§ 1739.13 Ineligible grant purposes.

(a) Grant funds may not be used to finance the duplication of any existing Broadband Transmission Service provided by another entity.

(b) Facilities financed with grant funds cannot be utilized, in any way, to provide local exchange telecommunications service to any person or entity already receiving such service.

§ 1739.14 Matching contributions.

(a) The grant applicant must contribute a Matching Contribution which is at least fifteen percent (15%) of the grant amount requested and shall be in the form of:

(1) Cash for eligible grant purposes.

(2) In-kind contributions for purposes that could have been financed with grant funds under this part. In-kind contributions must be new or non-depreciated assets with established monetary values. Manufacturers’ or service providers’ discounts shall not be considered as a Matching Contribution.

(3) The rental value of space provided within an existing building to be used as the Community Center, provided that the space is free of charge to the applicant, for the first 2 years of operation.

(b) Costs incurred by the applicant, or by others on behalf of the applicant, for facilities, installed equipment, or other services rendered prior to submission of a completed application shall not be considered as an Eligible Grant Purpose or Matching Contribution.

(c) Rental values of space provided must be substantiated by rental agreements documenting the cost of space of a similar size in a similar location.

(d) Any financial assistance from federal sources shall not be considered as a Matching Contribution unless there is a federal statutory exception specifically authorizing the federal financial assistance to be considered as such.

§ 1739.15 Completed application.

A completed application must include the following documentation, studies, reports and information in
form satisfactory to the Agency. Applications should be prepared in conformance with the provisions of this part and applicable USDA regulations including 7 CFR parts 3015, 3016, and 3019. Applicants must use the Agency’s Application Guide for this program, found at http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/ containing instructions and all necessary forms, as well as other important information, in preparing their application. Paper copies of the application guide can be requested by contacting the Director, Broadband Division at the following address: Stop 1599, South Agriculture Building, Room 2868, Washington, DC 20250. Completed applications must include the following:

(a) An Application for Federal Assistance. A completed Standard Form 424.

(b) An executive summary of the Project. The applicant must provide the Agency with a general project overview that addresses the following categories:
   (1) A description of why the Project is needed;
   (2) A description of the applicant;
   (3) An explanation of the total Project cost;

(4) A general overview of the broadband telecommunications system to be developed, including the types of equipment, technologies, and facilities to be used;

(5) Documentation describing the procedures used to determine the unavailability of existing Broadband Transmission Service; and

(6) A description of the participating Critical Community Facilities.

(c) Scoring criteria documentation. Each grant applicant must address and provide documentation on how it meets each of the scoring criteria detailed in §1739.17.

(d) System design. The applicant must submit a system design that contains the following, satisfactory to the Agency:
   (1) A narrative discussing the proposed Community Center, all costs of the Project, all existing and proposed facilities that are a part of the Project, the services to be provided by the Project, and the proposed Service Area;
   (2) Engineering design studies providing an economical and practical engineering design of the Project, including a detailed description of the facilities to be funded, technical specifications, data rates, and costs; and

(3) A map of the proposed Service Area reflecting the proposed location of the Community Center and all participating Critical Community Facilities.

(e) Scope of work. The scope of work must include, at a minimum:
   (1) The specific activities and services to be performed under the Project;
   (2) Who will carry out the activities and services;

(3) The time-frames for accomplishing the Project objectives and activities; and

(4) A budget for all capital and administrative expenditures reflecting the line item costs for Eligible Grant Purposes, the Matching Contribution, and other sources of funds necessary to complete the Project.

(f) Community-Oriented Connectivity Plan. The applicant must provide a Community-Oriented Connectivity Plan consisting of the following:
   (1) A listing of all participating Critical Community Facilities to be connected. For those Critical Community Facilities in the Service Area which will not be included in the Project, an explanation of why they are not being included should be provided. The applicant must also provide documentation that it has consulted with agents of all Critical Community Facilities in the Service Area, and must provide statements as to their willingness to participate, or not to participate, in the proposed Project;

   (2) A description of the services available to local residents through the use of the Community Center;

   (3) A listing of the proposed Telecommunications Terminal Equipment, telecommunications transmission facilities, data terminal equipment, interactive video equipment, computer hardware and software systems, and components that process data for transmission via telecommunications, computer network components, communication satellite ground station equipment, or any other elements of
§ 1739.16 Review of grant applications.

(a) All applications for grants must be delivered to the Agency at the address and by the date specified in the NOFA (see §1739.2) to be eligible for funding. The Agency will review each application for conformance with the provisions of this part. The Agency may contact the applicant for additional information or clarification.

(b) Incomplete applications as of the deadline for submission will not be considered. If an application is determined to be incomplete, the applicant will be notified in writing and the application will be returned with no further action.

(c) Applications conforming with this part will then be evaluated competitively by a panel of the Agency’s employees selected by the Administrator of the Agency, and will be awarded points as described in the scoring criteria in §1739.17. Applications will be ranked and grants awarded in rank order until all grant funds are expended.