

Image not found or type unknown

V.I. Broadband Office Seeks Proposals for \$25 Million in BEAD Grant Funding

The V.I. Broadband Office is accepting applications for up to \$500,000 per project through the federal BEAD program, aiming to fund digital skills training, broadband access, and economic development across the territory. Deadline is April 28.

Community Center / **Published On April 05, 2025 07:56 AM /**

Staff Consortium **April 05, 2025**

Image not found or type unknown



The Virgin Islands Broadband Office (VIBO) is calling on community-based organizations, businesses, and public agencies to apply for a new round of grant funding under the federal Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program. The initiative offers applicants the opportunity to secure up to \$500,000 per project, with more than \$25 million in total funding available.

According to a release issued Thursday by the Office of Management and Budget, the funding is intended to bolster digital equity and accelerate broadband access and education throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands. Eligible projects will align with one of three specific focus areas, as outlined in the Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) recently published by VIBO: “Workforce Development Trainings and Explorations for Broadband,” the “Community Digital Competency Initiative,” and the “Economic Transformation Initiative.”

“These programs represent a \$25 million chance to innovate,” the release stated.

The goal of the BEAD initiative is to close the digital divide by equipping Virgin Islanders with vital 21st-century digital literacy skills and improving access to high-speed internet. Projects selected for funding will support efforts such as workforce development training, upgrades to community facilities, and enhanced technology access for underserved groups.

“Unless the Virgin Islands acts now to make significant investments in creating pathways for our people to empower themselves with critical 21st Century digital literacy skills and access to high-speed broadband internet, we risk consigning them to the wrong side of the digital divide,” said Somere Webber, VIBO’s grants manager.

Webber emphasized the growing importance of digital literacy as technology continues to transform how businesses operate and how individuals perform day-to-day tasks. “Through the BEAD grant, VIBO is working to make sure that employers and employees in the territory have the tools they need to confidently navigate a rapidly evolving world,” she said.

Deployment of the grant funds will help subgrantees launch or expand training programs designed to provide marketable digital skills. Organizations may also use the funds to upgrade their facilities with new hardware and software aimed at supporting education and workforce readiness.

An informational webinar about the BEAD program is scheduled for April 10 at 4:30 p.m., and VIBO will post a link to view the session on its website, <https://omb.vi.gov>. Questions regarding the NOFOs or the application and evaluation process must be submitted in writing to bead@omb.vi.gov with the subject line “Q&A NOFO Workforce Development.”

The deadline to submit BEAD grant proposals is April 28, 2025.

For full application details, eligibility requirements, and submission instructions, interested parties are encouraged to visit the Office of Management and Budget website at <https://omb.vi.gov>.