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## Technical Assistance Broadband Grants Q's & A's

### **General Application Info:**

**Q: Is there any way you can give my office more time to apply for this grant?**

A: YES, the due date for the application has been extended to August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012. If that still seems like a short amount of time, remember, your grant application doesn't have to be a John Grisham novel. Keep it simple and to the point, with a clear mission objective and step-by-step plan.

**Q: Are applications that allow citizens and elected representatives to participate in online meetings something this grant can fund?**

A: YES, anything that utilizes broadband internet or communication resources to provide E-government services to citizens is desirable and encouraged. However, keep in mind that your proposed application should be something for which there is a demonstrated demand by the public or within government, and acts to streamline day-to-day functions. No matter how great an idea may sound, it has to be something that citizens would feel is valuable to them as a tool.

**Q: Is there a Microsoft Word version of the NOFA application?**

A: YES, on our website at: <http://www.wvgs.wvnet.edu/bb/grants.html> - Scroll down and click on 'Technical Assistance Grants' and scroll down some more to find the files linked under the thumbnail image in MS Word. If you prefer a PDF copy of the NOFA application, click on that thumbnail image.

**Q: What kind of projects could we do here in our local school for teachers to use broadband?**

A: There are a lot of potential projects. The ones I've listed below are just a few examples.

You could have an instructional seminar for teachers during an in-service day to learn how to download and capture online videos for use in the classroom, or examine online tutorials such as those being offered by the Khan Academy: <http://www.khanacademy.org/>. Consider having a training session for teachers from your school, your district, or your entire region for that matter, which tap into online resources for students. Teachers can utilize these resources in the classroom, or use them after school for tutoring on any particular subject. This allows teachers to use online resources selectively, and transform lesson planning with multi-media resources. Printed instructional resources, as well as instructor-led classes, can be paid for with grant funds.

Also, think about training or educational sessions you could conduct for educators in each field of study, focusing on online resources that would enhance their students' educational opportunities within each subject area. For instance, consider online engineering software and 3D modeling tutorials that can be used for free, and dynamically improve classes for Industrial Arts teachers.

And if your school or administrative offices would like a custom software application that allows them to streamline reporting within the school, the district, or for the State Department of Education, then contact these partner organizations to see how this grant might allow all of you to build a custom internal application for anything from reporting grades and making them available to parents, to performing attendance in the mornings and submitted the head-count electronically to several administrative offices at the same time.

**Q: What is the end date of this grant?**

A: All project work and accounting documents must be submitted by one year following the project award date.

**Q: Can employees come in after hours to work as a contractor on this project and be paid grant funds?**

A: That depends. If the employee is NOT working on the project during their daily work assignment, then YES, they can come in after hours and work on your project and be paid with grant funds. If, however, they ARE working on the project (either part time or full time) during their regular working hours, then NO, they cannot work on the project as a grant funded contractor.

**Q: If we don't have the technical expertise to perform the work of our grant project, can we contract with a service provider and pay them with grant funds?**

A: YES, you can apply for as much as you need, up to \$30,000, and pay a contractor as much as is necessary from your grant award in order to accomplish your project's goals and objectives.

**Budget/Financial Questions:**

**Q: Can matching funds include software or hardware purchased for the project?**

A: YES

**Q: Will grants funds be made available up front, or reimbursed after submission of receipts?**

A: Grant funds will only be reimbursed after submission of receipt once a month.

**Q: So we need to have enough money up front to actually pay for our program until reimbursement?**

A: YES and NO. Some services, such as those from vendors, can be billed and the receipts submitted with your monthly report to pay those costs with grant funds. Other services may require the grant recipient to cover certain costs up-front and submit the receipts for later reimbursement. Timely submission of grant reports is essential for financial reimbursement to occur.

**Q: What about vendor estimates and quotes? How exact do the estimated costs have to be?**

A: The preliminary budget is just that – preliminary – which means if you have to change a line item, go with another vendor, or modify costs once the project gets underway, you'll still be OK. The preliminary budget is your best foreseeable estimate based on figures and quotes provided to your office at the time of your application.

**Q: Is it OK to estimate costs for our preliminary budget?**

A: It's always preferable to contact partner agencies, personnel, and potential vendors to get hard quotes for commitments of resources, work hours, and service fees as a matter of course, simply because it helps to know that specific resources, personnel and vendors can provide the services within

the timeframe you're envisioning. Nail down as many hard figures as you can, but vendor estimates and rough calculations on hours are fine too.

**Q: Do we request exactly \$22,500, or do we present our total budget with expenses in excess of the match required?**

A: Present your budget just for those items and services that will be paid for with grant funds. Many applicants' projects may exceed the maximum \$30,000 award of funding, so we only need to see what items or services are being covered by our grant funds. You can tie the funding requested into the overall scope of your project by describing this further in the Project Proposal (Form SBDD-4).

**Q: Can this grant be used to pay licensing fees for software we're already using?**

A: NO. The NOFA states that this grant is not an operational grant to pay for utilities or licensing fees related to the day-to-day administration of the applicant's office. However, if that software were to be used as part of your proposed project, then the licensing fees could be used as part of your in-kind contribution to meet the 25% matching requirement.

**Q: Is there a limit on how much our project can cost?**

A: NO, there is no limit on the cost of your project; however, there is a limit on the grant award. For instance, if your project costs \$100,000, and you can only come up with \$70,000 out-of-pocket, then apply for the full \$30,000 of our grant limit so you can complete your project with grant funds.

**Q: Can we buy a server for our project using grant funds?**

A: NO, since a server is a piece of hardware it cannot be purchased with grant funds. However, the cost of the server can be used as a cash match toward your 25% matching requirement.

**Q: Can we buy software for our project using grant funds?**

A: That depends. If the software is off-the-shelf software, like Microsoft Windows or Office, then NO, you can't use grant funds to pay for that software. If you look at page 9 of the NOFA, you'll see that pre-packaged software is an in-kind match item. However, if you hire a contractor or use in-house personnel to script together a custom broadband application, then YES, you can use the grant funds for the creation of a new software application for E-Government, education, environmental reporting, etc.

**Q: Can the grant be applied to current salaries?**

A: YES. It is recommended (although not required) that employees work to contribute to your in-kind contribution for that month, but they can also be paid from grant funds as necessary. Hourly salary must be identical to that of their current hourly salary in their identified position.

**Q: Is advertising to educate the population on the availability of services a valid grant expense?**

A: YES, provided the advertising is a hardcopy advertisement placed in newspapers, or printed and placed in a library or post office, and not excessively expensive. You must demonstrate advertising costs in your preliminary budget.