Funding Available to Tribes to Support Broadband/Internet Access

RECONNECT PILOT PROGRAM: The USDA ReConnect program has received a $100 million increase to help aid coronavirus response through broadband access for telehealth, telework, and distance learning. Ninety percent of the households to be served by a project must be in a rural area without sufficient access to broadband. For FAQs and application instructions, visit HERE.

DISTANCE LEARNING AND TELEMEDICINE (DLT) GRANT: An additional filing window is open that makes available up to $25 million received from the CARES Act. While the CARES Act requires these funds be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, the agency believes that all DLT projects already serve that purpose. The DLT Program provides financial assistance to enable and improve distance learning and telemedicine services in rural areas. For more information, and to apply, see HERE.

NATIONAL TRIBAL BROADBAND GRANT: The Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED) is soliciting proposals from Indian Tribes for grant funding to hire consultants to perform feasibility studies for deployment or expansion of high-speed internet (broadband) transmitted, variously, through digital subscriber line (DSL), cable modem, fiber, wireless, satellite and broadband over power lines (BPL). For more information, see HERE.

These programs have flexible funding which can be used for broadband:

INDIAN HOUSING BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (IHBG): The CARES Act provides a $200 million increase to the IHBG, to be distributed through formula funding. For more information on the IHBG and tribal allocations, see HERE.

INDIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (ICDBG): The CARES Act provides a $100 million increase to the ICDBG to respond to COVID-19, through Imminent Threat Grants. The funds will be allocated on a first come-first served basis in noncompetitive grants. For more information, see HERE. For updated information on the application, see HERE.

OT20-2004: SUPPORTING TRIBAL PUBLLIC HEALTH CAPACITY IN CORONAVIRUS PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE: Non-competitive grants for Tribal governments and Tribal organizations to carry out public health emergency response activities in response to COVID-19. Activities may include surveillance, epidemiology, laboratory capacity, infection control, mitigation, communications, and other preparedness and response activities, see HERE.

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NACA): Funding to increase access to credit, capital, and financial services in Native Communities through the creation and expansion of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) primarily serving Native Communities, see HERE.

INTERNET FREEDOM FUND: Funding to support projects on open and accessible technology-centric project that promote human rights, and access to the internet, see HERE.

THE RURAL BROADBAND ASSOCIATION SMART RURAL COMMUNITY GRANT: Tribes can partner with rural broadband providers to deploy broadband-enable solutions within their communities, see HERE.

TELEHEALTH NETWORK GRANT PROGRAM (TNGP): Funding to promote rural Tele-emergency services, see HERE.

FOUNDATION GRANTS

ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION (RWJF): The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provides $50 million to support communities facing the greatest strain under the COVID-19 Pandemic, see HERE.

W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKF): Available funding to support community health and wellbeing, including projects that support communities during COVID-19, see Here.