March Stakeholder Briefing: CA Digital Equity Program (CalDEP) RFA Launch

March 28, 2025

CALIFORNIA ALL | Broadband for All

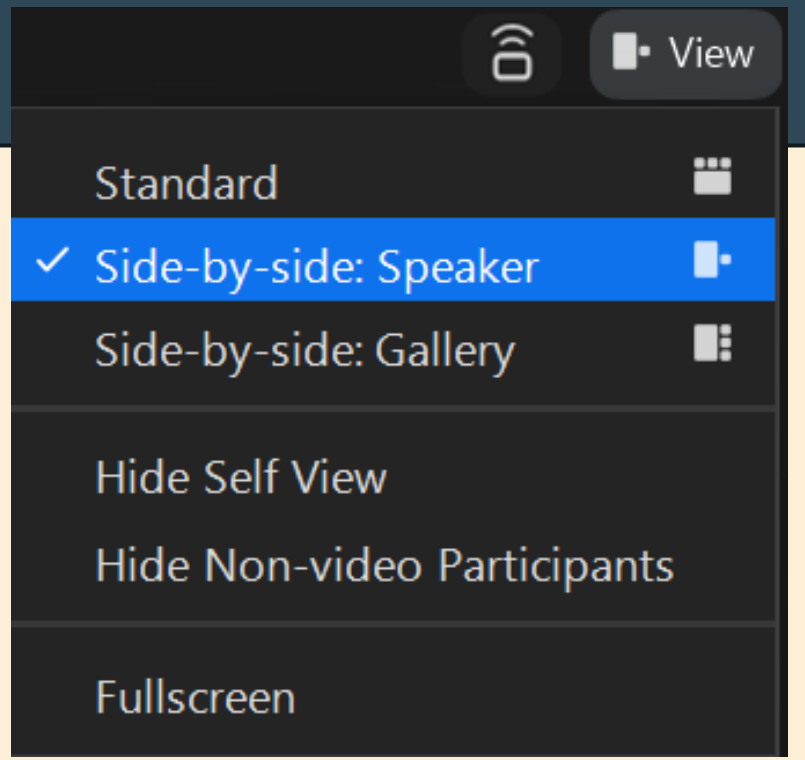
Housekeeping

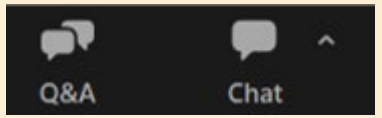
Select Side-by-Side: Speaker Mode for the best viewing experience when slides are shared and visibility of the ASL interpreters

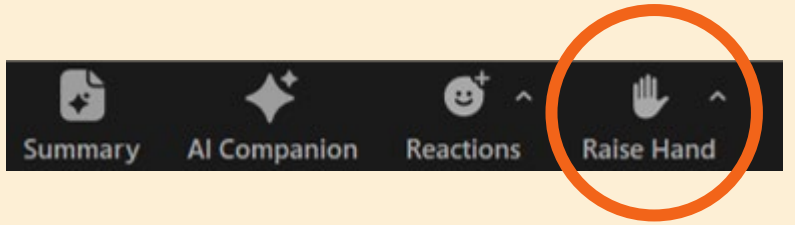
Closed Captions English closed captions are available. Choose “CC closed caption” on your toolbar and select "show subtitle".

Q&A Box Discussion after each agenda item. Please add your questions in the Q&A Box

Reactions Raise Hand feature or *9 if you calling into Zoom by phone







WELCOME

Scott Adams

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy
California Department of Technology

Agenda

Welcome

Grant Guidelines & Request for Applications

Technical Assistance

Live Demo: CalDEP Webpages & Application Portal

Timeline & Closing

IIJA BROADBAND PROGRAMS

Digital Equity Programs

State Digital Equity Planning Grant

($4 M)*

State Digital Equity Capacity Grant

($70.2 M)*

Digital Equity Competitive Grant

*CA's allocation from NTIA as determined by the Digital Equity Act formula.

WELCOME

Our Journey: SDEP & CalDEP Milestones

2022

Application and Receipt of $4M State Digital Equity Planning Grant

→

2023

Planning and Development of the State Digital Equity Plan (SDEP)

→

Q2 2024

State Digital Equity Capacity Grant (DECG) Application submitted to NTIA

→

Q2 2024 – Q1 2025

SDEP Implementation & CalDEP Program Design

*Receipt of State Award of $70.2M DECG (*Period of Performance start date: 12/01/24*)

→

This Week

Launch CA Digital Equity Program (CalDEP)

Stakeholder Engagement

SDEP & CAPACITY GRANT PROGRAM DESIGN & FEDERAL EXPECTATIONS

Capacity Grant Program Structure

NTIA
(Federal Grant Administrator)

CDT
(State Grant Recipient / Administrating Entity)
Administration (3%), Evaluation (5%), Update and Maintain SDEP (20%)*
*Percentages represent not to exceed amounts per NTIA State Capacity Grant agreement

Centralized Services

Develop, procure, or curate tools to support SDEP implementation (Digital literacy training platform)

State Agency Digital Inclusion Efforts

Fund State digital inclusion programs

California Digital Equity Program (CalDEP)

Subgrants to entities and coalitions to implement SDEP (Digital Navigation, Digital Literacy Training)

WELCOME

Metrics of Engagement

9

SDEP Implementation and Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program Stakeholder Briefings

2

Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program Design Surveys and Questionnaires

130

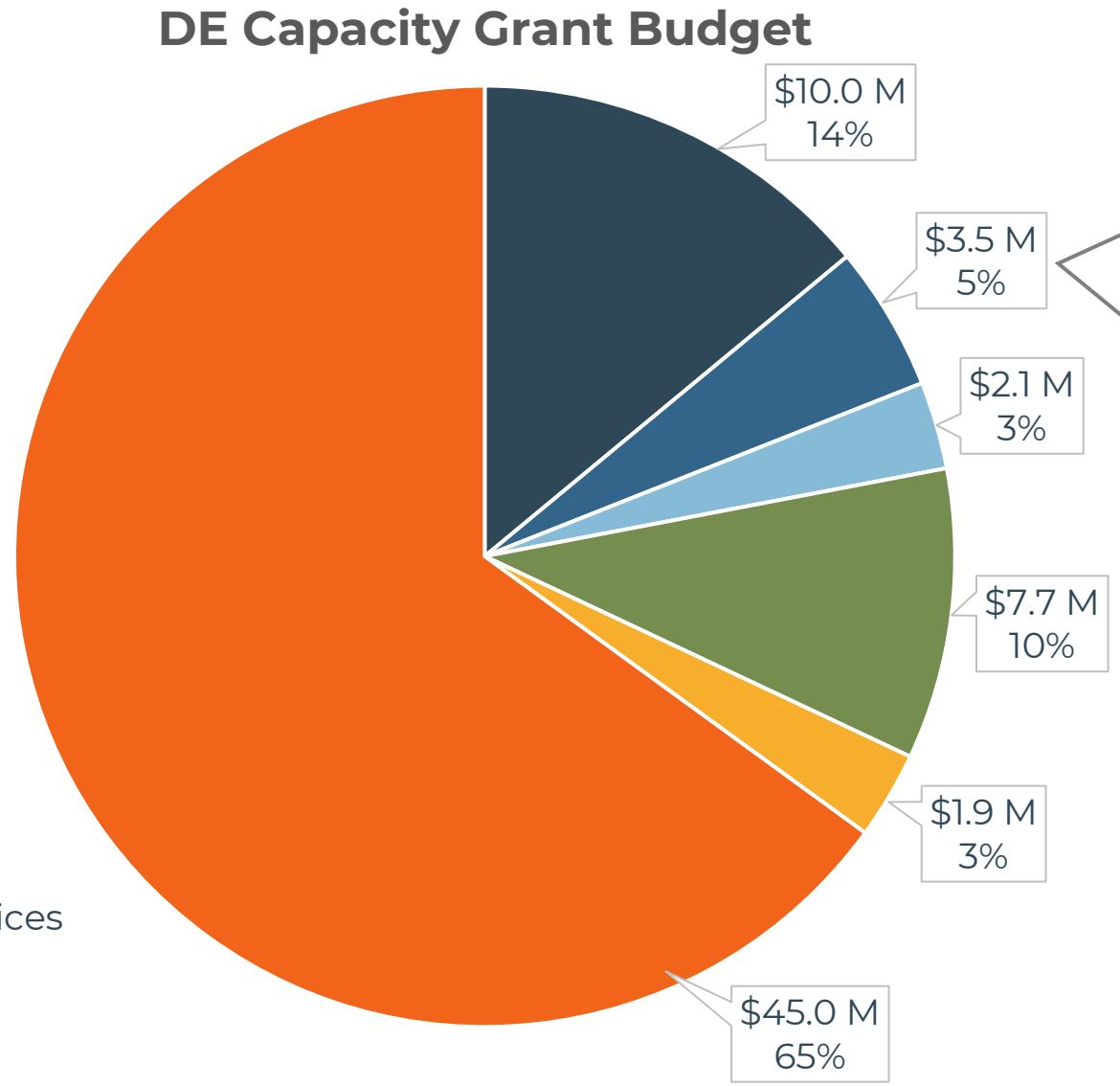
Market Research Meetings & Listening Sessions

22

Presentations at Stakeholders' Convenings, Conferences, and Summits

WELCOME

DECG Budget – Application

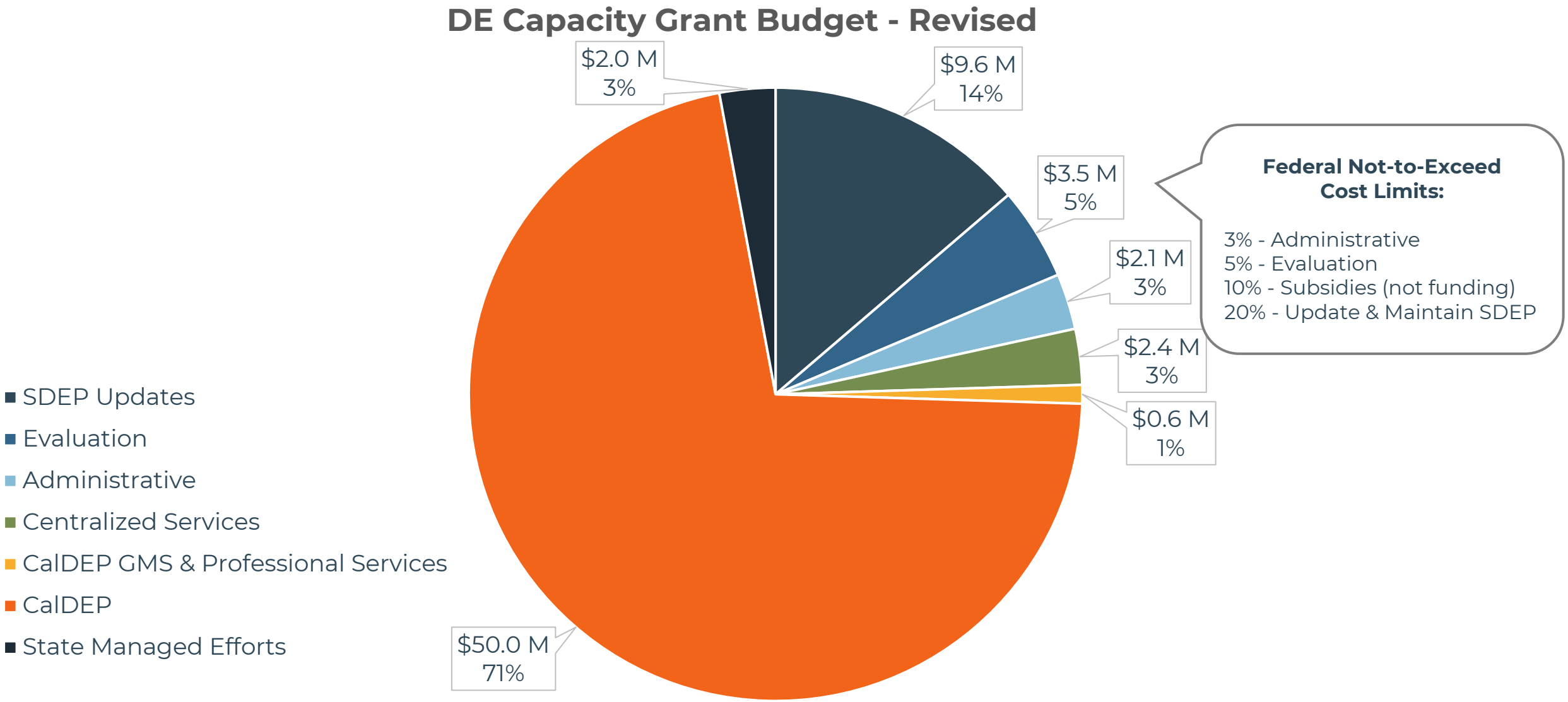


Federal Not-to-Exceed Cost Limits:

3% - Administrative
5% - Evaluation
10% - Subsidies (not funding)
20% - Update & Maintain SDEP

WELCOME

DECG Budget - Revised



Questions

CALIFORNIA ALL | Broadband for All

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Alex Banh

PRINCIPAL

Broadband Equity Partnership

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Background & Principles

NTIA State Digital Equity Capacity Grant's Overarching Goal
Support State Digital Equity Plan (SDEP) Implementation through:

- Focus on Covered Populations
- Long-lasting & Meaningful Change
- Measurable Implementation Strategies
- Stakeholder Engagement

California Digital Equity Program (CalDEP)

Advancing **SDEP Goals 2 & 3 + State Policy Outcomes**

SDEP Goals

- **Goal 1:** All Californians have high-performance broadband available at home, schools, libraries, and businesses.*
- **Goal 2**: All Californians have access to affordable broadband and necessary devices.
- **Goal 3**: All Californians can access training and support to enable digital inclusion.

*Goal 1 and its corresponding objectives will be addressed through the continued build-out of existing Broadband for All investments and Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD)-funded projects.

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Focus

Covered Populations

1. Individuals living in covered households
2. Aging individuals (60+)
3. Incarcerated individuals
4. Veterans
5. Individuals w/ disabilities
6. Individuals w/ language barriers
7. Members of racial or ethnic minority groups
8. Individuals who primarily reside in rural areas

SDEP 7 Key Activities

1. Complete BB4All infrastructure investments
2. Convene digital equity stakeholders
3. Refine digital equity data and maps
4. Develop a digital equity capacity subgrant program
5. Fund State-managed digital inclusion programs
6. Develop digital inclusion tools & best practices
7. Promote low-cost service offers & subsidy programs

Outcome Areas

1. Education
2. Health
3. Digital Literacy and Inclusion
4. Essential Service, Accessibility, & Civic Engagement
5. Workforce & Economic Development
6. Tribal Collaboration

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Purpose & Goals

Through the subgrants, CalDEP will focus on:

- Fund entities to implement the Statewide Digital Equity Plan.
- Address digital equity barriers at local, regional, and state level.
- Develop ecosystems and increase capacity.
- Provide digital inclusion funding to trusted messengers.
- Allocate funding across every county.
- Encourage statewide innovation.

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Allowable Uses of CalDEP

- Develop local digital equity plans
- Broadband adoption campaigns
- Digital navigation services
- Digital literacy and skills training
- Targeted device distribution
- Workforce development training and apprenticeships

*RFA Section 7.2 Funding Restrictions
Prohibition on Construction and Infrastructure Projects

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Eligible Entities & Requirements

1

Political subdivision, agency, or instrumentality of the State

2

Indian Tribe or a Native Hawaiian organization

3

Foundation, corporation, institution, or association
(that is not-for-profit entity and not a school)

4

Community anchor institution

5

Local educational agency

6

Entity that carries out a workforce development program

7

Partnership between any of the entities described in 1 to 6

8

Regional Broadband Consortia
(if they belong to another Eligible Entity category)

Must have an active UEI from SAM.gov and EIN from the IRS, and submit more than one Letter of Intent/Support.

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Funding Tracks

Two funding tracks designed to focus on regional, local & targeted statewide **ecosystem development.**

Track 1: Regional/Local Ecosystems (Planning + Capacity / $43 M)	Track 2: Targeted Statewide Ecosystems (Development, Planning, + Innovation / $7 M)
• Subgrants to: 1) Develop and refine regional and local digital equity plans 2) Provide capacity to implement digital equity activities directly or through 2nd-tier subgrants • Formula allocation per county geographic boundary • Will only award one application per county funding allocation. Encourage one Lead Applicant with partnerships per county boundary • Lead Applicant may also partner with entities across multiple counties to submit one regional application for multiple county funding allocations • Lead Applicant may make 2nd-tier subgrants to other Eligible Entities.	• Subgrants for a specific: o Outcome Area, or o Covered Population • Plans to only award the highest scoring application for a given Outcome Area or Covered Population • Must include a plan to support, coordinate, or share best practices with Track 1 Subgrantees • Lead Applicant may make 2nd-tier subgrants to other Eligible Entities.

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Track 1 County Allocation Formula

Formula allocations per county geographic boundaries.

Digital Equity Act State Allocation Formula

50%: size of total population within the state

25%: size of total Covered Populations within the state

25%: comparative lack of broadband availability & adoption relative to other states

Every state is ensured a minimum allocation of **0.5%** of total funding pool.

CalDEP Track 1 County Allocation Formula

75%: size of total Covered Populations within county geographic boundary

25%: comparative lack of broadband availability & adoption relative to other county geographic boundaries

Every county geographic boundary is ensured a minimum allocation of **0.5%** of total funding pool.

Updated Budget Allocation:

- 13% increase for entire Track 1 pool
- 14% avg increase for counties
- $25 K increase in minimum allocation

Track 1 Allocation

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

CalDEP Application Period

Overview	Notes
• Two-month open application period • March 26 – May 30 • Online via the BB4All Portal	• Review the Grant Guidelines and RFA and all associated materials on the BB4All Portal. • Use the Application Portal to complete and submit your application. • Only applications submitted via the Application Portal will be accepted.

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Content of Grant Guidelines & RFA

1. Program Background
2. Goals of the California Digital Equity Program
3. Definitions
4. Eligible Applicants
5. Eligible Use of Funds and Program Requirements
6. Who This Benefits
7. Allocation & Award Formula
8. Application & Submission Information
9. Selection Information
10. Post-Award Expectations
11. Application Questions & Technical Assistance
12. Schedule of Activities

*Addenda (to be added as necessary)

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Application Package

Main application components highlighted below. Refer to RFA and Application Portal for full list of required components.

Application Form	• Main application form and narrative questions. • Required information can be found in RFA and Application Guidance Workbook for reference. • Must be completed in Application Portal.
Evidence Certifying Eligible Entity Status	• Examples of documents include 501(c)(3) designation, organization charter, etc. • Refer to *List of Example Documents Certifying Eligible Entity Status* for examples
Budget Form	• Template for detailing budget information. • Must be uploaded in Application Portal.
Partnership Form	• Template for detailing information for each partner or supportive stakeholder. • Must be uploaded in Application Portal.
Letters of Intent / Letters of Support	• Letters for partners and stakeholders to express intent to partner or support for the application. • More than one letter is required. • Must be uploaded in Application Portal.
Standard Federal Financial Assistance Forms and Documentation	• CD-511 Certification Regarding Lobbying; LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable); NICRA (if applicable) • Must be uploaded in Application Portal.

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Application Scoring: Track 1

Minimum Requirements

- Contains all required information and submitted by the deadline
- Verified Eligible Entity with active UEI
- More than one Letter of Intent/ Support from partners or stakeholders within the geographic scope of the application (county or multi-county region)

Evaluation Metrics

Need, Purpose, and Benefits (Up to 30 pts)	• Plan for reaching Covered Populations within the county/region, including municipalities, unincorporated areas, and rural areas • Prioritizes Covered Households and maximizes opportunities for intersectionality, or to serve those from multiple Covered Populations • Ability to demonstrate support from regional/local digital equity ecosystem through Letters of Intent or Letters of Support
Strength of Applicant's Organizational Capacity (Up to 30 pts)	• Lead Applicant's experience with managing large initiatives, managing federal or state grants, and making grants or subgrants to other organizations (if proposed) • Applicant Team's experience in serving Covered Populations in specified county or multi-county region • Applicant Team's experience in digital equity or digital inclusion planning or programming • Robustness of partnership strategy presented, including diversity and regional/local reach of partners and stakeholders
Strength of Proposed Timeline and Budget (Up to 30 pts)	• Soundness of proposed activities • Realistic timelines & milestones • Feasible & efficient budget • Sustainability and likelihood of long-term impact
Application Administration (Up to 10 pts)	• Thoroughness of application • Compliance with application instructions

GRANT GUIDELINES & REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Application Scoring: Track 2

Minimum Requirements

- Contains all required information and submitted by the deadline
- Verified Eligible Entity with active UEI
- More than one Letter of Intent/ Support from partners or stakeholders across the state

Evaluation Metrics

Need, Purpose, and Benefits (Up to 30 pts)	• Justification for targeted statewide ecosystem • Addresses digital equity needs and barriers for the specified Covered Population or Outcome Area • Number of Covered Populations served & individuals within each that will benefit • Effectively advances SDEP Goals and Objectives for Covered Populations • Benefits Covered Populations in diverse regions of the state • Ability to demonstrate support from the statewide digital equity ecosystem through Letters of Intent or Letters of Support
Strength of Applicant's Organizational Capacity (Up to 30 pts)	• Lead Applicant's experience with managing large initiatives and managing federal or state grants • Applicant Team's experience in serving Covered Populations in diverse regions of the state • Applicant Team's experience in digital equity or digital inclusion planning or programming • Robustness of partnership strategy presented, including diversity and statewide reach of partners and coordination with Track 1 Subgrantees at regional/local levels
Strength of Proposed Timeline and Budget (Up to 30 pts)	• Soundness of proposed activities • Realistic timelines & milestones • Feasible & efficient budget • Sustainability and likelihood of long-term impact (including through innovation and ability to leverage additional funding)
Application Administration (Up to 10 pts)	• Thoroughness of application • Compliance with application instructions

Schedule of Activities

Activity	Date
RFA Opens	March 26
Office Hours – Session 1	April 16 (2:00 – 3:00 pm PDT)
Office Hours – Session 2	May 7 (2:00 – 3:00 pm PDT)
Q&A – Deadline to Submit Questions	May 9 (5:00 pm PDT)
RFA Closes	May 30 (11:59 pm PDT)
CDT Application Review	June 2 to August 15
Submit Recommendations for Award to NTIA for Approval	August 30

Questions

CALIFORNIA ALL | Broadband for All

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

James Spencer

BROADBAND ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy
California Department of Technology

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Program Components

Partnership Coordination

Resource webpage for applicants to identify potential partners

Q&A

Dedicated inbox to submit questions about the RFA and the application process

Office Hours

Opportunities to ask the CDT team generalized questions about the RFA and the application process

Written Resources

Written resources to assist in the application development process

Pre-Recorded Video Content

Presentations on specific topics regarding the RFA and the application process

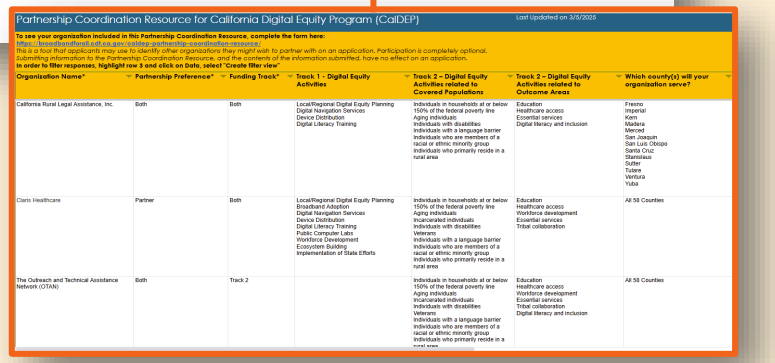
Learn more: https://broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/technical-assistance-resources

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Partnership Coordination Resource

Webpage for applicants to identify potential partners

- May be used to identify other organizations that might wish to **partner on an application**
- Facilitate collaboration in areas of mutual interest
- Is **optional** and will have no impact on application review/award



Learn more: broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/caldep-partnership-coordination-resource

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Office Hours

Opportunities to ask CDT team questions about the RFA & the application process

- Office Hours: **April 16** and **May 7 (2:00 – 3:00 pm)**
- OBDL cannot give advice or answer questions that are specific to individual applications
- Questions from Office Hours will be posted on the Q&A page
- Office Hours sessions will be recorded

Office Hours information announced on:

https://broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/technical-assistance-resources/

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Q&A

Dedicated inbox to submit questions about the RFA and the application process

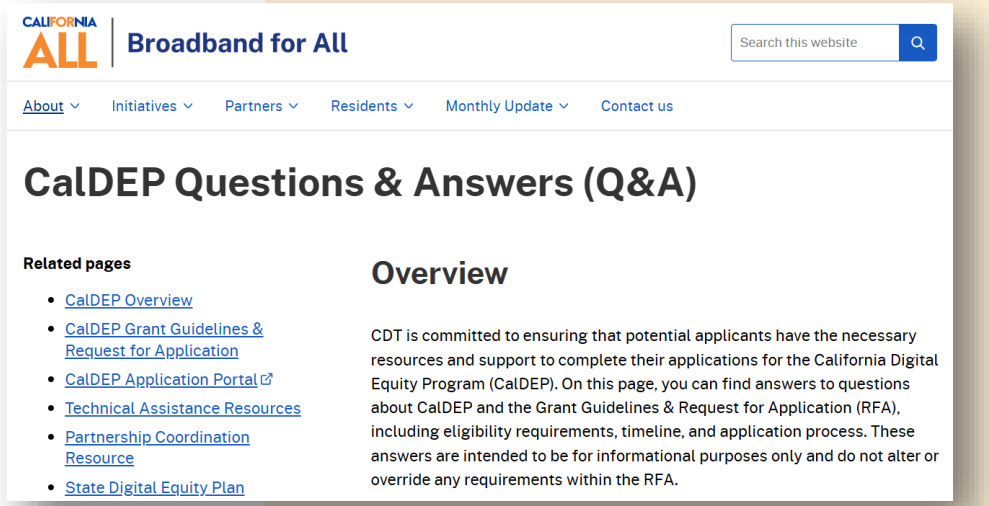
- Q&A received and posted on a **rolling basis**
- All questions must be sent by email to

  CalDEP@state.ca.gov with the subject line:

  “California Digital Equity Program RFA”
- Final deadline to submit questions:

  May 9 at 5:00 p.m. PDT

Questions that can be answered:	Questions that cannot be answered:
• Clarify the RFA or the application process	• Specific to individual applications.
• Address general program design or general policy	• Out of scope, inappropriate or irrelevant to CalDEP



Learn more: https://broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/caldep-questions-and-answers/

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Documents for Download

Written resources to assist in the application development process

Application guidance	Outlines application questions with extra guidance
Program One-Pager	High level summary of CalDEP
Application checklist	Summary of components of a complete application
List of example docs certifying Eligible Entity status	List of acceptable docs to certify Eligible Entity status
Letter of Intent (LOI) Template	Template for partner entities to express their intent to participate in a partnership and describe activities
Letter of Support (LOS) Template	Template for supportive stakeholders to express general support or endorsement for an application
Allowable / Unallowable Costs & Activities	List of allowable costs and associated activities
Procuring Goods & Services	Guidance for projects that may require contractual services
County Covered Populations Data	County-level Covered Population data for applicants to use in their outreach estimates

Learn more: https://broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/technical-assistance-resources/

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Pre-Recorded Videos

Pre-Recorded Video Content | Presentations on specific topics related to RFA & application

Budget Development	Walkthrough process for completing the Consolidated Budget Form
Track 1	Key considerations when developing a Track 1 application, which focuses on developing Regional and Local Ecosystems
Track 2	Key considerations when developing a Track 2 application, which focuses on developing Targeted Statewide Ecosystems

Learn more: https://broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/technical-assistance-resources/

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Schedule of TA

Dates & Activity	Technical Assistance

March 26
TA Materials provided alongside the launch of the RFA
	• **Rolling Q&A period begins**
	• **TA Written Resources Released with RFA Launch:**
	  • Program One-Pager
	  • Application Checklist
	  • List of example documents certifying Eligible Entity status
	  • Letters of Intent Template
	  • Letters of Support Template
	  • Allowable / Unallowable Costs and Activities
	  • Procuring Goods & Services

March 28 RFA Launch Webinar	• **Live webinar that provides an overview of RFA, GMS, and TA**
April 16 & May 7 Office Hours	• **Scheduled Office Hours for applications to ask general questions**
May 9 Final Deadline to Submit Questions for Q&A	• **Responses posted by May 16**

Questions

CALIFORNIA ALL | Broadband for All

LIVE DEMO: CALDEP WEBPAGES & APPLICATION PORTAL

Anh Nguyen

ENGAGEMENT & OPERATIONS MANAGER

Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy
California Department of Technology

LIVE DEMO: CALDEP WEBPAGES & APPLICATION PORTAL

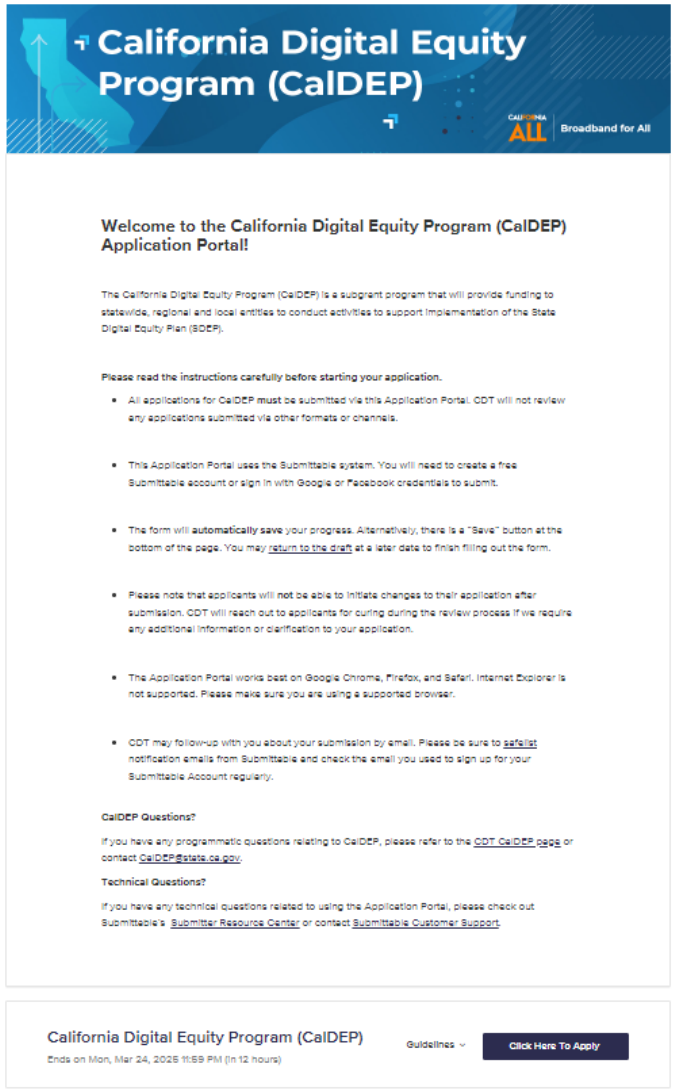
Summary

- CalDEP Overview
- CalDEP Grant Guidelines & Request for Application
- CalDEP Technical Assistance Resources
- CalDEP Questions and Answers
- CalDEP Partnership Coordination Resource
- CalDEP Application Portal

Scan here to access CalDEP Page

LIVE DEMO: CALDEP WEBPAGES & APPLICATION PORTAL

Application Portal



Deadline
May 30, 2025
11:59pm PDT

https://apply-caldep.broadbandforall.cdt.ca.gov/submit

Questions

CALIFORNIA ALL | Broadband for All

TIMELINE & CLOSING

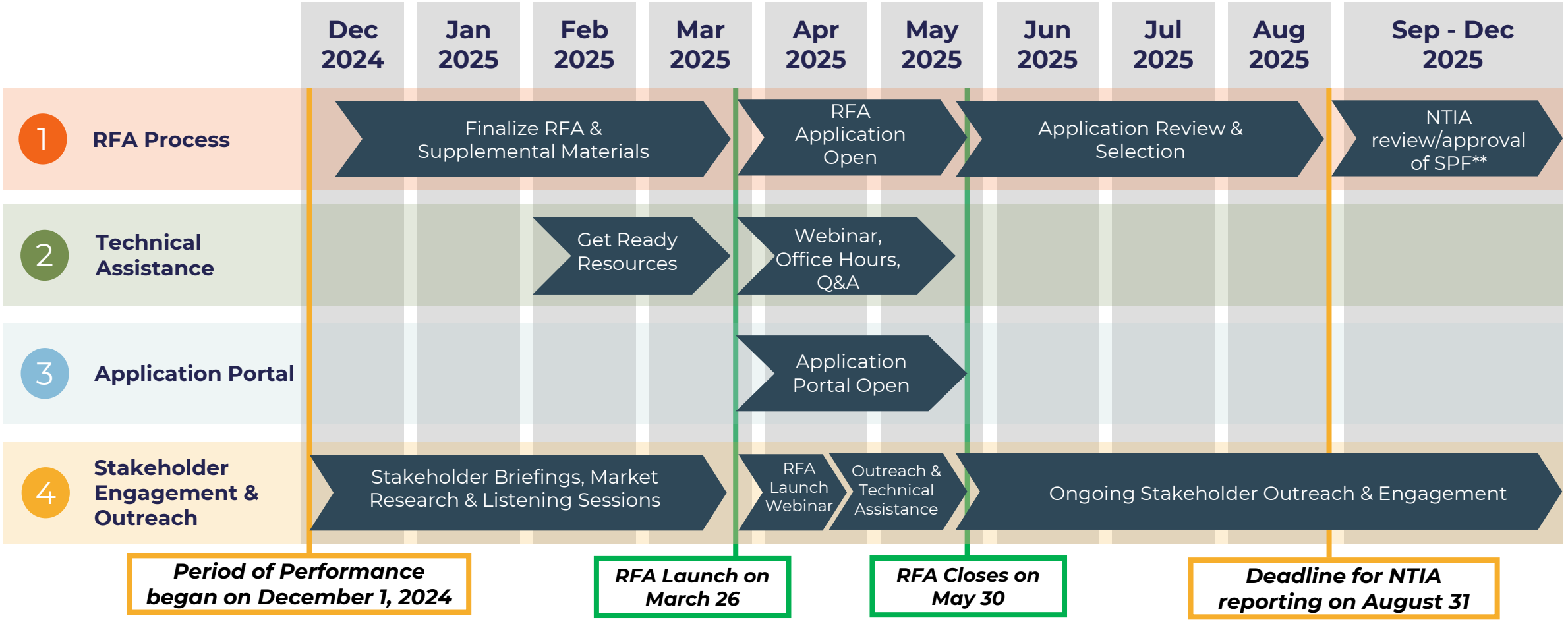
Shawn Daugherty

PRINCIPAL

Broadband Equity Partnership

TIMELINE & CLOSING

CalDEP Program Timeline



***Tentative timeline subject to revision and change*

TIMELINE & CLOSING

RFA Next Steps

- ❑ Review CalDEP webpages & TA resources on the BB4All portal
- ❑ Read the Grant Guidelines & RFA
- ❑ Enter info in Partnership Coordination Resource (optional)
- ❑ Identify partners or supporters
- ❑ Submit questions / Office Hours

Submit Application by Deadline
May 30, 2025
11:59pm PDT

Contact:

CalDEP@state.ca.gov

Questions

CALIFORNIA ALL | Broadband for All

THANK YOU!

Sign up:
Broadband for All Email Update

Website:
BroadbandForAll.cdt.ca.gov/caldep

Contact:
CalDEP@state.ca.gov

CALIFORNIA ALL | Broadband for All