/end of major projects

Partnering with OBC in its efforts is the New Jersey State Library (NJSL), an affiliate of Thomas Edison State University (TESU established in 1796. Together, New Jersey will address the needs of targeted Covered Populations with a set of activities designed to empower local organizations to establish programs and services that build digital equity through access to appropriate devices, meaningful opportunities to improve digital literacy skills and ensuring that appropriate technical support is available. (DE Plan p 19)

Activities
Digital Literacy Committee
Community of Practice
State Government Websites
Digital Literacy, Device Access & Technical Support Grant Program
Community Center Digital Connect Capacity Grants (for CPF grantees)

Digital Literacy, Device Access & Technical Support Grant Program.

Timeline: Jan 2025 – ongoing.

- <u>Jan 2025</u> – Representatives selected from digital literacy providers to convene monthly;
- <u>Jan - Mar 2025</u> - Research is conducted by consultant.
- Sept 2026 - Committee proposes standards
- <u>Jan 2026</u> - Standards decision made, approach for baselining and assessment for Covered Populations piloted.

- Measures: Count of organizations implementing Digital Literacy standards (DE Plan p 21, 89-90).

Community of Practice (CoP)

Timeline: Oct 2024 – ongoing.

- Oct 2024 - Call for members.

- Nov 2024 – Begin monthly convening.

- Jan 2025 - Designate governance model and meeting structure for CoP, cultivate long-term relationships.

- Measures: Count of community of practice sessions; number of attendees reporting increased confidence in ability to offer digital. literacy services to Covered Populations. (DE Plan p 90)

State Government Websites

Timeline: March 2025 – ongoing.

An Interagency Taskforce convenes to share best practices that improve the user experience for Covered Populations while protecting resident data and maintain back-end efficiency. Taskforce convenes, holds monthly meetings. Taskforce sets measurable objectives and KPIs to track impact. OBC will report back to NTIA on the aligned approach, targeting Mar 2025.

Measures: Activities prioritized; objectives identified; KPIs established. (DE Plan p 21, 22, 23, 93-94)

Digital Literacy, Device Access and Technical Support Grant Program

Timeline: Oct 2024- Sept 2029:

- Oct 2024 - Application released;
- Dec 2024 applications due;
- Feb 2025 - grants awarded.
- April 2025 - projects start.

- Measures: Number of opportunities for Covered Populations to access digital literacy, devices and technical support at community locations increased (DE Plan p 21, 22, 23, 89-92).

Community Center Digital Connect Capacity Grants (for CPF grantees)

Timeline: Oct 2024- Sept 2029:

- Oct 2024 - Application released;
- Dec 2024 applications due;
- Feb 2025 - grants awarded.
- April 2025 - projects start.

- Measures: Number of opportunities for Covered Populations to access digital literacy, devices and technical support at community locations increased (DE Plan p 21, 22, 23, 89-92).

Ongoing Collaborative Efforts

Digital Equity and Workforce Development Working Groups

- **Collaborate** with OBC/NJSL and suggest activities.

- **Feedback** will help to ensure that the needs of the targeted Covered Populations are being met. (DE Plan p 45, 76-80)

- **Community focus groups** will serve to inform program design and program activities and take place quarterly. (DE Plan p 76-80)

Key partners

Key partners will provide insights on aspects of the DE Capacity grant execution to best reach specified Covered Populations. These contributions may include

- **Workforce agencies/organizations:**
  - insight on employer needs and in-demand digital skills;
  - inform a possible digital literacy credentialing system;
  - identify opportunities to leverage digital literacy standards to meet workforce requirements.

- **Labor/community-based organizations/libraries**:
  - pilot and scale digital equity programs;
  - provide insight on state investments; and
  - partner to create new programs for affordability and device access.

- **Industry partners: create new programs for affordability and device access;**
  - sponsor digital equity programs;
  - provide employer insights on in-demand digital skills; and
  - Inform the design of potential digital literacy credentialing systems.

- **Higher education/training organizations**:
  - develop and implement digital literacy programs for specific Covered Populations;
  - offer degree-related or credentialed coursework in internet technology, adult learning and industry-certifications related to digital technologies and literacy; and
  - provide subject matter expertise

(DE Plan p 30-45, 85-87)

Key Dates to Remember

Application submission and grant award dates for the Capacity Grant Program are described in the NOFO$_1$.

Period of Performance

States and US Territories will be able to spend down grant funds during the **5-year period of performance beginning on the date when the State is awarded grant funds**.

Application Due Date

Applications are due by the following dates for…:

- States, D.C. and Puerto Rico: 60 days after the NOFO is released, **May 28, 2024**
- U.S. Territories: The due date for US Territories' Capacity Grant Applications is **July 31, 2024**
- Native Entities: 315 days after the NOFO is released; the Native Entity *application window opens September 25, 2024* and **closes February 7, 2025**

Issuing Awards

NTIA expects to begin issuing awards to Eligible States on a rolling basis **no later than August 28, 2024**.

What's Next: CHALLENGE PROCESS

BEAD Challenge Registration

To submit a challenge, as per the NTIA guidance, you must represent a **broadband service provider, local government, tribal government,** or **non-profit.** Please fill out the information provided to initiate registration for the challenge process. After your identity has been confirmed, you will be granted credentials to a platform from which you can submit any number of challenges.

Review NTIA's Bead Challenge Process Policy to see the different challenge categories and types to ensure you submit the appropriate evidence for each. When more than 6 locations serviced by the same provider and technology are challenged in a given census block group, the entire census block group will be considered challenged. After the challenge window closes, the rebuttal window will open to provide any counter evidence to a challenge. After the rebuttal window closes, challenges will be adjudicated and the updated map will be used as the basis for allocating BEAD funding across the state.

Visit [the OBC website](#) to access the pre-registration for the Mapping Challenge Process

If you have any questions, please direct inquiries to: **BROADBAND@bpu.nj.gov**

---

* Required

About You

1. Entity Name *

[Enter your answer]

2. Entity Website

[Enter your answer]

3. Primary Contact Name *

[Enter your answer]

4. Primary Contact Email *

[Enter your answer]

5. Primary Contact Number

[Enter your answer]

6. Type of Organization *

[Select your answer ▾]

[Next]