

Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: Broadband Outreach Inc.

Project Title: Public Housing Authority Infrastructure Project

Project Type: Last Mile

Executive Summary

Broadband Outreach Inc. (“BBO”) is a corporation that was recently formed to bring affordable broadband into the homes of low-income, aged and otherwise underserved people by harnessing the power of technology to empower lives and to close the digital divide. Our approach features an integrated solution that does not just provide a speedy Internet connection with nothing else but hopes that it will be used; rather, our proposal includes what we think are the three critical components, (1) broadband connectivity, (2) training to really use and appreciate the broadband world, and (3) the computers themselves, together constituting what we call “Meaningful Broadband.” And, with Meaningful Broadband in public housing authorities, we feel strongly that we are not only meeting the goals of the Broadband Stimulus program but also providing a powerful and long-lasting model for changing lives. Here is how we will do this. Among other projects, BBO is acting as the agent of each of the Public Housing Authorities named below (each, a “PHA”) to submit this Application and the related Sustainable Broadband Adoption Application described in Item 3 of this Application, and to facilitate the award of grants pursuant to such applications. Following any such award, BBO will act as the general contractor for each PHA to implement and supervise the projects described in such applications. This general contractor approach allows BBO to accept overall responsibility and accountability for managing and supervising the projects to successful completion, while, permitting BBO to bring in partners and sub-contractors each of whom are among the best in the core services they provide. BBO’s general contractor team includes seasoned industry veterans experienced in managing projects as and much more complex than these. For the three core “Meaningful Broadband” components, we have enrolled (1) one of the country’s leading wireless broadband operators, Spot On Networks, to provision the connectivity, (2) the nation’s foremost authority on the digital divide and training to overcome it, One Economy, to provide training, and (3) a capable and cost efficient supplier of computer equipment, Wyse, to reach our goal of providing every single PHA resident a working modern computer. Each PHA has identified common problems or needs regarding its residents’ adoption of broadband service. The residents typically lack the computer skills, training and broadband awareness necessary to access and use the internet and the financial ability or willingness to purchase a personal computer and to pay monthly internet access rates. As a result, each PHA community is underserved insofar as the rate of broadband subscribership for the funded service area (i.e., the PHA community) is 40% of households or less. To address such problems and needs, BBO, the PHAs and their industry partners have designed an integrated, sustainable broadband adoption program. Upon receipt of the requested grants, Spot On Networks, LLC, one of BBO’s industry partners, will install and manage a high speed wireless internet system at each designated PHA community and will offer free internet access and user support services

to the residents at such PHA community for 36 months. Under the related Sustainable Broadband Adoption Application, each PHA resident also will be offered the opportunity to receive free computer training, a free personal computer for use to access the internet, and free access to a community web portal. In short, BBO's proposal features a powerful blend of the key components to expand broadband right into the homes of PHA residents and provide "Meaningful Broadband" (not just hopes) to residents of PHAs. The proposed funded services areas are the designated PHA residential communities listed below, together with the total number of units in the various PHA communities. The demographics of such areas typically are low-income, minority families with little post-secondary education, truly some of the most vulnerable communities in America today. BBO's executives and advisory board have a combined 100 years of experience designing and implementing innovative broadband solutions. When combined with the experience of the BBO industry partners listed below, BBO is highly qualified to implement the proposed projects and achieve their intended results. Spot On Networks, LLC ("SON") will be the internet service provider for the communities served by the wireless internet system to be installed by SON at each community. They will do so by attaining connectivity to the Internet and providing a state of the art wi-fi router network in each PHA to deliver the broadband service. SON presently offers this approach by managing and actively monitoring over 200 Wi-Fi networks deployed throughout the United States, serving residential multi-family dwelling complexes encompassing nearly 30,000 residential units as well as over 14 million square feet of commercial space. SON will adhere to the principles contained in the FCC's Internet Policy Statement (FCC 05-151, Aug. 5, 2005). SON further commits not to favor any lawful Internet application or content over others. SON will use generally accepted technical measures to provide acceptable service levels to all customers. The services provided by the SON will primarily consist of access to the public Internet such that the project will not be a "private network." SON will offer network interconnection, where technically feasible and without exceeding current or reasonably anticipated capacity limitations, on reasonable rates and terms to be negotiated with requesting parties. SON will negotiate in good faith with all parties making bona fide requests for interconnection. SON will further use an expedited and binding private dispute resolution mechanism to resolve any disputes arising from the application of its interconnection obligations. SON will display its network non-discrimination and interconnection policy prominently on its web page and will provide notice to customers of any changes in to these policies. SON typically deploys a network of wi-fi routers using the 802.11 protocol. These are arrayed within residential real estate complexes with appropriate access points and routers to provide broadband Internet service. BBO estimates that approximately 253 jobs will be created or saved within BBO and its industry partners through implementation of the proposed projects. The number of employment opportunities created for the PHA resident users, as a result of the computer training and through access to help wanted websites on the internet, is incalculable. The overall infrastructure cost of the broadband system is \$438.02/ unit, or \$7,521,679.44, in total.