

CONNECTING CITIZENS GRANT PROGRAM

ROUND ONE: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. What is the purpose of the Connecting Citizens Grant Program?**
This program helps eliminate the barriers to last mile costs for communities. It helps pay for infrastructure, enabling connectivity to more citizens in more parts of B.C.
- 2. Is this a one-time grant?**
A community (area, locale) can receive only one grant under this program. In that respect this is a one-time grant.
- 3. Will there be other opportunities to apply?**
This is a multi-year program. One intake of applications is anticipated for this fiscal year (ending March 31, 2009). Applications are due to Network BC no later than November 7, 2008.
- 4. What is the review process once applications are received by Network BC?**
Applications will be received by Network BC, documented, and presented to an adjudication committee for evaluation. This is a proven approach to ensuring consistency and equitability in grant administration. All applicants will be notified via letter.
- 5. When will funding be made available to successful applicants?**
Network BC anticipates confirming successful applications in early 2009.
- 6. If a community broadband project is already underway, does it qualify?**
If it is completed, it does not qualify. If it is underway, it qualifies. Preference will be given to projects that have not directly benefited from previous government funding.
- 7. Who will own the equipment purchased with the grant?**
The applicant will own any equipment purchased with the grant.
- 8. How is 'community' defined under this program?**
Community refers broadly to any town, village, suburb, subdivision, rural route or coverage area where service will be offered to citizens.
- 9. Is the funding divided equally among the stated priorities?**
Funding will be allocated in order of priority as described under the 'Preference for Funding' section of the program criteria.
- 10. What would demonstrate 'community support' for a connectivity project?**
Community support could be in the form of letters of support from local groups such as economic development, community development or business/tourism organizations, civic governments or signatures of local citizens committed to purchasing services.

11. Why is Network BC offering a grant program?

Citizens in rural and remote areas of B.C. have been very vocal about their need for broadband. Regional Internet service providers and broadband advocates have identified high cost of infrastructure as a barrier to expansion of services to homes and businesses. Previous infrastructure grants provided by Network BC have proven effective in getting more citizens connected.

12. Who was consulted in development of this program?

Network BC continuously solicits and receives input from organizations and individuals committed to providing and receiving broadband connectivity. This input influences the development of all Network BC strategies and programs to Bridge the Digital Divide.

13. What other barriers to connectivity in rural and remote areas have been identified?

Affordable access to Internet gateways was another key barrier identified in rural and remote areas. Network BC was able to leverage affordable access to Internet gateways for regional Internet service providers, enabling them to offer service to more homes and businesses.