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<b>Organization:</b>	<b>C.K. Blandin Foundation</b>
<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities</b>
<b>Project Type:</b>	<b>Sustainable Broadband Adoption</b>
<b>State(s):</b>	<b>Minnesota</b>
<b>Federal Award:</b>	<b>\$4,858,219</b>

### ABOUT THE PROJECT

The C.K. Blandin Foundation plans to launch the Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities initiative, a multi-sector, comprehensive approach to sustainable broadband adoption targeting residents, small businesses, local governments, and critical services providers in rural Minnesota. The initiative expects to reach each of Minnesota's 80 rural counties through education, training, technical assistance, and by removing barriers to broadband adoption. The project anticipates training as many as 2,500 individuals in computer literacy, online education, and workforce development, and plans to distribute 1,000 affordable refurbished computers to low-income, rural Minnesota residents. Funding will support the development of institutional broadband applications for schools and health care facilities to help increase broadband adoption. The U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) Center at the University of Minnesota, Crookston will help track the impact of the project, including the number of subscribers generated.

The Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities project also proposes to:

- Partner with the Association of Minnesota Counties and local mental health consortia to develop 10 regional Network of Care Web sites to provide information on local mental health resources.
- Enable 30 Minnesota Workforce Centers to extend the operating hours of their computer centers by eight hours per week and provide additional digital literacy training.
- Promote broadband best practices across economic sectors in 10 demonstration communities, one of which will be the Native American Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. These communities will receive intensive assistance, including funds for four local demonstration projects in each community to support expanding broadband access and adoption.
- Enable e-commerce and broadband training to 2,000 rural small businesses.

### ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY

The C.K. Blandin Foundation is Minnesota's largest foundation focused on rural areas. Since 2003, the foundation has operated a broadband initiative to improve the economic vitality of Minnesota's rural communities by encouraging the development of rural telecommunications markets and infrastructure.

### PROJECT PARTNERS

- Association of Minnesota Counties
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
- Minnesota Learning Commons
- Minnesota Renewable Energy Marketplace – Alliance for Talent Development
- National Association of Counties
- PCs for People
- Regional Development Commissions
- Minnesota Workforce Centers
- University of Minnesota Crookston Campus
- University of Minnesota Extension

Data provided in the project description is based on information supplied by the applicant. An executive summary of this application can be found on [www.broadbandusa.gov](http://www.broadbandusa.gov).

For press-related inquiries, contact 202-482-7002 or [press@ntia.doc.gov](mailto:press@ntia.doc.gov).  
 For the general public, contact [BTOP@ntia.doc.gov](mailto:BTOP@ntia.doc.gov).

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