

MIDDLE MILE (I/II) | \$1 BILLION ALLOCATED TO MIDDLE MILE GRANT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT EXPANSION OF NETWORKS

OVERVIEW

Official name: Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure

Funding pool: \$1.00B

Type of program: Direct competitive grant on technology-neutral basis

Program objective: "Encourage the expansion and extension of middle mile infrastructure to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas ... and to promote broadband connection resiliency"

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

- 1 For eligible entities meeting **at least two of five conditions:**
 - Adopt "fiscally sustainable middle mile strategies"
 - Commit to offering non-discriminatory interconnect
 - Identify specific, documented and sustainable demand for middle mile interconnect
 - Identify conditions/resources to speed up project
 - Demonstrate benefits to national security interests

- 2 **Eligible entities must also:**
 - Agree to prioritize connecting to unserved areas, connecting to non-contiguous trust lands, or offering wholesale carrier-neutral service at reasonable rate
 - Offer interconnection "in perpetuity ... on reasonable rates and terms"

Note: funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides



MIDDLE MILE (II/II) | LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE IS BROAD WITH REGARDS TO ELIGIBLE ENTITIES AND ELIGIBLE USES

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Can be one or a partnership of multiple:

- State or its political subdivisions
- Tribal government
- Tech company
- Electric utility, utility cooperative or public utility district
- Telecom company or cooperative,
- Nonprofit foundation, corporation, institution, or association
- Regional planning counsel
- Native entity
- Economic development authority

ELIGIBLE COSTS & ACTIVITIES

Middle mile grants can be used for "**the construction, improvement, or acquisition of middle mile infrastructure**"

Middle mile infrastructure broadly means "*any broadband infrastructure that does not connect directly to an end-user location, including an anchor institution,*" **and includes:**

- Leased dark fiber, interoffice transport, backhaul, carrier-neutral internet exchange facilities, carrier-neutral submarine cable landing stations, undersea cables, transport connectivity to data centers, special access transport, and other similar services
- Wired or private wireless broadband infrastructure, including microwave capacity, radio tower access, and other services or infrastructure for a private wireless network, e.g., towers, fiber, and microwave links