

2. The degree to which each slate of applications, taken as a whole, satisfies the program's stated purposes for the applicable program categories;

3. The geographic distribution of the proposed grant awards;

4. The diversity of the technologies employed by the proposed grant awards;

5. The diversity of projects represented by the proposed grant awards;

6. The promotion of equitable access to and use of the information infrastructure for traditionally disadvantaged or under-served groups;

7. Avoidance of redundancy and conflicts with the initiatives of other Federal agencies; and

8. The availability of funds.

After applications have been selected in this manner, negotiations will take place between TIIAP staff and the applicant. These negotiations are intended to resolve any differences that exist between the applicant's original request and what TIIAP proposes to fund. Not all applicants who are contacted for negotiation will necessarily receive a TIIAP award.

When the negotiations are completed for Category Two, the TIIAP Director will recommend final award actions to the NTIA Administrator. Applying the same factors listed above, the Administrator will then make the final selection of grant recipients from the pool of negotiated applications in Category Two. This process is repeated for the set of projects approved for negotiation in Categories One and Three.

Eligible Costs

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Allowable costs incurred under approved projects shall be determined in accordance with applicable Federal costs principles, *i.e.*, OMB Circular A-21, A-87, or A-122. If included in the approved project budget, the TIIAP will allow costs for personnel, fringe benefits, computer hardware and software, other end-user equipment, telecommunication services and related equipment, consultants and other contractual services, travel, rental of office equipment, furniture and space, supplies, etc. that are reasonable and directly related to the project. Construction costs are not eligible.

Note that costs that are ineligible for TIIAP support may not be included as part of the applicant's matching fund contribution.

Indirect Costs

The total dollar amount of the indirect costs proposed in an application under

TIIAP must not exceed the indirect cost rate negotiated and approved by a cognizant Federal agency prior to the proposed effective date of the award, or 100% of the total proposed direct costs dollar amount in the application, whichever is less.

Award Period

Successful applicants in Category One will have between 12 and 24 months to complete their projects. Successful applicants in Categories Two and Three will have between 12 and 18 months to complete their projects. The actual time will vary depending on the complexity of the project.

Other Information

Electronic Information

Information about NTIA and the TIIAP, including this document and the *Guidelines for Preparing Applications*, can be retrieved electronically via the Internet through ftp, gopher and the World Wide Web.

To reach the ftp server, ftp to ftp.ntia.doc.gov. Use the login name of 'anonymous' and use your email address as the password. Change to the /grantinfo directory to find TIIAP files.

To reach the gopher server, point your gopher client at gopher.ntia.doc.gov and login as 'gopher'.

To reach the www server, use http://www.ntia.doc.gov to reach the NTIA Home Page. Follow the link entitled 'What's New' to reach TIIAP information.

TIIAP can also be reached via electronic mail at tiiap@ntia.doc.gov.

Technical Assistance

TIIAP program staff are available to provide technical assistance to applicants on a first-come, first-served basis until the time that a proposal has been submitted to NTIA. All applicants are asked to read carefully both this Notice and the *Guidelines for Preparing Applications* before contacting staff for technical assistance. In addition to outreach through professional conferences and meetings, NTIA will be conducting a series of regional workshops to provide potential applicants with information on the program and application procedures. Information on these workshops is provided in the Dates section.

Application Forms

Standard Forms 424, Application for Federal Assistance; 424A, Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs; and 424B, Assurances—Non-Construction Programs, (Rev. 4-92), and other Department of Commerce forms shall be used in applying for financial

assistance. These forms are included in the Guidelines for Preparing Applications, which can be obtained by contacting NTIA by telephone, fax, or electronic mail, as described in the ADDRESS section above. The TIIAP requires one original and five copies of the application. Applicants for whom the submission of five copies presents financial hardship may submit one original and two copies of the application.

Because of the high level of public interest in projects supported by the TIIAP, the program anticipates receiving requests for copies of applications. Applicants are hereby notified that the applications they submit are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Applicants may identify sensitive information and label it "confidential" to assist NTIA in making disclosure determinations.

Abbreviated proposals under Category One do not need to include the above standard forms. Instructions for preparing an abbreviated proposal are included in the Guidelines for Preparing Applications.

As noted above, all applicants are required to submit a non-binding letter of intent in advance of submitting a full proposal. The letter of intent shall contain information on how to contact the applicant, the category in which the applicant intends to apply, the subject area of the intended proposal, and a brief description of the project that is to be proposed. Detailed instructions for preparing a letter of intent are included in the Guidelines for Preparing Applications.

Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument for awards under this program shall be a grant.

Authority and Funding Availability

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), Department of Commerce, serves as the President's principal adviser on telecommunications and information policy. NTIA's functions were codified as part of the Telecommunications Authorization Act of 1992, Pub. L. No. 102-538, 106 Stat. 3533, 47 U.S.C. §§ 901-04 (1993).

As specified in the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 1994, Pub. L. No. 103-317, 108 Stat. 1724, 1747 (1994), Congress has provided the Department of Commerce \$64 million for the TIIAP for fiscal year 1995. The grant funds may be used for the planning and construction of telecommunications networks for the provision of