

NC DIT GREAT Program
Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology Program

Applicant Information

Company Name	TING FIBER INC
Address	1230 Perry Road Apex, NC 27502
Website	ting.com
Federal Tax ID	
DUNS #	080804742
System Award Management (SAM.Gov) ID	7XNN1

Authorized Representative		Authorized Representative (Alternative)	
Full Name	Amol Naik	Full Name	
Contact Title	Vice President of Public Policy and Government Affairs	Contact Title	
Phone Number	4046687493	Phone Number	
E Mail	anaik@tucows.com	E Mail	

Grant Administrator & Company Name(if applicable):

Full Name	Melanie Wolfe
Contact Title	Senior Policy Associate
Telephone	9542611687
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Website	
Federal Tax ID	
Address	

Project Information

Project Title	Angier Fiber Network		
Project Cost	\$9,787,138.85		
County	Harnett	Tier #	002
Estimated # of Households with improved access	4515		
Estimated # of businesses with improved access	5		
Base Speed Minimum Download/Upload	Greater than 100:100 Mbps		

Project Description (provide a brief summary of the project)

As a private ISP who has successfully built multiple fiber to the premise (FTTP) networks in the state of North Carolina, Ting is proposing to build a citywide FTTP network in Angier, NC. The pandemic has shown us how quickly communities and individuals can fall behind if their internet cannot support safely working from home, engaging in remote learning, accessing crucial telehealth services, and fully participating in the global economy. Moreover, the economic development benefits of a fiber network are numerous access to symmetrical gigabit speed internet will make Angier an even more appealing place to move, start a business, and pursue education opportunities. However, with a population of just under 6,000 residents, Angier presents a difficult business case for a large scale fiber builder to invest in improving internet infrastructure, which helps to explain its lack of residential fiber connectivity. Despite an average resident income of \$48,306, Angier has a relatively high poverty rate of 13% and a large immigrant population, which contribute to the simultaneous challenge of low internet adoption across the community. To counterbalance Angier's lack of universal high speed internet service, Ting is applying for a GREAT Grant to facilitate its buildout of a citywide fiber network to serve all of Angier's residents and businesses. Angier's current distribution of internet services providers consists of Spectrum, CenturyLink, Hughesnet, Viasat, and Earthlink. None of these providers have closed the digital divide in Angier; in fact, only 77.3% of Angier's residents had regular access to internet service according to the Census average between 2016 2020. These providers rely on outdated cable and DSL solutions that can only deliver the highest speeds to a small number of wealthy residents in the community, and several NC state broadband surveys taken by Angier residents have confirmed this nationwide phenomenon on a local scale. Ting commends the North Carolina legislature and the North Carolina Broadband Infrastructure office for recognizing the need for "consistent" and "reliable" access to 100/20 speeds, and Angier is a perfect example of a town that appears to have broadband access on paper, but whose residents lack consistent and reliable internet access in practice.

To paint a picture of the proposed fiber infrastructure project, Ting will engage with Angier's staff and officials in the planning and pre construction phase. Together, we'll discuss the specifics of construction, begin receiving input regarding the city's priorities, and negotiate a formal license agreement for access to the ROW. As part of project kickoff, we would create processes and communication channels to ensure that city staff and officials from Angier have ample opportunities to provide feedback to Ting throughout our design and construction planning process.

Meanwhile, our design and engineering team would work with our design vendor to further develop our feasibility level design into a high level design and then a low level, "construction ready" design. In the process, we will also develop a bill of materials, design the core network infrastructure, create a splicing design, and draft permit designs for our first active cabinet for initial feedback. Our project management team will collect and confirm permitting

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requirements with the City, coordinate construction ride outs for various members of our Construction and Customer Operations (CCO) team, and facilitate the development of the construction permit package for the entire project. At this stage, we will also secure a local storage facility/warehouse space, procure our cabinet equipment and materials, and procure our fiber construction materials. Although equipment and materials have not yet been designated for this project specifically, our Global Supply Chain team has already accounted for and ordered materials to accommodate construction in cities across the country.

In the second phase of the project, we plan to begin construction on the fiber network and install our first active cabinet and connect it to transport. At that stage, we would also ensure data center readiness, including placing data center equipment, connecting it to redundant transport, and activating and testing data center connectivity. As for the fiber construction itself, we would closely monitor our contractor as they lay conduit throughout the first work zone, and then blow and splice fiber once conduit is in place. Once construction is complete, we would engage in careful testing of the network, and then hold what we at Ting call a “lighting ceremony” to celebrate the launch of the network in Angier and ceremonially “light” or bring fiber optic service to our first customer.

Around this time, we would host additional marketing events to engage Angier residents and businesses, begin signing up customers, and coordinating in home installs across Work Zone 1.

As far as our resident communication strategy throughout all construction phases is concerned, our marketing team leverages direct mail, door hangers and local meetings to proactively inform residents about any construction and potential disruptions to street use or parking. We would have local sales and marketing representatives in place to spearhead this work in Angier. We have found that keeping residents informed is crucial to a smooth deployment process, particularly when it is explained that any temporary inconvenience construction noise, traffic, etc will result in access to gigabit speed fiber internet.

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

No

Checklist Details

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

Statement of Qualifications:

As an internet service provider (ISP), Ting has deep roots in promoting access to the free and open internet. Our parent company, Tucows, has been committed to the simple goal of “making the internet better” since 1993, and after nearly three decades addressing inefficiencies and inequities in the global domain name registration space, our CEO Elliot Noss decided to build Ting Internet to address the gaping need for more fiber in the US. Ting lit its first customer with fiber internet in 2015, and we haven’t slowed down (or raised our prices!) since. We’ve established successful relationships with a variety of cities across the country to help them bring fiber to the home, and we’re hoping to do the same in Sanford.

Ting Fiber Inc., is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Delaware, and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Tucows, Inc., a publicly traded company listed on the Nasdaq (TCX), and the Toronto Stock Exchange (TC). Today, Tucows employs over 1,000 people globally, and provides Internet related services to millions of customers around the world. While our parent company operates four unique businesses and has 1000+ employees around the world, the Ting fiber team is approximately 380. Our fiber team also benefits from the support of several shared services and other Tucows employees for legal, financial, and branding support.

Our dedicated Ting Internet team is led by four members of the Tucows Executive Board, Elliot Noss (CEO), Jill Szuchmacher (Chief Strategy Officer), Michael Goldstein (Chief Revenue Officer), and Ross Rader (Chief Customer Officer). Jointly, these individuals shape the strategic direction of Ting, and they continue to scale the teams they manage to keep pace with the influx of new markets, new fiber network construction, and new customers. At Ting, our in house team spans every aspect of the fiber internet business engineering & design, project management, construction & field operations, supply chain management, market development, finance, marketing, sales, product, customer support, and government affairs & legal. However, to support our rapid growth and multiply the efforts of our full time staff, we leverage contractors in multiple areas of our business, including the construction of our networks. Under the leadership of Elliot, Michael, Ross, and Jill, Ting has developed expertise in building fiber networks and operating as an ISP serving residents, businesses, and enterprises in 13 markets across seven states in the U.S. In most of our markets, Ting fully funds and fully owns the majority of the fiber infrastructure. Additionally, we have experience with a variety of public private partnerships where the City owns the backbone of the network and Ting builds and owns the fiber infrastructure to the premise, or where the City owns the entirety of the network, as is the case in Westminster, MD and will be the case in Colorado Springs, CO, one of our recently announced markets.

In two of our Southern California markets, Encinitas and Solana Beach, we work with a third party private partner who builds and owns the infrastructure, and Ting is an ISP on their network. Across the board, we have experience with organic growth, acquisitions, and partnerships with municipalities and private sector fiber network builders.

In Westminster, MD, our partnership agreement can be found here, and is based on the following:

A FTTP network financed and built by the City of Westminster, including service drops to subscribers;
Ting as network operator and the initial service provider on the network;
Service provider payments to the City based on passed premises and lit subscribers;
Shared risk on the City’s debt service for construction of the network.

In Centennial, we entered into an IRU with the City for an initial lease of fiber, which is an important piece of our current FTTP deployment project. More information on the terms of the lease can be found here. We also have a dark fiber IRU with the City of Sandpoint, Idaho, where the City was lit with service in June of 2018 and we are now expanding to areas outside of the City.

In Holly Springs, NC, we lit our first neighborhoods in 2017 and have since completed the Town buildout. As part of that build, we leverage excess/surplus Town fiber through an IRU, and also worked with the Town to procure land for our central office facilities.

In 2018, we announced our intention to bring fiber Internet to Fuquay Varina, NC a town contiguous to Holly Springs, NC. As part of that arrangement, we worked on a shared construction basis on joint routes with the municipality to reduce costs for both parties. We lit the first customers in Fuquay Varina at the end of 2018. We have a similar arrangement with the Town of Wake Forest, NC, which was lit with service in November 2020.

Checklist Details

Our most recent endeavor with leasing city owned fiber is in Culver City, California where we are actively building fiber to every resident by extending our fiber network from the City's fiber backbone, "Culver Connect," to individual premises.

For the sake of brevity, we have omitted the complete resumes of our team members, though we are happy to provide them at the State's request.

Core Team Members and Role in Project Execution

Jill Szuchmacher, Chief Strategy Officer and EVP Networks: As the most senior leader of our networks team which encompasses design and engineering, construction, project management, network operations, supply chain, and market development Jill supports the leaders of each of those teams and sets priorities across the business. Jill has experience across the full lifecycle of fiber deployment and operations, encompassing long range planning, regulatory strategy, underground and aerial deployment, vendor strategy and contract negotiation as well as standing up and then optimizing market and backbone operations across a geographically distributed footprint. Her operational experience includes mobilizing large scale builds, digital transformation, and workforce scaling, as well as driving network optimization in mature fiber footprints. Prior to joining Ting, she spent 13 years at Google, including 8 years in leadership roles at Google Fiber.

Ross Rader, Chief Customer Officer: As our Chief Customer Officer, Ross oversees Ting's Customer Support function, which includes an onboarding team and an ongoing support team. Ross personally plays a role in hiring each one of Ting's customer support advisors, and he continues to develop our training program and raise the bar for our customer support operation.

Michael Goldstein, Chief Revenue Officer, Ting Internet: A longtime executive of both Ting and Tucows, Michael has been Making the Internet Better since 1999 when he first worked at Tucows as a marketing director. Today, Michael oversees two crucial teams at Ting our marketing team and our City Manager team, both of which are highly local functions that help integrate Ting into all of the communities where we do business. Michael's team is responsible for customer acquisition helping us reach our target of 50% penetration by Year 5 and also for community investment, lending support to nonprofits, community events, and digital literacy initiatives to make the internet more accessible for all residents in Ting Towns.

Jason Smith, Vice President of Construction and Customer Operations: Jason leverages decades of experience in fiber optic network construction at companies including Level 3 and Google Fiber to lead the Construction and Customer Operations team, providing initial reviews of new city builds, determining construction methods to utilize, and identifying local and national construction contractors. He leads the team that will hire Ting employees, and will lead the detailed conversations with the department of public works. He will ensure that Ting staff is aligned with the City staff on process and expectations for the project. Jason is a fifth generation North Carolinian and a resident of Granville County, North Carolina.

Paul Pine, VP Global Supply Chain: Paul manages a team dedicated to procuring the materials and services required to execute all of our construction commitments across the country. Paul and his team developed master service agreements with all of our vendors and construction partners, and beyond that they work to maintain personal relationships with individuals from all of these firms to ensure that purchase orders are fulfilled, work is completed to Ting's standards, and delays are communicated well in advance when they do arise.

Amol Naik, Vice President of Public Policy and Government Affairs: Amol is the leader of Ting Internet's public policy and government affairs team, which works with governments at the federal, state, and local levels to enable the successful deployment and operation of Ting's networks nationwide. Amol has significant public policy experience in the technology and ISP industries, including leading the adoption of the first "one touch make ready" telecommunications reforms in the United States. Amol has also served as a Cabinet official in municipal government, making him acutely aware of the challenges faced by municipal officials during the deployment of large scale infrastructure projects. Amol is focused on meaningful community engagement during all aspects of the construction and operation of a FTTP network, working closely with government officials to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. Amol is a product of the Robeson County, NC Public Schools, having attended K 12 in his hometown of Lumberton. He is a 2001 graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Vivian Lee, Senior Director of Project Management Office and Organizational Development: Vivan has worked with Ting since October 2018 and oversees Ting's project management office, with team members dedicated to each of our current and pipeline markets to develop schedules and report on Ting's construction progress. Vivian has over a decade of experience in project management, and she's scaled her team significantly since joining Ting, including new functions to focus on project management for city engagement, product development, and digital inclusion.

Monica Webb, Senior Director of Market Development and Strategic Partnerships: As one of Ting's earliest employees who has worked with us since 2014, Monica has been involved in many aspects of launching the Ting operation, and today is heavily involved with forging our relationships with cities and has significant experience negotiating franchise agreements, licenses, and other public private and private partnership arrangements that serve as the foundation of our relationships with our Ting Towns. Previous to Ting, Monica was a founder and the Chairperson of a large municipal fiber cooperative of 44 towns in Western Massachusetts where she worked daily with local, county and state leadership on the governance, business planning, policy and financing of municipal fiber networks.

George Kopas, Senior Director Finance, Ting: In the nearly five years George has worked at Tucows, he has risen from a Senior Financial Analyst to the Senior Director of Ting's Finance team, building a full Finance organization around him along the way. Today, George is responsible for oversight of the Finance function for the Ting Internet business. This encompasses decision support for strategic expansion and products, development and management of capital budget, acquisition support and integration, and management of the FP&A and Accounting function.

Nick Raceu, Director of Network Operations/Vice President of Engineering: Management of the network operation is done by our Network Operations Center, who work 24x7. Nick's team includes network engineers and security professionals who have helped him scale Ting's NOC and proactively maintain secure and functioning networks in all of our markets.

Robert Houlihan, Director Network Engineering Rob joined Ting in 2021 after nearly 14 years with Cedar Falls Utilities, where he was responsible for the operations of five departments, Information Systems, Meter Reading, Information Technology and Security, Network Engineering and Communications Services. At Ting, Rob plays an equally important role in designing our fiber networks and accounting for the increased capacity that will come as Americans' usage of the internet and need for rapid transmission of data grows.

Donald Ray, Sr. Manager, Regional Construction and Customer Operations: In Ting's West Region markets, Donald oversees the management of the daily operation of all activities, including all construction, installation, service, engineering, and line activities as well as having overall responsibility for all employees and projects in the region ensuring that the work is handled expediently and to company standards. Donald develops company strategies through the preparation of business fulfillment plans, budgeting, and forecasting; he has oversight of the work productivity, quality, and control standards for all field employees; and he ensures that quotas and staffing aligns with business goals and projected future volume of activity.

Melanie Wolfe, Senior Policy Analyst and Digital Inclusion Lead: Melanie supports Ting's policy team and works with Ting's city partners to develop digital inclusion plans that help low income residents afford internet access. She led Ting's implementation of the Emergency Broadband Benefit now the Affordable Connectivity Program and she continues to help Ting leverage other federal and state funding opportunities to help Ting expand to underserved communities.

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Jeremy Luymes, GIS Manager: Jeremy is our principal GIS analyst, though he plays a much larger role than simply mapping our fiber networks. Jeremy is involved in our network design process from Day 1, assisting our design vendor with planning our projects and ensuring that our networks reach every home and business in a community.

To support the efforts of our central team, we integrate a number of contractors in several areas of our business, and those contractors differ across the geographic regions. Generally, contractors for a given project are selected based on their proven experience working with members of our Engineering and Design team and our Construction and Customer Operations (CCO) team. We tend to use RFPs in contractor selection to gather multiple cost estimates and compare proposals before onboarding a contractor to a project. Throughout the life of our partnerships, our construction contractors are overseen by Ting's teams, and our project management team ensures that regular communication occurs between contractors and the relevant internal counterparts.

For our North Carolina expansion plans, our CCO Lead Jason Smith has already been interviewing multiple contractors who responded to an RFP he opened. After engaging with several firms, we have selected Dycom Industries as our leading construction partner to assist us with building underground fiber networks in the state. Dycom has over fifty years of experience in construction, and they provide a wide range of services from engineering, to construction, program and project Management, material provisioning, subscriber installations, maintenance, and underground facility locating services to the telecommunications and utility industries across 49 states. We have heavily vetted Dycom and their subsidiary interested in working with us in Arizona since they first responded to an RFP of ours, and we are confident they will be excellent long term construction partners.

On the engineering and design side, Ting has collaborated with an expert external firm called Biarri Networks to handle the feasibility studies, high level design, and low level design for our potential fiber cities, with constant feedback and iteration from our in house team throughout the process. We believe Biarri is the best at what they do, and they're pioneers in autodesign, a technique that produces more accurate network planning for bringing broadband networks to market years more efficiently than traditional fiber network planning methods. In our case, their team engages heavily with us after the autodesign phase to make nuanced improvements to the design based on our standards and the needs of our city partners.

Supporting our team behind the scenes, we work with outside legal counsel from the firms Harris Wiltshire & Grannis, LLP and Morgan Lewis to advise us in the development of city agreements and assist us with specific legal questions.

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

Based on conversations with community members, reviewing 477 data, and conducting online searches to identify current options for broadband access in Angier, there are several providers who claim to serve parts of the project area proposed in this grant. Spectrum is the incumbent cable provider, and DSL options include Kinetic (Windstream), and CenturyLink (AKA Lumen). The standard satellite options of Viasat and HughesNet, along with mobile based wireless provider T Mobile, are also available to residents of Angier. Importantly, there is no ubiquitous residential and business fiber provider delivering symmetrical gigabit speeds to Angier.

As North Carolina acknowledged in its 2022 GREAT Grant Guidance, the state of North Carolina recognizes the need to distinguish between advertised speeds and consistent, reliable speeds delivered to residents. We know that satellite and DSL certainly cannot support 100/20 speeds for all of Angier, and we argue that Spectrum's aged cable system is not capable of providing those speeds consistently and reliably, at all hours of the day, to support the needs of the community. Spectrum has had years of opportunity to upgrade their plant to a FTTP network, and they have neglected doing so in favor of more profitable markets. At Ting, we believe that Angier is deserving of a network that can support not just 100/20, but symmetrical gigabit speeds, and we are prepared to execute that vision in less than 24 months to bring those speeds to every resident and business interested in our service. To this end, throughout the application period we have invested in a direct mail campaign to promote the North Carolina Broadband Survey to all residents and businesses of Angier, encouraging them to report their broadband experience to the state. We hope that new data points continue to appear on the NC One Map, but even today there are a number of red dots throughout Angier that indicate survey responses where 25/3 speeds could not be delivered consistently and reliably.

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

Ting offers a comprehensive range of services to support a robust Internet experience for residential, commercial and institutional customers. For residential customers, Ting offers a selection of Internet access packages up to a symmetrical gigabit, all with straightforward pricing that has never been increased since we began operations. Rental and purchase of routers, streaming TV devices, and Whole home WiFi are also offered.

For small business, commercial and institutional customers, we offer a selection of Internet access packages to a full symmetrical gigabit and beyond. We also offer static IP addresses, WiFi solutions, facilitation of VOIP services, and customized customer care solutions.

Our residential products include "Home Fiber 1000," our marquis gigabit internet product, which offers symmetrical speeds of 1000 mbps for \$89/mo, and our "Home Fiber 5" package which offers 5 mbps for \$19/mo. We are expanding our offerings to include two mid tier products, a 50/50 mbps package for \$39 and a 200/200 mbps package for \$69. All of our residential offerings guarantee symmetrical speeds and no data caps.

Our approach to low income pricing and digital inclusion involves close collaboration with the City, so that we can understand where the City's residents in need live and work. In Culver City and Charlottesville, we're working on finalizing our digital inclusion programs with local housing authorities to have Ting serve affordable housing units throughout the City, and intend to scale a similar program to all of our Ting Towns going forward. With an upfront contribution from the City to help support initial inside wiring costs, Ting is committing to providing gigabit internet at no net cost to residents participating in the program. We plan to help residents apply for state and federal subsidies and support the remainder of the service costs ourselves.. Ting is currently participating in the Affordable Connectivity Program, reducing those costs by \$30 for customers who fit the federal government's eligibility parameters, and we plan to continue to leverage state and federal subsidies that make the cost of broadband more affordable for our customers.

Our small business products encompass the following:

Starter Plan | 200 Mbps, starting at \$99

Basic Gig | 1 Gbps, with 1 static IP, starting at \$139

Business Gig with SLA | 1 Gbps, with a 1 static IP and a service level agreement, starting at \$499

Additional static IPs, Managed WiFi and customized multi gigabit solutions are also available.

Our enterprise products encompass the following:

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Dedicated Internet Access | 100 Mbps – 10 Gbps, starting at \$499
Point to point and Point to multipoint | 1 Gbps – 10Gbps, starting at \$499
Network to network interface | 10 Gbps – 40 Gbps, starting at \$2,499
Multi dwelling units and homeowners' association bulk options with discounted monthly rates and no installation fees
Dedicated account managers
Property wide managed WiFi
Managed services

Residential products and packages

Home Fiber 1000: with upload and download speeds of 1000 mbps; \$89 monthly
Home Fiber 200: with upload and download speeds of 200 mbps; \$69 monthly
Home Fiber 50: with upload and download speeds of 50 mbps; \$39 monthly

Each package includes:

Symmetrical speeds of either 5/5 mbps, 50/50 mbps, 200/200 mbps, 1000/1000 mbps (a full gigabit);
No data caps;
Technical support available 24x7;
No minimum terms – service is offered month to month.

Start up costs vary based on a customer's selections and include:

Gateway purchase or rental: Each account includes a gigabit enabled, state of the art, 802.11ac fiber modem and wireless gateway. These can either be purchased outright for a one time fee or rented monthly.
Installation: Although waived for those who pre order service before a neighborhood is built, there is otherwise a one time installation fee for customers that have not previously had Ting fiber brought to their home or business. If a new occupant is taking over a premises that has already been wired by Ting, the installation fee is not charged again.

Whole home WiFi:

We also offer WiFi extenders for residential customers with premises requiring more extensive and robust WiFi to accommodate all areas and users for purchase for \$99 or \$5/mo rental.

Streaming TV Devices:

To enable streaming over Ting, we sell the Amazon Firestick for \$49, or an Apple TV 4K 32GB for \$179 to purchase, or \$9/mo to rent.

Business products and packages

We also offer a variety of services available to small businesses and larger enterprises, as follows:

A “small business gigabit” package with up to 1000 mbps bandwidth (GPON, 1:16 split), 24/7 support, the option to add static IPs, but no dedicated bandwidth, for \$139/mo.

An “enterprise gigabit” package with dedicated 1000 mbps (Active Ethernet), 24/7 support, 1 static IP address included, for \$999/mo. The enterprise gigabit package encompasses proactive link monitoring and notification, available support engineering, MxU service, available wireless backup, and dedicated bandwidth.

* Ting Enterprise SLA is available for viewing here.

Multiple Dwelling Units (MDUs)

This offering is geared toward apartment complexes, hotels/motels, assisted living, condominiums, HOAs, or other multiple unit environments where the complex ownership or management group decides to engage in a bulk billed environment to maximize buying power to discount off of retail rates. Customizable solutions are designed and priced on a case by case basis.

Our MDU solutions are flexible and continue to evolve to meet our customers' needs, but we always offer a combination of single bulk billing to property owner/manager if desired, 24/7 support, up to 1000 mbps bandwidth available to individual units, fiber to the unit options or use existing Cat5e/6 wiring, managed WiFi, sales engineering and design support, and video and phone add ons.

Additional Business or MDU Product Offerings

GigE symmetrical Internet service: Ethernet dedicated access for high bandwidth users.

PrimeVoice: This partnership offers VoIP access phone services.

Managed WiFi: Building, deploying, and managing WiFi in public areas like parking lots, parks, stadiums, etc.

Commitment to Customer Support: Delivering superior customer service has always been a primary focus of our business. Ting's existing and prospective customers can call our support team at any time and speak directly with a human employed by us who can answer their questions. Our customer support team is highly trained to understand our construction process, our services, and any technical issues that arise, and is empowered to solve customers' problems. Since we began tracking our Customer Experience Score in January of 2021, our customer support rating has averaged a 93% satisfied score on our onboarding process and 92% satisfied score for ongoing support needs.

4) Description of Adoption Plan:

To measure our success in terms of customer adoption, Ting always enters new markets with a goal of 50% penetration amongst serviceable addresses. We provide annual, if not quarterly, status updates on market adoption in Tucows' public filings, and we are currently on track to reach that level of penetration in

Checklist Details

all of our mature markets. We ensure high levels of success in this area by deploying a variety of marketing and communications tactics to reach diverse segments of the population. As we've referenced in other responses, Ting puts effort into resident communications well before the network is lit, and we go to great lengths to send direct mail and host in person events to introduce ourselves to a community and give them advance notice of the construction process before it occurs. We invest heavily in digital advertising to spread awareness about the benefits of fiber internet and Ting's offerings online, but we acknowledge that populations who struggle with digital literacy may not receive those messages. For this reason, we also incorporate a human component into our adoption strategy, leveraging door to door sales teams to communicate with residents face to face and answer their questions about the Ting customer experience. We also hire local marketing coordinators and managers, who participate in a number of local events, ranging from charity runs to community festivals, to introduce our brand to new towns and reach residents where they are.

In terms of a local presence, as we built the network, we also expanded our team in Wake Forest and in the broader market area. Our North Carolina Regional Manager, Todd Rubin has been working with Ting since 2016 and has helped integrate Ting into the communities we serve throughout the area. Particularly at the early stages of the build, Todd has regularly communicated with Wake Forest's town manager, IT director, and the Mayor to understand their priorities and ensure that Ting's network continues to meet the city's needs. Ting has also employed a local marketing manager, a marketing coordinator, and two marketing specialists to focus on customer acquisition in Wake Forest. On the construction and operations side, we have 22 FTEs across our NC operation, with 8 dedicated to our Wake Forest operations, focused on customer drops and installations as well as blowing, splicing, and testing our fiber during construction. The construction team itself is based locally out of Holly Springs and Apex, which is where our NC office and warehouse are located.

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
a1) Partnership - 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
a2) Partnership - 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
a3) Partnership - 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) Unserved Households(HH) Using most recent FCC Data or other information or supporting data, estimated number of unserved households within the eligible county (TIER ONE)	500 or Less	1
c) Unserved Households (HH) to be Served Using most recent FCC Data or other information supporting data, the percentage of the total unserved households with the eligible project area	Less than 15%	1

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d) Unserved Business 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
e1) Piedmont or Coastal Plain Region	Choose One	
e2) Mountain Region	Choose One	
f) Base Speed - Min Download : Upload	100:20 Mbps to 100:100 Mbps	1.00
Total Score		3
g) Community Broadband Plan defined by NCBIO	No	0
h1) 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	
h2) 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	
i1) Are the matching funds partially comprised of ARPA funds a county received directly from US Treasury?	Choose One	
i2) 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:		\$4,893,569.43	
Total Project Cost:	\$9,787,138.85	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
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
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NC DIT GREAT Program

Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology Program

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:	Amol Naik	Title:	Vice President of Public Policy and Government Affairs	Date:	05/04/2022
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