

## SECTION C EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The BEK Communications Cooperative is a rural telephone cooperative that operates in [REDACTED] in North Dakota. Because of this [REDACTED], we are eligible to receive support from the Universal Service Fund (USF) for the construction of rural infrastructure. However, due to the rural nature of our communities there is often a lack of computer skills, lack of access to computers, training opportunities and instructors to meet the market needs. As BEK has been able to build much of the infrastructure in our communities, we need to expand our ability to provide hands on computer and Internet training.

BEK has a bit of an advantage in the fact that much of the innovative approaches for developing a technology based training program have been addressed and put into practice. Based on past experiences with technology training, the classes average [REDACTED] hours per individual per class. We offer beginning, intermediate and advanced classes in the BEK service area. The hours per person on average will depend on how many classes an individual attends.

The BEK target market for our training/education programs will include everyone who lives in the BEK territory. This includes students of all age groups and technical abilities. Presently the BEK territorial population is [REDACTED]. Currently, we use internal instructors for technology training.

Upon receiving stimulus funds, BEK would either employ additional employees or outsource instructors to carry out our education program. Additionally, BEK feels that as additional technologies are made available to our schools and community members, this will give them more choices when it comes to job opportunities. Many may decide to work from home, thus increasing jobs.

BEK has partnered with a number of individuals and companies to provide a diverse and extensive training offering. These partners include [REDACTED]. Presentations and seminars will be presented by the corporate partners covering such topics as “Working from Home”, “Online Banking”, “Digital Photography”, as well as Quicken accounting software.

A number of non-profit partners will provide additional training. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] will be providing training sessions on Internet safety specifically for Adults, and Internet safety for all ages.

The proposed SBA project is estimated to cost approximately \$53,000.00.