

## South Carolina 2022 Last Mile Grant Program Application Guidelines

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### Purpose

The goal of the South Carolina 2022 Last Mile Program is to provide connections to existing residential housing units with students and/or teachers that desire broadband but who are unable to obtain service in served areas as reflected in the ORS SC Broadband Office [September 2021 Eligibility Map](#). The Last Mile Program shall use funds to provide financial assistance to install and deliver broadband infrastructure and service in the state. All projects require a minimum 50% financial match. Funds from ORS under this program are capped at the lesser of 1) 50% of Eligible Expenses or 2) \$5,000 per home, not to exceed the requested State funds allocated in the applicant's grant award.

ORS has received notice that certain addresses are currently serviceable by fiber or cable without a contribution in Aid of Construction (AIC) charge to the consumer. ISP's may notify the ORS that certain addresses are currently serviceable but must do so by no later than 5:00 p.m. Thursday April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022. A revised list of eligible addresses will be published on Friday April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Those addresses will be shown as redlined.

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### Designated Contact Persons

James Stritzinger  
Director SC Broadband Office  
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff  
Broadband@ors.sc.gov

Michael Herzberger  
Deputy Director SC Broadband Office  
South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff  
Broadband@ors.sc.gov

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### Questions

Questions must be submitted by email to the Designated Contact Persons prior to the close of the Application Period.

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### Schedule of Events

| Event  | Date/Deadline |
|--|---------------|
| List of Addresses sent to ISPs               | 4/15/2022     |
| Applications Due                             | 5/6/2022      |
| Submitted Applications posted on ORS website | 5/11/2022     |
| Project Comment/Review Period                | 5/23/2022     |
| Project Close-out                            | 10/21/2022    |

|                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Final Invoice and Affidavit Due | 11/21/2022 |
|---------------------------------|------------|

The Schedule of Events may be adjusted by ORS. Any changes to the Schedule of Events will be posted on the ORS website [www.ors.sc.gov/broadband](http://www.ors.sc.gov/broadband).

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### **Funding Award Selected**

Applicants will be notified in writing, which may include email. ORS reserves the right to negotiate the final terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement with selected Applicants whose proposals are selected, and to reject any selected Applicants with whom ORS cannot agree to terms and conditions.

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### **Funding Agreement Process**

Selected Applicants must enter into a contractual funding agreement with ORS. Such Funding Agreement is not valid until approved by ORS. Selected Applicants must be in receipt of a Notice to Proceed before any work may begin. Any project costs incurred prior to receipt of a Notice to Proceed are ineligible expenses under this solicitation. The anticipated Funding Agreement term is 120 days from the effective date of the Funding Agreement.

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### **Projects must meet the following eligibility criteria. The project must:**

1. Connect as many existing residential addresses from the list provided by ORS and, if applicable, additional addresses provided by the Applicant. If the initial list of citizens provided in the original grant application decline service, the Applicant agrees to make a good faith effort in connecting other subscribers that will have access to broadband service upon the completion of the project.
2. Be completed, operable, paid for, and submitted to ORS for payment no later than the earlier of (1) 30 days after project completion or (2) November 21, 2022. Projects must be completed by October 21, 2022.
3. Eligible costs include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Construction and Materials (e.g., fiber, conduit, photonics, electronics, etc.)
  - b. Engineering services
  - c. Permitting fees
  - d. Validation of Service expenses
  - e. Equipment directly related to broadband infrastructure and necessary for the Project (however, such equipment shall not be utilized for other activities of the Grantee, except as may be approved by ORS)
  - f. Equipment installation
4. The following are ineligible expenses and Grant funds may not be used to pay for:
  - a. General broadband planning not associated with the project
  - b. Expenses related to providing broadband services
  - c. Ongoing overhead, operating costs, or staff costs
  - d. Political activities or lobbying
  - e. Expenses related to administering the Grant
  - f. Supply and material markup

**Project Selection and Priorities**

| Category Type                                      | Percent     | Comment   |
|--|-------------|---|
| Geography  | 20%         | Relative to all applications received (Intent is to have a wide distribution of projects across the state)  |
| Technology   | 25%         | Fiber = 25 points<br>Hybrid-Fiber Coax (HFC)= 20 points<br>Fixed Wireless = 5 points  |
| Total Number of Homes                              | 20%         | Relative to all applications received   |
| Preference to Students                             | 20%         | $\frac{3}{4}$ or more (housing units within project service area with students) = 20;<br>$\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ housing units = 15;<br>$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ housing units = 10;<br>$\frac{1}{4}$ - 1 housing unit = 5 |
| Average Construction Cost per Housing Unit         | 10%         | Relative to all applications received   |
| Monthly Consumer Costs (recurring and unrecurring) | 5%          | Based on applications received and study of proposed consumer costs   |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | <b>100%</b> |   |

**Project Applications**

Eligible addresses will be available no later than **April 15, 2022**. The application period opens on April 20, 2022, with applications **due by 3:00 pm (EDT) on May 6, 2022**. Applications received after the deadline will **NOT** be considered for this funding opportunity but may be retained for future funding opportunities. Applicant must upload their application to the ORS Citrix share file cloud-based directory. ORS will assign a directory for each ISP. If an applicant does not have a folder or login, please email [broadband@ors.sc.gov](mailto:broadband@ors.sc.gov) with a subject line of "requesting access" to request a login.

**Project Funding**

Indicate the amount of South Carolina 2022 Last Mile Grant Program funding requested for the project, the amount of funding to be provided by the Applicant, and the amount and source of any funding to be provided by a third-party entity. Applicant must provide proof that it has secured the necessary funds to meet its 50% match requirement.

ORS will post all complete applications to the ORS website.  
(See: <https://ors.sc.gov/broadband/investments/state/lmgp>)

**Reporting Requirements and Right to Audit**

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Geo-tagged photographs of active construction and geo-tagged photographs of speed tests must be provided to ORS. ORS reserves the right to audit the project at any time to ensure work is occurring in accordance with the executed agreement between ORS and the Applicant.