

### Applicant Information

Company Name	ATMC
Address	640 Whiteville Road, NW, Shallotte, NC 28470
Website	www.focusbroadband.com
Federal Tax ID	
DUNS #	009795113
System Award Management (SAM.Gov) ID	VQY8Y7CU62L4

Authorized Representative		Authorized Representative (Alternative)	
Full Name	Michael Keith Holden	Full Name	Jody Heustess
Contact Title	CEO/General Manager	Contact Title	VP, Marketing & Customer Care
Phone Number	910-755-1720	Phone Number	910-755-1728
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Grant Administrator & Company Name(if applicable):

Full Name	
Contact Title	
Telephone	
E-Mail	
Website	
Federal Tax ID	
Address	

### Project Information

Project Title	Faster Robeson 2022		
Project Cost	\$4,886,300		
County	Robeson	Tier #	001
Estimated # of Households with improved access	1,790		
Estimated # of businesses with improved access	22		
Base Speed - Minimum Download/Upload	Greater than 100:100 Mbps		

Project Description (provide a brief summary of the project)

The Faster Robeson 2022 GREAT Grant project is a PARTNERSHIP between Atlantic Telephone Membership Corporation (dba. FOCUS Broadband) and Robeson County Government to deliver critical broadband service with up to 2 Gigabits per second (Gbps) maximum symmetrical speeds to unserved and underserved areas of Robeson County via a 100% fiber to the home network constructed by FOCUS Broadband. The proposed funding area qualifies for grant eligibility due to Robeson County's status as a Persistent Poverty County and North Carolina Tier 1 Economically Distressed County. Approximately 95% (1,718 addresses) of the proposed service addresses are within Robeson County with the remaining 5% (94 addresses) in an adjacent portion of Hoke County. Through engineering field audits of existing services in the proposed funding service area, a county-wide survey conducted by the Lumber River Council of Governments, a survey conducted by FOCUS Broadband, and information contained in federal and state broadband availability sources, FOCUS Broadband has found the addresses contained within this application to be unserved and in critical need of high-capacity broadband connectivity for the purposes of economic diversification and improvement, job training and employment, and educational, community health, and public safety enhancement. The areas identified in the proposed project area were jointly identified by the Robeson County Broadband Committee and FOCUS Broadband. After receiving funding through the NC GREAT Grant program in 2020, FOCUS Broadband is in the process of constructing a 100% fiber optic network throughout much of rural Robeson County. The proposed Faster Robeson 2022 grant area will require construction of 76.5 route miles of fiber optic network to serve 1,790 eligible residential addresses and 22 businesses. The estimated cost of the Faster Robeson 2022 project is \$4,886,300 or \$2,696.33 per eligible location.

Has the applicant entered into a partnership for this project as defined in S.L. 2019-230?

Yes

### Checklist Details

1) Statement of Qualifications (Please provide a detailed description of qualifications and experience with the deployment of broadband):

The Faster Robeson NC GREAT Grant application is submitted as a joint project between Atlantic Telephone Membership Corporation (dba FOCUS Broadband) and Robeson County Government. We affirm that a formalized PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT exists between the two entities for the purpose of provisioning broadband services in unserved areas as outlined in the PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT. FOCUS Broadband is a cooperative that operates primarily in rural, underserved, sparsely populated areas and is well qualified to utilize funds available through the NC GREAT Grant program to achieve success. FOCUS will utilize its experience, assets, and established business practices to provide service to the unserved areas identified in this application.

### Checklist Details

Headquartered in Brunswick County, FOCUS Broadband is the largest rural not-for-profit communications cooperative in North Carolina. FOCUS Broadband is member-owned and operated continuously since it was chartered in 1955. FOCUS Broadband offers local telephone service, high-speed internet, Cable TV, business communications solutions, residential and business security services and more to over 54,000 residential and business customers in Brunswick, Columbus, and Robeson counties. FOCUS Broadband will begin offering services in Pender and Robeson Counties in the coming months.

FOCUS Broadband provides broadband Internet to over 53,500 customers utilizing a variety of different plant types including fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) and DOCSIS over coaxial cable. Approximately 99% of FOCUS Broadband's customers have access to broadband internet speeds of at least 600 Megabits per second, with 50% having access to Internet speeds of up to 1 Gigabit per second. FOCUS Broadband is led by a senior management team with 135 years of combined telecommunications experience, and FOCUS Broadband's staff of over 300 team members are proven and well-qualified.

FOCUS Broadband understands the critical role access to reliable high-speed internet plays in education, healthcare and business. FOCUS Broadband connected all Brunswick County public schools to a fiber-optic network to provide reliable, high-capacity broadband communications. Through its relationship with Novant Health, FOCUS Broadband has used fiber optics to link nine rural health care facilities back to Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center so that doctors can have timely access to critical patient records and off-site resources. To promote economic growth and supply local businesses with critical bandwidth capability, FOCUS Broadband has built fiber optic broadband services into industrial parks and business districts in the towns of Leland, Shallotte, Ocean Isle Beach, Holden Beach, Oak Island, Sunset Beach, Caswell Beach, Brunswick, Boiling Spring Lakes, and south Whiteville.

Perhaps the best example of FOCUS Broadband's qualifications and experience with the deployment of broadband was a project that began in 2011 and was completed under budget and ahead of schedule in just 16 months. Through the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS), the company applied for and received a Broadband Initiatives Grant and Loan package totaling \$16 million to build a 100% fiber optic network in southeastern Columbus County. This network covered over 185 square miles and required building approximately 250 miles of mainline fiber optic lines past 2,220 unserved households. FOCUS Broadband currently provides broadband Internet service to over 2,050 customers via this Columbus County network and users have the option to subscribe to Internet packages which deliver symmetrical speeds of 50 Mbps, 250 Mbps, 500 Mbps, and 1 Gigabit - the fastest such speeds available in Columbus County.

Over the past 60 months, under the direction of this management team, FOCUS Broadband has completed over \$50 million in substantially similar fiber optic upgrade and expansion projects passing over 35,000 homes and businesses in the company's ILEC and CLP service areas as well as a \$5 million project to expand broadband into rural Brunswick County to serve over 4,000 addresses utilizing a DOCSIS hybrid-fiber-coax network.

More recently FOCUS Broadband has won over \$45.5 million in grant funds from 11 different state and federal grants to bring high-speed internet to underserved rural areas of Brunswick, Columbus, Robeson, Duplin, and Pender counties. These funds were made available through the NC GREAT Grant Program (8 grants), the USDA ReConnect Broadband Grant Program (2 grants), and the USDA Community Connect Program (1 grant). FOCUS Broadband is investing over \$22 million in matching funds to complete these projects and is currently working to construct over 1,100 miles of fiber optic network past more than 18,000 homes and businesses. Upon the completion of these project areas in 30 months, FOCUS Broadband will have brought gigabit high speed internet to 816 square miles of rural service area.

In January of 2022, FOCUS Broadband started a self-funded, multi-year, \$100 million project to convert its entire coaxial network to fiber to the home to ensure that its customers have access to sustainable, reliable, symmetrical multi-gigabit speeds. This project is expected to improve services for an estimated 28,000 broadband subscribers in Brunswick County, North Carolina.

The work FOCUS Broadband has undertaken to provide broadband to rural communities throughout Brunswick and Columbus Counties has received national recognition. FOCUS Broadband is a Certified Gig Provider and has been named a Smart Rural Provider; both designations are given by the Rural Broadband Association. The Smart Rural Provider designation highlights member companies who undertake projects which make rural communities vibrant places to live and do business through the implementation of innovative broadband enabled solutions. In addition, in 2006, FOCUS Broadband became the first company in North Carolina to be a certified fiber to the home provider by the National Fiber-to-the-Home Council.

FOCUS Broadband will use its assets and experience to bring fast, affordable, and reliable broadband internet access to the proposed funding service areas in Robeson County.

#### 2) Assessment of the current level of broadband access in the proposed deployment area – supporting data may be uploaded if applicable:

FOCUS Broadband has determined the addresses in the Faster Robeson 2022 grant area fall below the 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload threshold. The methodology used to make this determination is the same methodology FOCUS Broadband used to determine unserved areas in successful grants submitted to NC DIT for Columbus, Robeson, and Duplin Counties in 2019 and 2020, as well as a \$22.7 million USDA Reconnect grant awarded to FOCUS Broadband for Pender County in 2020.

While the Faster Robeson 2022 area consists primarily of areas that are considered by the FCC 477 Report as being within partially served Census Blocks, the addresses included in this project do not have access to qualifying broadband speeds which meet the 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload threshold.

FOCUS Broadband identified a total of 1,812 unserved addresses for this project. The majority of the 1,718 addresses in Robeson County are clustered in the central and eastern portions of the county near the Parkton Community and in the Barker Ten Mile Community. FOCUS Broadband will soon begin construction of a broadband project funded by a US Department of Agriculture Community Connect Grant in the Barker Ten Mile Community. Additional addresses are available near the Barker Ten Mile project area that were not included in the Community Connect application because the Community Connect allowed funding only for addresses that had less than 10/1 Mbps. Because this program allows addresses that are 25/3 Mbps, we have included the additional addresses that showed as having faster than 10/1 Mbps but less than 25/3 Mbps. In the southern part of Robeson County adjacent with FOCUS Broadband's two GREAT Grant projects from 2020 there are a small number of unserved addresses that were not included in FOCUS Broadband's 2020 GREAT Grant application due to project size and cost limitations. These addresses have been added to this application. Ninety-four of the project's unserved addresses are located in adjacent areas of southern Hoke County.

United State Census Bureau demographic statistics from 2019 report that Robeson County has a population 130,625 with 47,997 households and an average of 2.81 persons per household. This same data states that 59.1% of Robeson County Households subscribe to an internet connection leaving a little less than half, or 53,425 of the county's households without a reliable internet connection. From a broadband availability perspective, the county has six internet service providers that provide varying levels of internet service in portions of the county. These include AT&T, CenturyLink, Spectrum, Lumbee River Electric Membership Corporation (LREMC) and Electric Service Company of Hamlet. With the aid of two NC GREAT Grants, in December of 2021, FOCUS



### Checklist Details

Broadband begin providing gigabit internet service in the southeastern corner of the county in the rural communities near Marietta, Orrum, and Proctorville.

AT&T provides telephone service to an estimated 65% of Robeson County. AT&T offers internet service delivered via digital subscriber line (DSL) with speeds typically less than 10/1 to most subscribers as well as fixed wireless options. They serve portions of Lumberton with fiber optics that provide speeds up to 1 Gig. As of October 1, 2020, AT&T no longer accepts new customers and no longer allows existing customers in rural DSL served areas to make speed changes. In addition, AT&T has made very little effort to upgrade its legacy copper network in Robeson County to be able to offer broadband speeds. By virtue of not allowing new customers to subscribe to DSL service, AT&T is effectively making a large portion of their Robeson County service area unserved.

FOCUS Broadband is a cooperative broadband provider that began providing gigabit broadband speeds via fiber optic connections to each household in its Robeson County service area. FOCUS Broadband secured state grant funds through the NC GREAT grant program and the USDA Community Connect which is allowing them to build a 100% fiber optic network to approximately 2,900 Robeson County addresses in and around Orrum, Proctorville, Marietta, and areas southeast of Fairmont by the end of 2022 with 650 additional addresses to be built in the Barker Ten Mile Community by the end of 2024.

CenturyLink's incumbent telephone area covers approximately 35% of Robeson County including the towns of St. Pauls, Red Springs, Maxton, and Lumber Bridge. In those areas, CenturyLink offers internet service to residential customers almost exclusively via DSL. CenturyLink's service area is overlapped by one or more providers who offer gigabit broadband in the following communities: Maxton, Red Springs, Lumber Bridge, Parkton and St. Pauls. Through funding received from a NC DIT GREAT grant, Spectrum will overbuild approximately 1,168 addresses in CenturyLink's Robeson County incumbent service area near the town of Maxton. While FCC 477 data and the CenturyLink website claim that broadband speeds faster than 25/3 Mbps are available in certain rural areas of Robeson County, no speed test results from our broadband survey support this claim.

Electric Service Company of Hamlet is a fixed wireless broadband provider that provides fixed wireless speeds to the southern corner of Robeson County between Maxton and Rowland. Based on FCC 477 reports, Electric Service company of Hamlet provide speeds up to 10 Mbps download and 2 Mbps upload. These speeds do not meet the 25/3 Mbps threshold required by the Federal Communications Commission to be considered broadband service.

Lumbee River Electric Membership Corporation (LREMC) is a cooperative that provides broadband on the western side of Robeson County in the rural communities between Lumberton, Pembroke, Red Springs and St. Pauls. LREMC's service area makes up about 23.2% of the Robeson County land area. Each of the address served by LREMC has access to broadband speeds of up to 100 Mbps delivered over fiber optics.

Spectrum provides broadband service to a majority of the Robeson County households. Spectrum has limited availability of fiber optics in Lumberton. In the remainder of Lumberton, Spectrum offers qualifying broadband speeds delivered over DOCSIS cable modem service. Spectrum cable modem service is also available in the towns of Fairmont, Lumberton, Rowland, Maxton, Red Springs, Lumber Bridge and St. Pauls. Spectrum offers broadband speeds up to 1 Gbps where they have fiber optic service available and 940 Mbps where they provide service via DOCSIS. All households who subscribe to Spectrum services would be considered served addresses. In 2019, Spectrum was awarded a grant through the NC GREAT grant program to provide fiber optic delivered internet to rural areas south of Pembroke and Maxton. Spectrum will also receive funding through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund which is intend for the company to bring high-speed internet to nearly 4,200 other rural addresses throughout Robeson County. Spectrum has up to six years to complete that project.

While there are some addresses within the proposed project that are near areas won by Spectrum in the 2020 RDOF auction, FOCUS Broadband was careful to not include any individual addresses in the proposal that fall within census blocks where Spectrum will receive RDOF funding. FOCUS Broadband and Spectrum each received funding through the NC GREAT Grant program in 2020 to build broadband in southern Robeson County near the communities or Orrum, Fairmont, Marietta, and Maxton. No addresses from those project areas have been included in this application.

A November 13, 2020 article in the New York Times by Dan Levin categorized Robeson County as a 'Rural Dead Zone' and found that "about 20,000 of the county's homes, or 43 percent of all households have no internet connection". The article went on to describe the large number of homes in Robeson County who don't have high speed internet service and the negative impacts that had on educating children during the COVID-19 pandemic. A copy of this article has been uploaded for reference.

Additional support data, including survey results, letters from customers, speed checks from provider websites, NC One Map data, NTIA Broadband Indicators of Need Map Data, and more have been uploaded to support our application.

### 3)Description of Proposed Services, Advertised Speeds, and Pricing Structure for proposed broadband recipients in the eligible project area:

#### Description of Services to be Provided-

FOCUS Broadband will provide high-capacity, high-quality broadband internet, delivered over a 100% fiber optic to the premise network at affordable rates. Speeds offered by FOCUS Broadband in the Faster Robeson 2022 GREAT Grant proposal area will offer symmetrical broadband speeds ranging from 50 Megabits per second (Mbps) to up to 2 Gigabit per second (Gbps) with no data caps. In addition to broadband internet, FOCUS Broadband will provide high quality residential and business telephone and video services over the same fiber optic connection.

#### Residential Broadband Speed Offerings-

Broadband and high-speed internet packages available to residential customers will mirror those offered in FOCUS Broadband's existing service area served by fiber optics and will feature speeds beginning at 50 Mbps and go up to 2 Gbps. Package options available will not be throttled or contain data caps. Pricing per package will be based on the tier of speed offered. There will be four speed tiers offered to residential customers with symmetrical upload and downloads speeds. The prices and speeds are listed below:

Speed Tier	Prices	Price with Lifeline Discount
50/50 Mbps	\$ 49.95	\$ 31.45
250/250 Mbps	\$ 57.95	\$ 39.45
500/500 Mbps	\$ 67.95	\$ 49.45
1/1 Gbps	\$ 77.95	\$ 59.45

### Checklist Details

2/2 Gbps \$ 109.95 \$ 91.45

#### Low-Cost Options-

To encourage adoption by low income and financially vulnerable households, customers who qualify for the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) Broadband Lifeline Assistance Program and apply the \$9.25 Lifeline discount to a FOCUS Broadband internet package will receive a matching \$9.25 discount from FOCUS Broadband. The combined total of the two discounts will provide \$18.50 per month off any broadband package. FOCUS Broadband is a participant in the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) which offers a savings of \$30 per month.

#### Business Broadband Speed Offerings-

Broadband and high-speed internet packages available to business customers will mirror those offered in FOCUS Broadband existing service area served by fiber optics. Package options available will not be throttled or contain data caps. Pricing per package will be based on the level of speed offered. There will be three speed tiers offered to business customers with asymmetrical upload and downloads speeds. The prices and speeds are listed below:

Speed Tier	A La Carte
250/100 Mbps	\$ 69.95
500/200 Mbps	\$ 99.95
1 Gbps/400 Mbps	\$ 149.95

Business Class Broadband tiers which offer service level agreements and symmetrical speeds will also be available as well as managed service options which include IT Support Services, firewall protection, managed networks, and data backup.

#### Community Anchor Institution Broadband Speed Offerings-

The broadband and high-speed internet packages available to qualifying community anchor institutions will not be throttled or contain data caps. Pricing per package will be based on the level of speed offered. There will be three speed tiers offered to qualifying community anchor institutions with symmetrical upload and downloads speeds. The prices and speeds are listed below:

Speed Tier	A La Carte
50/50 Mbps	\$ 39.95
250/250 Mbps	\$ 49.95
500/500 Mbps	\$ 59.95

#### Additional Service Offerings-

In addition to broadband internet services, FOCUS Broadband will offer additional services including:

- Telephone service with Unlimited Nationwide Calling for as low as \$19.99 per month
- Home Security and Automation Services

FOCUS Broadband will not require contractual obligations to subscribe to services.

#### 4) Description of Adoption Plan:

FOCUS Broadband understands how important it is to effectively communicate the availability of high-speed internet service and encourage its use to customers in unserved and underserved areas. FOCUS Broadband has a great deal of experience in communicating to rural, unserved areas and has effectively migrated customers to faster internet service as part of its 2010 grant project in Columbus County where it achieved a penetration of over 75% of residents in an unserved area. In addition, over the past 24 months, FOCUS Broadband has begun serving over 1,000 rural residents in Robeson and Columbus Counties as a result of projects made possible with GREAT Grant funding. For this project, FOCUS Broadband will use its experience and a variety of communication tactics to educate and encourage broadband adoption in the proposed funding area, if a GREAT Grant is awarded. These tactics will include community education forums (COVID dependent), advertising through a variety of media methods, as well as other marketing programs listed below:

- **Online Information and Interest Webpage-** FOCUS Broadband utilized its [www.FasterRobeson.com](http://www.FasterRobeson.com) website to gauge interest and availability of high-speed internet access in Robeson County. This website has played a critical role in defining areas that are unserved and underserved for internet access. This website will be used as a focal point to educate customers on the benefits of fiber optics, the progress of construction, contact information and product information. In addition, FOCUS Broadband will utilize [www.FasterRobeson.com](http://www.FasterRobeson.com) to allow customers to pre-register for service. Once customers have pre-registered, as service becomes available in each service area, FOCUS Broadband personnel will contact pre-registered customers to advise them of service availability.
- **Community Education Forums-** FOCUS Broadband will host community education forums in a facility located within a ten-minute drive of the proposed funding area. The forums will take place outside of regular work hours for ease of attendance. Each household within the proposed service area will be invited to learn about the benefits of fiber optic delivered broadband, project timelines, the construction process, available service and pricing options and provide time for questions and answers. Attendees will also be given contact numbers for the FOCUS Broadband Construction Hotline and they will be encouraged to visit our [www.FasterRobeson.com](http://www.FasterRobeson.com) website where they can view up-to-date construction status map and pre-register for service. Forums will be open to the public at no cost and an incentive will be provided to encourage attendance.



#### Checklist Details

- **Direct Mail-** FOCUS Broadband will utilize direct mail campaigns to notify households within the grant application area to inform them initially that fiber optic delivered broadband will be coming to their area, and subsequently of its availability. These direct mail pieces will direct customers to the FOCUS Broadband project webpage, [www.FasterRobeson.com](http://www.FasterRobeson.com), where they can get information about broadband offerings and pre-register for service, as well as provide them with contact information to call FOCUS Broadband directly.
- **E-mails-** Through surveys of residents living in the grant application area via the FOCUS Broadband project website, [www.FasterRobeson.com](http://www.FasterRobeson.com), FOCUS Broadband has compiled a database of email addresses from potential customers living in the grant application area. FOCUS Broadband will use these email addresses to contact customers of the coming availability of fiber optic broadband for their community. FOCUS Broadband will also do email campaigns which will direct customers to the FOCUS Broadband project webpage, [www.FasterRobeson.com](http://www.FasterRobeson.com) where customers can get information about broadband offerings and pre-register for service as well as provide them with contact information to call FOCUS Broadband directly.
- **Newspapers-** FOCUS Broadband will utilize local newspapers and news websites serving Robeson County to promote the availability of service through press releases and advertising. FOCUS Broadband will drive customers to the project website, [www.FasterRobeson.com](http://www.FasterRobeson.com), both during and after construction. FOCUS Broadband will advertise packages available as well as provide contact information for customers who are interested in signing up for service.
- **Referral Program-** FOCUS Broadband will offer a referral program whereby a \$50 credit will be applied to a customer's account when they refer FOCUS Broadband service to another customer who signs up for new service. This has been an effective program for FOCUS Broadband in new communities because it encourages neighbors to spread the word about availability of FOCUS Broadband services in their community.
- **Digital Marketing based on Geo-fencing-** FOCUS Broadband will employ a variety of digital marketing tactics including geo-fencing and search engine optimization (SEO) to place online ads in Robeson County to direct customers to the FOCUS Broadband project webpage, [www.FasterRobeson.com](http://www.FasterRobeson.com), where customers can get information about broadband offerings and pre-register for service, as well as provide them with contact information to call FOCUS Broadband directly.
- **Social Media Marketing-** FOCUS Broadband will use its social media platforms to update potential customers on construction and service availability, if awarded grant funding. In addition, FOCUS Broadband will create targeted and boosted posts for residents in these areas that direct them to the [www.FasterRobeson.com](http://www.FasterRobeson.com) website where they can get more information about broadband offerings and pre-register for service, as well as provide them with contact information to call FOCUS Broadband directly.
- **Lawn Signs-** When a customer in the grant application area has new service installed, FOCUS Broadband places a sign on the customer's lawn for a short period of time which indicates that the customer has chosen to subscribe to FOCUS Broadband service. This was an effective tool utilized during several rural broadband projects because it shows the availability of Internet service as it is happening.
- **Outdoor Advertising-** FOCUS Broadband will utilize billboards on roads and highways within the grant proposal area to promote the availability of high-speed internet.

#### By checking the appropriate box, you will upload the following documents:

5) Description of Project Area, Identification of locations to be served, relevant maps and mapping files:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6) If submitting other data sources, including field data, to identify unserved locations (households and businesses) outside of the fully unserved census blocks provided on the NC One Map, please provide a narrative describing your methodology for determining the proposed funding area is unserved and eligible for funding in this round.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7) Excel Spreadsheet (NO PDF) that itemizes the eligible activities and cost estimates. Please provide an explanation of how you estimated the costs:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8) Please provide your methodology or explanation of how you calculated cost per location (Households/Businesses):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9) Proof of Financial Solvency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10) Technical Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11) Evidence of Support for the Project (i.e. Letter of Support)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12) Evidence or proof a partnership based on the definition in the guidance document and the authorizing legislation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### SCORING

*The GREAT Program is a competitive grant program. Applications shall be scored based upon a system that awards a single point for criteria considered to be the minimum level for the provision of broadband service, with additional points awarded to criteria that exceed minimum levels. Applications receiving the highest score shall receive priority status for the awarding of grants.*

*The tool below is being provided to Applicants so that they may estimate their score to determine estimated match requirements. All final and official scores will be determined by the BIO during the review process.*

	Reviewer	Score
<b>a1) Partnership -</b> One point shall be given for a proposed partnership that will make available existing infrastructure that has been installed for the partner's enterprise, non-consumer broadband purposes, or any other property, buildings, or structures owned by the partner, for a proposed project.	Choose One	0

## NC DIT GREAT Program

### Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology Program

<b>a2) Partnership -</b> A county or nonprofit entity that proposes to provide a financial match shall be given one point. Notwithstanding Article 8 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, or any provision of law to the contrary, a county may use unrestricted general funds or federal American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117 1) funds allocated to it for the purpose of improving broadband infrastructure for a financial match.	Choose One	0
<b>a3) Partnership -</b> An applicant shall receive two additional points for a proposed partnership where the county's financial match is comprised entirely from federal American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117 2) funds intended for broadband infrastructure.	Choose One	0
<b>b) Unserved Households(HH) –</b> Using most recent FCC Data or other information or supporting data, <b>estimated number of unserved households within the eligible county (TIER ONE)</b>	500 or Less	1
<b>c) Unserved Households (HH) to be Served –</b> Using most recent FCC Data or other information supporting data, <b>the percentage of the total unserved households with the eligible project area</b>	Less than 15%	1
<b>d) Unserved Business –</b> Using most recent FCC Data or other information by NC BIO, provide broadband service to unserved business within eligible county (TIER ONE) and project area (Documentation)	1 and 4	1
<b>e1) Piedmont or Coastal Plain Region</b>	Choose One	
<b>e2) Mountain Region</b>	Choose One	
<b>f) Base Speed - Min Download : Upload</b>	100:20 Mbps to 100:100 Mbps	1.00
Total Score		3
<b>g) Community Broadband Plan defined by NCBIO</b>	No	0
<b>h1)</b> For counties that received an aggregate of eight million dollars (\$8,000,000) or more directly from the federal government, the following points shall be added to the application score:	Choose One	
<b>h2)</b> For counties that (i) received less than an aggregate of eight million dollars (\$8,000,000) directly from the federal government from the American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117 2) and (ii) are providing a portion of a project's matching funds using the entirety of the federal funds the county received, together with any other unrestricted general fund monies, if needed, the following points shall be added to the application score:	Choose One	
<b>i1)</b> Are the matching funds partially comprised of ARPA funds a county received directly from US Treasury?	Choose One	
<b>i2)</b> Are the matching funds entirely comprised of ARPA funds a county received directly from US Treasury?	Choose One	
Final Score		3

List all expenses related to the project, the amount of each expense, and the corresponding funding source(s) in the table below. The table should include all of the eligible costs such as: installation, acquiring or updating easements, equipment, fiber, construction, backhaul infrastructure for the end user, and testing costs. Ineligible costs should not be included in the project budget. The table should clearly show all planned expenditures and all funding sources for the project.

Reviewer Score:	3	Matching Requirement (%):	50%
Based on your scoring matrix, Your minimum match requirements:		\$2,443,150	
Total Project Cost:	\$4,886,300	Grant Amount Requested (\$):	\$0

Please indicate which documents were submitted with your application, by checking the appropriate box.

~ Reference guidelines booklet for document details ~

1) Excel Spreadsheet (NO PDF) that itemizes the eligible activities and cost estimates. Please provide an explanation of how you estimated the costs	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) What is the total cost per location for the project? Please provide your methodology or explanation of how you calculated cost per location (Households/Businesses)	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) Proof of Financial Solvency	<input type="checkbox"/>

Project Expense	GREAT Funds	Matching Funds	Total
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**NC DIT GREAT Program**  
Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology Program

Easements (one-time fees)			0
Materials (fiber, equipment, etc.)			0
Construction/Installation			0
Testing			0
Engineering			0
Lease/Collocation Fees (one-time fees)			0
Other 1			0
Other 2			0
Other 3			0
Total Eligible Project Cost			0

**Company Certifications**

1	Overdue Tax Debts	Does the Company or the Related Member(s) currently have any overdue tax debts with any City, Town or County in, or with the State of North Carolina?	No
2	Occupational Safety and Health Act Violations	Does the Company, or the Related Member(s) have any citation under the Occupational Safety and Health Act that have become a final order within the past three years for willful serious violations or for failing to abate serious violations?	No
3	Loan Defaults	Is the Company, or the Related Member(s) currently in default on any loan or grant previously made by the State of North Carolina?	No
4	Incentive History	Has the Company, or Related Member(s) ever defaulted on an economic development grant or incentive or been sued by a grantor with respect to an economic development grant or incentive from the State of North Carolina?	No
5	Creditor Losses, Litigation, Government Investigations	Has any member of management or any principal of the Company, or the Related Member(s) been involved in a financial reorganization, a bankruptcy, or other situation that led to losses by creditors or bond buyers, investor lawsuits, or government investigation alleging fraud or impropriety?	No
6	Pending or Threatened Litigation	Is the Company, or Related Member(s) subject to any claim, suit, action, proceeding, or government investigation that is pending or threatened that, individually or in the aggregate, would reasonably be expected to have a material adverse effect on the proposed grantee's finances or operations or the ability to conduct the proposed project, or that would reasonably be expected to impact the NC DIT's decision to award a grant?	No

**Internet Service Provider (ISP) Certification and Attestation**

The attached statements and exhibits are hereby made part of this application, and the undersigned representative of the applicant certifies that the information in this application and the attached statements and exhibits are true, correct, and complete to the best of the signatory's knowledge and belief. The signatory further certifies:

1. as Authorized Representative, the signatory has been authorized to file this application by formal action of the governing body;
2. agrees that if a grant is awarded, the applicant will provide proper and timely submittal of all documentation requested by the Grantor Agency;
3. that the applicant has substantially complied with or will comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances as applicable to this project;
4. that the applicant certifies the financial and organizational strength regarding the ability to successfully meet the terms of the grant requirements and the ability to meet the potential for repayment of grant funds; and
5. attests that the proposed project area is eligible.

**Authorized Representative**

Name:	Michael Keith Holden	Title:	Chief Executive Officer	Date:	03/23/2022
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