Arkansas Rural Connect Application

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

This is the application for the Arkansas Rural Connect (ARC) Broadband Grant Program. The ARC program application includes three (3) sections:

1. A section for local officials – completed in its entirety
2. A section for Internet Service Providers (ISPs) – completed in its entirety
3. A multi-tab Excel spreadsheet that must be completed in its entirety by the ISP

Each section must be submitted in full for the application to be deemed complete. Should you have questions regarding the application, please call the Arkansas Department of Commerce Broadband Office (Broadband Office) at (501) 682-5464. If no answer, please leave a detailed message and call back number and someone from the Broadband Office will return your request as soon as possible.

Applications may be submitted by emailing them to: broadband.arkansas.gov, or by mailing a hard copy to:

Arkansas Department of Commerce Broadband Office
c/o Arkansas Economic Development Commission
1 Commerce Way, Suite 601 Little Rock, AR 72202

Should a hard copy be mailed into the Broadband Office, please place the files on a USB Drive and mail the USB drive along with the application.

The application window for Arkansas Rural Connect funding will be determined by the Broadband Office. The dates will be posted on the website at: broadband.arkansas.gov. Applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

Note: The ARC Rules document requires broadband internet availability at a minimum of 25Mbps Down/3 Mbps Up. The project deliverable expectations are: 97.5% uptime at 1% average availability always, including peak hours of 7 pm CT to 11 pm CT.

Note: Project Closure refers to the time period the ARC Rules and obligations will be enforced. This time period requires each ISP to operate, maintain, upgrade and service the network infrastructure that is awarded, constructed and implemented up and unto January 1, 2030. Failure to comply with this project closure may result in enforcement of **ARC Rules (Section 11: D-J).**

Arkansas Rural Connect Application: Local Officials

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Contact Information

The Local Public Official may be a County Judge or a Mayor.

Local Public Official Name

Held Office ☐ **Mayor** ☐ **County Judge**

Alternate Primary Contact Name

Mailing Address

City **Zip**

Phone Number **Email**

Community Information

Community or County Name

Community Type (Check Below)

☐ **County**

☐ **Incorporated Municipality**

☐ **Unincorporated Community**

Project Footprint

1. **Does the project footprint include the entire territory of your community?** ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**
2. **If "No" to question 1., is the part of your community not included in the project footprint currently served by a broadband Internet Service Provider (ISP)?** ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**
3. **Does the project footprint extend beyond the boundaries of your community?** ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Please attach a proposed coverage map in the following cases:

1) An unincorporated community that is not a Census-Designated Place

2) A community that is partially served with broadband and an ARC grant will connect the remaining unserved portion of the community

3) A project that includes more than one (1) ISP

4) When the project footprint extends beyond the boundaries of the community

Arkansas Rural Connect Application: Local Officials

Co-Applying with Internet Service Providers

Are you applying with multiple Internet Service Providers? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Please list the Internet Service Provider(s) you are co-applying with on this ARC Application, and the media type, technology or technologies they will be using to serve your community.

1) Provider Name _____ **Point of Contact for Company** _____

Email _____ **Phone Number** _____

Technologies ☐ **Fiber** ☐ **DSL** ☐ **Cable (coax)** ☐ **Fixed wireless**

2) Provider Name _____ **Point of Contact for Company** _____

Email _____ **Phone Number** _____

Technologies ☐ **Fiber** ☐ **DSL** ☐ **Cable (coax)** ☐ **Fixed wireless**

3) Provider Name _____ **Point of Contact for Company** _____

Email _____ **Phone Number** _____

Technologies ☐ **Fiber** ☐ **DSL** ☐ **Cable (coax)** ☐ **Fixed wireless**

Up to three (3) separate applications can be submitted by a single community. Is your community planning to submit more than one (1) application? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, you need to rank the applications (1 = most preferred, 2 = next most preferred, and 3 = least preferred). If you only have one (1) project, please rank it 1. What is the rank of this application? _____

Please give the project a "Unique Project Name". This "Name" should be in the following format: "Community Name" - "ISP Name" - "Project Rank".

_____ - _____ - _____

(Community Name) **(ISP Name)** **(Rank)**

Arkansas Rural Connect Application: Local Officials

Interdependent Projects

Are you applying with other communities as part of an interdependent project? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please list the Partnering Communities and their "Unique Application Name". The Internet Service Provider should inform you if you are in an interdependent project.

Partnering Communities	Unique Application Name
1)	- -
2)	- -
3)	- -
4)	- -
5)	- -

Financial Information

What is the total amount of state grant funding your project is requesting from the Arkansas Rural Connect program?

If you are co-applying on this application with multiple Internet Service Providers, what is the amount of money that will be allocated to each of the Internet Service Providers?

1) **Provider Name** **Amount Allocated**

2) **Provider Name** **Amount Allocated**

3) **Provider Name** **Amount Allocated**

Other Stakeholders and Pricing

If applicable, please provide statements of any cost sharing or facilitation that the community commits to implement in order to assist the deployment process. Please attach the statement(s).

If applicable, please provide statements from any nonprofits or businesses that will support the project financially or by other means. Please attach the statement(s).

If applicable, please provide statements of any commitments that the Internet Service Provider has made on pricing in return for the community agreeing to co-apply for ARC grant funding. Please attach the statement(s).

Conflicts of Interest

Do you have any conflicts of interest with the Internet Service Provider you are co-applying with?

This could be a stake in the company, a personal relationship, or any other conflicts that should be disclosed. ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If you answered "Yes" to the above question, please describe any potential perceived conflicts of interest in the field below.

Process of Application Development

Please describe (in less than 1,000 words) how your community developed the project proposal. Describe efforts of contacting Internet Service Providers, engaging the community, and making the process fair, competitive, and transparent.

Arkansas Rural Connect Application: Local Officials

Project Closure

Does this project have an estimated planned date for project closure earlier than January 1, 2030?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Note - "Project Closure" refers to the date when the obligations of ARC will not be enforced by the state. "Project Closure" is normally January 1, 2030.

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please list the date for project closure below.

Early Project Closure Date _____

Monitoring & Reporting

Please affirm that you understand that local officials are responsible for the following items:

1) Assist in ensuring the Internet Service Provider has completed construction and deployment.

2) Work with the Arkansas Department of Commerce Broadband Office to verify that 95% of locations have service

3) Hear and record complaints regarding broadband service. These shall be shared with the Arkansas Department of Commerce Broadband Office.

4) Provide reports to the Arkansas Department of Commerce Broadband Office twice per year. These reports are due twice a year and must be submitted by June 30 and December 31. The reports must be submitted until "Project Closure", and "Project Closure" is normally January 1, 2030 unless an earlier date is agreed upon by the parties. Reports should be submitted electronically to: broadband@arkansas.gov, or a hard copy mailed to:

Arkansas Department of Commerce Broadband Office
c/o Arkansas Economic Development Commission
1 Commerce Way, Little Rock, Arkansas 72202

The bi-annual reports shall include: a) an overall judgement of whether the Internet Service Provider is fulfilling obligations, b) any valid complaints, after deployment, from consumers about poor service or not getting service, c) large service outages where the community could not use broadband.

Initial _____

Reasonable Public Notice

Based on ACT 198 of 2019, local governments are required to provide reasonable public notice prior to partnering with a private entity to apply for funding under the Arkansas Rural Connect (ARC) program. Please affirm below that you have provided reasonable notice to the public of your intentions to apply in partnership for the ARC grant program.

I affirm that I have provided reasonable notice to the public on my intention to apply in partnership for the ARC grant program. (Please sign)

Arkansas Rural Connect Application: Local Officials

With my signature below, I do hereby certify that I have read, understand and support the above application for grant funds through the Arkansas Rural Connect Broadband Grant Program. I further certify that I have read, understand and agree to abide by the rules and regulations governing the grant program.

Local Public Official Printed Name

Local Public Official Signature

Date

Arkansas Department of Commerce Broadband Office
c/o Arkansas Economic Development Commission
1 Commerce Way, Suite 601
Little Rock, AR 72202

Arkansas Rural Connect Application: Service Providers

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Should a hard copy be mailed into the Broadband Office, please place the files on a USB Drive and mail the USB drive along with the application.

The application window for this round of Arkansas Rural Connect funding will be determined by the Broadband Office. The dates will be posted on the website at: broadband.arkansas.gov. Applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

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Arkansas Rural Connect Application: Service Providers

Company Information

Company Name

Mailing Address

City **Zip**

Phone Number **E-mail**

Project Manager Information

Please provide the information below with person who is knowledgeable about the application & project

Primary Contact

Position

Phone Number

E-mail

Project Details

Project Community

Unique Application Name - -

Is this project a part of an interdependent project? Yes No

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please list the Partnering Communities and their "Unique Application Name" that are involved in the interdependent project. As the ISP, you should inform the local communities if they are a part of an interdependent project.

Partnering Communities	Unique Application Name
1)	- -
2)	- -
3)	- -
4)	- -
5)	- -

Arkansas Rural Connect Application: Service Providers

Project Details

Does the project footprint extend beyond the boundaries of the community? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are there other ISPs you are co-applying with on this specific project? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, the map of the Project Footprint that is required in the spreadsheet must be subdivided among service areas of different providers.

Can the proposed network achieve a minimum of 25Mpbs Down/3 Mbps Up internet access within all of your project footprint?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Expected Date of Completed Network Implementation

Expected Date of Network Infrastructure

What is the total capital expenditure cost of the project?

How much is the request in grant funding from the ARC grant program?

What percentage of the overall investment costs of the project will be covered with ARC funds?

What are the other sources of funding shall be used, in addition to ARC funds? Please list Below:

Project Details

Please attach the financial information required in the rules - see page 14, section 8, subsection C, point 7.

Note - the ARC rules have exceptions regarding what must be submitted based on the grant request amount. Also, the ARC rule provides two (2) alternatives in lieu of submitting complete financial statements. These alternatives can be seen on page 14, section 8, subsection C, point 7. Please contact the Broadband Office if you have questions regarding the submittal of financial information.

Please list the Service tiers offered within the project footprint

	Bandwidth (Upload/Download)	Data Caps (if any)	Other Features	Price ($/month)
1)				
2)				
3)				

If the table above does not provide enough space, please attach the entirety of the service tiers that are offered to the Project Footprint.

Project Details

Explain any binding commitments on pricing, either to consumers in general or groups of consumers, that you have made to the community if you should be awarded an ARC grant. (optional)

Explain with appropriate figures and calculations why you think the proposed broadband project can become cash-flow positive after deployment and capital expenditures are complete. Please attach to the application.

Has the community made any commitments to facilitate or subsidize this broadband project? How does this affect your deployment plans?

Please provide a brief overview of what right rights or easements will be needed to implement the project.

Project Closure

Does this project come with a planned date for project closure earlier than January 1, 2030?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please list the date for project closure below.

Early Project Closure Date _____

Other Project Stakeholders

Other project stakeholders can be included in the application. This could include nonprofits, banks, third party contractors, etc. This does not include public officials. Please list those below:

	Name	Organization	Email & Number	Role in Project
1)				
2)				
3)				
4)				

Should there be more than 4 "Other Project Stakeholders", please attach a complete list to this application

The stakeholders listed above must submit the following:

1) A declaration that they have read all application materials relating to their role and affirm it

2) A declaration of their commitment to perform the roles allotted to them in the implementation plan

3) Evidence of their capacity to perform the roles allotted to them in the implementation plan

4) Disclosure of any conflicts of interest that might affect stakeholders' support of the project

ISP Narrative

Provide a narrative (of 500 words or less) describing the company's experience providing consumer broadband service. This can include the number of customers served, revenues earned, or other information to establish a proven record of deployment success.

Affirmation of Co-application

Please affirm that information provided by the co-applicant public official is correct and acceptable. The ISP should ensure that the public officials understand the project sufficiently and the information provided is accurate.

Initial

Conflicts of Interest - Local Officials

Outside of the purposes of this grant, do you have any conflicts of interest with the Mayor, County Judge, or other local officials you are co-applying with? This could be business relationships, a personal relationship, or any other conflicts that should be disclosed. ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please describe those conflicts below. Describe the effort the ISP made to be fair, competitive, and transparent.

Conflicts of Interest - Other Providers

Do you have any conflicts of interest with any service provider that may be providing services for the area? This could be business relationships, a personal relationship, or any other conflicts that should be disclosed. ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please describe those conflicts below. Describe the effort the ISP made to be fair, competitive, and transparent.

Please complete the spreadsheet portion of the application.

With my signature below, I do hereby certify that I have read, understand and support the above application for grant funds through the Arkansas Rural Connect Broadband Grant Program. I further certify that I have read, understand and agree to abide by the rules and regulations governing the grant program.

Primary Contact Printed Name	
Primary Contact Signature	
Date	

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c/o Arkansas Economic Development Commission
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