<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awarding Agency Name</th>
<th>Commerce And Econ Opp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency Contact</td>
<td>Tim Laffey (<a href="mailto:broadband@illinois.gov">broadband@illinois.gov</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcement Type</td>
<td>Initial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Assistance Instrument</td>
<td>Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Opportunity Number</td>
<td>FY23-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Opportunity Title</td>
<td>Digital Equity Capacity Kickstarter Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSFA Number</td>
<td>420-27-3170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSFA Popular Name</td>
<td>Digital Equity Capacity Kickstarter Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated Number of Awards</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Total Program Funding</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Award Range</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Funding</td>
<td>Federal and State</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indirect Costs Allowed</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restrictions on Indirect Costs</td>
<td>Yes : NICRA limit</td>
</tr>
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<td>Posted Date</td>
<td>06/30/2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Date Range</td>
<td>06/30/2023 - 08/01/2023 : 5:00PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Application Link</td>
<td>Please select the entire address below and paste it into the browser... <a href="https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/3170-2571.html">https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/3170-2571.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance Session</td>
<td>Offered : Yes, Mandatory : No, Date : 06/29/2023 : 12:00PM, Registration link : <a href="https://registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/unpacking-the-deck-nofo">https://registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/unpacking-the-deck-nofo</a></td>
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</table>
A. Program Description

Notice of Funding Opportunity Intent
The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (the “Department” or “DCEO”) is issuing this Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”) to support expansion of broadband access, adoption, and use initiatives among Illinois broadband and digital equity stakeholders, such as communities and community-based organizations. Through this NOFO, the Department will fund proposals that promote specific digital equity outcomes – such as local outreach and engagement, added digital navigator capacity, public access expansion, or feasibility study.

Program Description
The Digital Equity Capacity Kickstarter program represents an integral and strategic component of the State of Illinois’s Connect Illinois vision and commitment to broadband access, adoption, and use – all through the lens of digital equity and inclusion. The program will serve as a bridge to forthcoming federal Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program funding per the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

The Capacity Kickstarter program complements other State funding opportunities, such as the Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Program. Administered by the Illinois Office of Broadband (IOB), Connect Illinois invests in new broadband infrastructure to spur advances in broadband access, adoption, and use. Supporting digital skill building, broadband adoption and use, and device access through the Capacity Kickstarter program contributes to the Connect Illinois vision.

Applications should cover one or more of the following categories focused on access, adoption, and use:

(a) Outreach and Adoption
   - Facilitate awareness of and enrollment in low-cost broadband programs, such as the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Related activities may include:
     - Conducting outreach to community members;
     - Supporting enrollment in ACP and other low-cost broadband offerings; and
     - Complementing initiatives funded by the FCC ACP Outreach Grant.

(b) Digital Skill Building, Navigation and Use
   - Serve as the primary point of contact for community members seeking guidance and support around digital literacy, digital skills building, device access, and home broadband needs;
   - Provide advice, assistance, and tech support to community members on the use of digital tools and platforms, including but not limited to, email, word processing software, tele-healthcare, remote learning, job applications, social media, and general web use; and
   - Coach, train, and guide residents individually or in group settings on how to use their home internet service and devices to meet their day-to-day needs and achieve their goals.

(c) Community Technology Center Access
• Establish, administer, and expand Community Technology Centers (CTCs) and support basic computer literacy training programs through these centers; and
• Provide access to computers, internet connectivity, and related training to Illinois communities with demonstrable need.

(d) Access Expansion Feasibility
• Identify and advance a community’s broadband access vision and goals;
• Evaluate market options, consumer demand, and stakeholder alignment;
• Engage internet service providers and build public sector leadership; and
• Consider next steps for public-private partnership, grant funding, etc. to increase broadband access and connectivity.

Performance Goals and Measures
Applications should be prepared to meet the following requirements:
• Commitment to measuring progress and identifying, refining, and/or applying approaches that are scalable or replicable to meet broader community, regional, or statewide needs.
• Category-specific activities and outcomes per Program Description, including:
  (a) Number of ACP outreach attempts, interactions, and enrollments;
  (b) Number of digital navigation outreach attempts and interactions; or
  (c) Number of CTC patron visits, digital literacy trainings offered, digital literacy patrons served (for each, include both total and unique numbers)

Other Information
For purposes of this program, the terms broadband access, adoption, and use have the following meaning:
• Broadband Access refers to the availability of wireline broadband service of at least 100/20 megabits per second (Mbps), a performance standard recognized by the Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Program and various federal broadband funding and regulatory agencies.
• Broadband Adoption refers to daily access to the Internet: at speeds, quality and capacity necessary to accomplish common tasks; with the digital skills necessary to participate online; and on a personal device and secure, convenient network.
• Broadband Use refers to how broadband is used by individual households, businesses, or community anchor institutions – be it for improved quality of life, employment or commercial opportunities, economic development, or any number of related applications in areas such as distance learning, telehealth, or precision agriculture.

In addition, the term “affordability” is often used when considering the price facing consumers for devices, broadband subscription services, and related installation fees. As a result, affordability impacts various aspects of the Connect Illinois vision – including broadband access, adoption, and use.

B. Funding Information
This grant program is utilizing federal American Rescue Plan Act funding resources appropriated from funds appropriated by the general assembly. Total amount of funding expected to be awarded through this NOFO is $1,000,000. Awards will range from $30,000 to $300,000. The Department expects to make 20-30 awards through this NOFO.

Anticipated start date for awards is July 1, 2023. The period of performance is expected to be July 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024.

Applicants must submit a project narrative that describes in detail how the award will be executed. The project narrative should include enough information for DCEO to understand the scope of the project, the
budget, including a detailed breakdown of the costs associated with each budget line and any additional necessary detail to enable DCEO to manage the grant agreement activity against planned project performance. The Project Narrative must include evidence of capacity, quality and need as defined in Section E.1.

The release of this NOFO does not obligate the Department to make an award.

C. Eligibility Information

An entity must be registered in the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/, at the time of grant application. The portal will verify that the entity:

- Has a valid FEIN number (https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/taxpayer-identification-numbers-tin#:~:text=You%20can%20use%20the%20IRS%27s,for%20Individual%20Taxpayer%20Identification%20Number);
- Has a valid UEI number (https://sam.gov);
- Has a current SAM.gov registration (https://sam.gov);
- Is not on the Federal Excluded Parties List (verified at https://sam.gov);
- Is in Good Standing with the Illinois Secretary of State, as applicable (https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/business_services/corp.html);
- Is not on the Illinois Stop Payment list (verified once entity is registered in GATA Grantee Portal); and

Marking SAM.gov registrations as “public” will allow the GATA Grantee Portal to expedite the review of the federal information. Making the SAM.gov registration “private” will not prevent the review; however, it will slow down the review process.

Entities on the Illinois Stop Payment List and/or the Federal Excluded Parties List at time of application submission will not be considered for an award.

An automated email notification to the entity alerts them of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., not in good standing with the Secretary of State). A federal Debarred and Suspended status cannot be remediated.

Pursuant to the policy of the Illinois Office of the Comptroller, to receive grant funds from the State of Illinois, a grantee must be considered a regarded entity by the IRS for federal income tax purposes. Disregarded entities will not be eligible to receive grant funds.

1. Eligible Applicants include:

Eligible applicants include:
- 1. Community Based Organizations
- 2. Nonprofit Organizations
- 3. Political Subdivisions
- 4. Illinois Public Libraries
- 5. Illinois Public School Districts

The Department complies with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), The Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10/1 et seq.), The United States Civil Rights Act of

2. Cost Sharing or Matching.

Matching funds are encouraged but not required for an application to be competitive.

3. Indirect Cost Rate.

In order to charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant organization must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs:

a) Federally Negotiated Rate. Organizations that receive direct federal funding, may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally NICRA.

b) State Negotiated Rate. The organization may negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate. If an organization has not previously established in indirect cost rate, an indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted through State of Illinois’ centralized indirect cost rate system no later than three months after receipt of a Notice of State Award (NOSA). If an organization previously established an indirect cost rate, the organization must annually submit a new indirect cost proposal through CARS within six to nine months after the close of the grantee’s fiscal year, depending on the grantee’s audit type requirements.

c) De Minimis Rate. An organization may elect a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the De Minimis Rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the De Minimis Rate.

All grantees must complete an indirect cost rate negotiation or elect the De Minimis Rate to claim indirect costs. Indirect costs claimed without a negotiated rate or a De Minimis Rate election on record in the State of Illinois’ centralized indirect cost rate system may be subject to disallowance.

Grantees have discretion and can elect to waive payment for indirect costs. Grantees that elect to waive payments for indirect costs cannot be reimbursed for indirect costs. The organization must record an election to “Waive Indirect Costs” into the State of Illinois’ centralized indirect cost rate system.

State Universities may request an indirect cost rate of 10% due to the State of Illinois’ continuous funding of a portion of facility and administrative costs.

4. Other, if applicable.

N/A

Applicants may submit multiple application(s) for this opportunity.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package.

Grant application forms are available at the web link provided in the “Grant Application Link” field of this announcement or by contacting the Program Manager:
2. Content and Form of Application Submission.

A standard application package must be submitted to and reviewed by DCEO. Each package must contain the following items:

☐ Uniform Grant Application in fillable PDF format. Signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.

☐ Uniform Budget utilizing the template provided by DCEO for this project. The entire budget with all worksheets included even if the worksheets are not relevant to the grant opportunity must be submitted with the application materials. Signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.

☐ Conflict of Interest Disclosure

☐ Mandatory Disclosures

This Notice of Funding Opportunity also requires the submission of the following other programmatic specific items as part of the program application that can be found on the website where you accessed the application document:

☐ Cover letter, per Application Template
☐ Program-specific Application, per Application Template
☐ Community letters of support, if collected

3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM).

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

(i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. To establish a SAM registration, go to www.SAM.gov and/or utilize this instructional link: How to Register in SAM from the www.grants.illinois.gov Resource Links tab. Please note, making SAM.gov registrations “public” will expedite the GATA Grantee Portal pre-qualification process.

(ii) Provide a valid UEI number in its application, which matches the UEI number used in both the applicant entity’s SAM registration and GATA Grantee Portal registration.

(iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. The Department will not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Department is ready to make a Federal pass-through or State award, the Department may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.

Applications for this opportunity must be submitted by 5pm on Tuesday, August 1st, 2023. Applications received after this date will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until available funds are depleted.

Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronic form at https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/ea4db4ff4d5043bfb4b0f752e75c7baa.

The Department is under no obligation to review applications that do not comply with the above requirements. Failure to meet the application deadline may result in the Department returning application without review or may preclude the Department from making the award.

5. Intergovernmental Review, if applicable.

N/A

6. Funding Restrictions.

This opportunity does allow reimbursement of pre-award costs. Other restrictions can be found in Sections B. and C.3.

7. Other Submission Requirements.

Documents stored in Google Docs or other cloud-based servers are not allowed.

Applicants may confirm receipt of the application and documents by contacting the program contact listed in this NOFO.

E. Application Review Information

1. Criteria.

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- **Need of the Eligible Applicant.** The level of demonstrated need for improved broadband access, adoption, and/or use, particularly to underserved or underrepresented populations. Maximum of 30 points.
  - Economic need in each target community, as evidenced by the proportion of populations eligible for ACP, other economic data, or connectivity levels within the community (up to 10 pts);
  - Indicate the current number of navigators=, number of previous digital training occurrences, or number of residents who need training and/or broadband access (10 pts);
  - Indicate the current number of CTCs or other public resources for basic computer training and/or online services (8 pts); or
  - Provide the current broadband access vision and goals, discuss current environment for broadband expansion, or provide detailed next step for future partnerships (2 pts).

- **Capacity of the Eligible Applicant.** The level of commitment and appropriate skills of the lead organization to manage the project(s), particularly any recent experience in similar digital equity programming, initiatives, or activity. Maximum of 30 points.
• The level of experience proposed staff has with ACP or other broadband initiatives (up to 6 pts);
• Number of staff working on the project (6 pts);
• Staff resources available and time dedicated to the project (6 pts);
• Amount of training needed prior to enacting project (6 pts);
• Ability to participate in other Broadband engagement opportunities (6 pts);

• Quality of the Proposal. The commitment of the lead organization to achieve one or more digital equity outcomes, particularly to underserved and underrepresented populations, and following processes to ensure broad community awareness and participation. Maximum of 30 points.
  • Demonstrate the digital equity outcomes are realistic for both area population and time frame (up to 10 pts)
  • Provide a fundamentally sound plan to meet program goals (10 pts)
  • Provide a quantitative measure of the impact expected from the project (10 pts)

• Community Support. The level of demonstrated support from community stakeholders. Maximum of 10 points.
  • The amount of local community input received by the applicant (e.g. unique or personalized letters of support, etc.)

2. Review and Selection Process.

Applications will be graded using the Merit Review Process and scored on the criteria specified in Section E.1. The Department will designate an Evaluation Committee to grade each application received for this funding opportunity. The final score of each Committee member will be calculated and an average of all scores will be the final applicant score. Grants will be awarded on a rolling basis to the top-scoring applications within each category, provided there are competitive applications within each category. For an application to be competitive, it must score at least 70 out of a possible 100 points. Applications that score below 70 points may be funded, but only if no other higher-scoring applications are received. To ensure diversity in the types of projects funded, the highest scoring applications within each category may be given priority.

The Merit Based Review process is subject to appeal. However, competitive grant appeals are limited to the evaluation process. Evaluation scores may not be protested. Only the evaluation process is subject to appeal. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Department within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published. The written appeal shall include the name and address of the appealing party, the identification of the grant and a statement of reasons for the appeal. To file an appeal, applicants must submit the appeal in writing and in accordance with the Merit-Based Application Review Appeals Process listed on the Grant Opportunities page of the DCEO website: https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/meritappreview.html.

3. Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates, if applicable.

After the application period is closed, the Department will conduct a merit based review of eligible applications. Successful applicants will receive a Notice of State Award (NOSA) to initiate the grant agreement phase. During this phase, you will be contacted by a grant manager to develop a grant agreement, which can be a months long process depending on complexity, cooperation, and conformity with all applicable federal and state laws.
The Department reserves the right to issue a reduced award, or not to issue any award.

F. Award Administration Information

1. State Award Notices.

The Notice of State Award (NOSA) will specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the pre-award risk assessments and the merit-based review process. The NOSA must be accepted in the GATA Portal by an authorized representative of the grantee organization. The NOSA is not an authorization to begin performance or incur costs.


Subrecipients and Subcontractors: Agreement(s) and budget(s) with subrecipients and subcontractors must be pre-approved by and on file with DCEO. Agreements can be submitted to DCEO when available. Subcontractors and subrecipients are subject to all applicable provisions of the Agreement(s) executed between DCEO and the grantee. The successful applicant shall retain sole responsibility for the performance of its subrecipient(s) and/or subcontractor(s).

Grant Uniform Requirements: The Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/1 et seq.) (and its related administrative rules, 44 Ill. Admin. Code Part 7000), was enacted to increase the accountability and transparency in the use of grant funds from whatever source and to reduce administrative burdens on both State agencies and grantees by adopting federal guidance and regulations applicable to those grant funds; specifically, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200).

Procurement: Grantees will be required to adhere to methods of procurement per the Procurement Standards (2 CFR 200.317 – 2 CFR 200.327).

3. Reporting.

Periodic Performance Report (PPR) and Periodic Financial Report (PFR)
Grantees funded through this NOFO are required to submit in the format required by the Grantor, at least on a quarterly basis, the PPR and PFR electronically to their assigned grant manager. The first of such reports shall cover the first three months after the award begins. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.328, Periodic Financial Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.329, Periodic Performance Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Any additional reporting requirements will be disclosed in the NOSA. Grantees are required within 45 calendar days following the end of the period of performance to submit a final closeout report in the format required by the Grantor (See 2 CFR 200.344).

Monitoring
Grantees funded through this NOFO are subject to fiscal and programmatic monitoring visits by the Department in accordance with 2 CFR 200.337. They must have an open-door policy allowing periodic visits by Department monitors to evaluate the progress of the project and provide documentation upon request of the monitor. Program staff will also maintain contact with participants and monitor progress and performance of the contracts. The Department may modify grants based on performance.

Audit
Grantees shall be subject to Illinois’ statewide Audit Report Review requirements. Terms of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 USC 7501-7507), Subpart F of 2 CFR Part 200, and
the audit rules set forth under the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act shall apply (See 30 ILCS 708/65(c)).

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Grant Help Desk
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Email: CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov