Program Description

Overview of the Grant Program

The Connected Communities Facilities 2.0 Grant Program's goal is to make digital access easier by building and rehabbing spaces where communities can come together and connect digitally. The goal is to create places where people can access digital resources for work, health, and education in one location. The Connected Communities Facilities Grant Program is funded by the ARPA Capital Project Fund (CPF).

Key Dates

*Subject to change

- May 15, 2024 - Application Open
- July 12, 2024 - Application Close
- September 2024 - Award Announcements

Federal Award Information

Award Amount

The maximum grant request allowable for the Connected Community Facilities Grant Program is $2 million.

Match Amount

The grant will cover up to 90% of eligible project expenses, with a required 10% match by the grantee.

Period of Performance

All contracts with grantees must be in effect by November 30, 2024. **Funds must be expended by December 30, 2026.**

Eligible Applicants

- County Government
- Local Government
- Health Department
- K-12 School
- Library
- Public Safety Unit of Government
- Nonprofit partnering with any of the above governments to address the digital divide ***must demonstrate strong local government support for application. Read more in guidebook.***

Eligible Communities

Automatically Eligible Communities: Any project that is in counties with a Median Family Income at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for a default household size of 3 ($65,880).

This is all counties except: Cheatham, Davidson, Fayette, Knox, Loudon, Maury, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Tipton, Williamson, or Wilson. Note: Counties with AMIs above $65,880 are still eligible to apply if they show that they are serving a target population (defined in the next section).

Priority Eligible Communities: Following Governor Bill Lee's Executive Order 1, applicants from an "at-risk" or "distressed" county, as designated by the Appalachian Regional Commission, will receive 5 additional points in their scoring. In fiscal year 2024, Tennessee's "at-risk" and "distressed" counties were:

- **At-Risk (27):** Benton, Campbell, Carroll, Carter, Claiborne, Decatur, Fentress, Greene, Grundy, Hawkins, Haywood, Houston, Jackson, Johnson, Lauderdale, Lewis, Macon, McNairy, Meigs, Morgan, Pickett, Rhea, Sequatchie, Unicoi, Van Buren, Warren, Wayne
- **Distressed (8):** Bledsoe, Clay, Cocke, Hancock, Hardeman, Perry, Scott, Lake

Additionally, projects in a **Qualified Census Tract (QCT)** will receive 5 additional points in their scoring. Applicants may earn up to 5 points for projects in an At Risk/Distressed County or QTC, but not for both categories simultaneously.

Eligible Target Populations

If the project is located in Cheatham, Davidson, Fayette, Knox, Loudon, Maury, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Tipton, Williamson, or Wilson Counties, the project must serve one of the following eligible populations:

- Providing Services in a Qualified Census Tracts
- Low-or-moderate income households or communities
- Households that experienced unemployment
- Households that experienced increased food or housing insecurity
- Households that qualify for the Children's Health Insurance Program
- Households that qualify for Childcare Subsidies through the Child Care

Verification of eligible population: As part of the application process, applicants will be required to provide verification of the end beneficiary that aligns with the selected target population. By choosing a specific population, applicants are committing to collect verification. Sampling the population and collecting data over given periods of time is acceptable.

Examples of CCF Projects

Based on the information provided, here are examples of ideal projects for the Capital Projects Fund (CPF):

- Digital Learning Hub: A partnership between a local government and a private sector company could develop a digital learning hub. This facility would provide high-speed internet, computers, and telehealth equipment, serving as a digital learning center, workforce training center, and telehealth clinic. The private sector partner could contribute expertise in technology and digital literacy training, while the local government ensures accessibility and community engagement.

- Maker Space: A collaboration between a local government and a private sector innovation company could establish a maker space. This space would include a flexible space for workforce development, a computer lab for education, and a telehealth room for healthcare services.
- Community Wellness Center: A partnership between a local government and a healthcare provider could create a community wellness center. This center would combine a fitness center, a library, and a telehealth suite.
- Community Center: A partnership between a local government and a cultural organization could establish a cultural and community center. This center would include a cultural arts space, a library, a workforce development center, and a telehealth suite. The private sector partner could contribute to the cultural arts space and workforce development center, ensuring a vibrant cultural scene and effective workforce training, while the local government could manage the library and telehealth services.