

# **PSC: Receives 240 applications requesting more than \$420 million for ARPA Broadband Access Grants**

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for ARPA Broadband Access Grants

MADISON – The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) announced today its preliminary count of 240 applications received requesting more than \$420 million for the first round of broadband funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Funding for the grants was [made available](#) by Governor Tony Evers in May 2021. Applications and instructions for ARPA Broadband Access Grants were made available on [Tuesday, June 1, 2021](#). The PSC is expected to award \$100 million in the early fall of 2021 for projects that will expand high-speed broadband internet to unserved and underserved locations in the state.

“I declared 2021 the Year of Broadband Access because this past year underscored just how critical it is for every Wisconsinite to have access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet service,” said Gov. Evers. “While we continue working to make sure our state and our economy continue rebounding from the pandemic, expanding broadband access must continue to be a top priority. I’m proud to be directing these funds to those who need them most as we continue our work to make broadband affordable and accessible for folks across our state.”

“As with broadband grant rounds in the past, the demand for funding has never been higher. Exacerbated by the pandemic, the lack of broadband in many areas is leaving people out of our modern society,” said PSC Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq. “I want to thank Governor Evers for dedicating this federal funding to broadband grants for projects that will help Wisconsin bounce back stronger than

ever.”

Internet service providers, telecommunications utilities, cooperatives, local governments, and for-profit and non-profit organizations were eligible to apply for grants. The Commission will approve projects that will be completed by December 31, 2024, and there was no minimum or maximum amount of funding an applicant could request.

In addition to following federal guidance from the U.S. Treasury Department, the PSC will evaluate broadband projects based on applicant capacity, capability, performance, planning, project budget, proposed matching funds, and the proposed service area’s existing broadband service needs. Funds will be disbursed through a reimbursement process similar to the current process for the state Broadband Expansion Grant Program.

In addition to the \$100 million in ARPA funding, the 2021-2023 Biennial State Budget, signed by Governor Evers earlier this month, provides \$129 million in state grant funding over the next two years. Details about that funding will be announced in the coming weeks.

A list of ARPA Broadband Access Grants applicants will be available soon.

Visit [here](#) for more information about the Wisconsin State Broadband Office.