

# Community-Centered Connectivity Grant Program

## Application Guide

### 1. Introduction

This Application Guide is designed to provide guidance for organizations preparing an application for the Community-Centered Connectivity (CCC) Grant Program. It is intended to help applicants submit clear, complete proposals that are aligned with the program.

### 2. Before you apply

Before starting an application, we recommend you complete the [CCC Funding Track Eligibility Quiz](#); review the program webpage and ensure you meet the [Eligibility criteria](#); and read this guide. You can consult examples of the application form for Catalyst and Scaling funding tracks on the program webpage.

You can consult the [Community Network Do-It-Yourself Toolkit](#) or the [Community Network Readiness Assessment Handbook](#) to familiarize with how to build a community network.

Please note that Internet Society also offers [a moderated online course](#) on this Assessment Handbook.

### What makes a strong application?

#### Clear

Strong applications clearly describe the problem the project aims to solve, the proposed technical solution(s), the key project activities, and information about the location(s) where the project will be implemented.

Reviewers look for specificity about the technology, infrastructure, or model being used and how it is appropriate and relevant for the local context. Reviewers also look for clarity about the need for the project, capacity of the applicant to deliver the technical solution(s), how



proposed activities relate to the intended outcomes, as well as alignment with the appropriate program funding track: Catalyst, Scaling, or Systems (invite only).

### **Comprehensive**

Strong applications have completed responses to all application questions and have all required documents uploaded.

There are no “perfect” responses to every question, but strong applicants demonstrate their ability to consider the questions and respond intentionally. Incomplete responses or missing documents may prevent an application from advancing in the review process.

### **Community-centered**

Strong applications demonstrate relationships with the community(-ies) where the project will be implemented. They show the need from the community for the proposed connectivity solution, as well as community involvement in the planning and implementation of the project. Community engagement should be active and continuous, not limited to one-time consultation.

**Note:** While applications from any eligible organization are welcome, a strong preference will be given to those working with refugees/displaced communities, Indigenous communities, and women and girls. For more information, visit the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section of the [program webpage](#) .

### **Sustainable**

Strong applications demonstrate a plan for the financial and operational sustainability of the project. Include how operational and maintenance expenses for the connectivity solution(s) will be covered after the grant ends. While plans do not have to be finalized, demonstrating that you are considering the future sustainability of the project will be helpful during the review process.



## Demonstrate organizational capacity and technical expertise

Strong applications show a project team that is capable of managing the grant and the project activities from beginning to end.

Applicants should describe any prior experience with connectivity work and/or with partners that have relevant technical expertise.

If you are partnering with an implementing partner, include an official letter, Memorandum of Understanding, or other agreement that indicates a formal agreement between your organizations. If you are planning to use consultant services for your project activities, explain who the consultants will be, their roles and responsibilities, and include any quotes for services, if possible.

### 3. Guidance for application questions

The table below shows some of the questions from the application but is not a complete list. You can consult examples of the application form for Catalyst and Scaling funding tracks on the program webpage or view the application in Fluxx.

Question	Guidance for responding
Does your organization have a bank account in the organization's name, and can it receive funds from a foundation based in the United States?	Verify this information with your financial institution before submitting your application.



<p>Are you building a new network or expanding an existing one?*</p>	<p>If your project includes both, select the option that best represents the primary focus of your project.</p>
<p>Project Summary:*</p>	<p>Describe your proposed project by clearly defining the problem it addresses and the technical solution(s) you plan to implement. Outline the key activities involved in the project and explain and track how they contribute to your intended outcomes.</p> <p>Explain the community need for this project and demonstrate your team’s capacity and readiness to successfully implement it.</p>
<p>Is there a precise location where you plan to build or expand the network(s) (e.g., school, health center, digital hub, etc.)? If so, please specify them.*</p>	<p>If you do not have the names of the precise locations, provide any preliminary information on where you plan to build or expand the network(s).</p>
<p>Do you intend to make multiple deployments?*</p>	<p>Deployment = installing the physical infrastructure of a connectivity solution, training people who will use the network, communicating about the project with stakeholders, and putting all the business plans into operation. Read more in <a href="#">the <u>Community Network Do-It-Yourself Toolkit</u></a>.</p>
<p>Describe your plan to connect the selected community to the Internet. Describe the technical specifications you intend to</p>	<p>Your answer will depend on whether you are building or expanding existing network(s) or both.</p> <p>Describe the overall network design (e.g. fiber, fixed wireless, satellite, mesh network, hybrid etc.). List the type</p>



<p>use to deploy your community network.*</p>	<p>of equipment and infrastructure you plan to use (e.g. towers, access points, etc.).</p> <p>If applicable, include a Network Diagram in the “Application Documents” section.</p>
<p>Describe your existing relationship with the community (communities) where you plan to implement this project?</p>	<p>Describe your organization’s prior experience working with the community (-ies) where the project will be implemented, including the nature and duration of that relationship. Include any experiences that demonstrate trust and familiarity with local needs and context.</p> <p>Describe if you have worked with the community (-ies) before and any outcomes, effects, or lessons learned from that work.</p>
<p>Describe previous projects your organization has implemented that are relevant to this program.*</p>	<p>Describe your organization’s prior experience working on connectivity projects, Internet access, digital skills, or any other relevant experience.</p> <p>If applicable, include prior relevant experience working with cooperatives, social enterprises, etc. You may also want to include any evidence or data about this experience.</p>
<p>If you are applying with an implementing partner, describe the roles and responsibilities of each party involved</p>	<p>If your application includes an implementing partner(s), explain the roles and responsibilities of each party. Be specific about who will lead project coordination, provide technical expertise, oversee monitoring and maintenance, and long-term support.</p> <p>If applicable, include official letters, agreements, or Memoranda of Understanding in the “Application Documents” section that demonstrate your partnership.</p>



<p>What is your financial sustainability plan for your network?</p>	<p>Demonstrate plans for how you will sustain the network(s) financially after the grant period ends. This may include fundraising plans, subscription or membership costs, governance plans etc. Consider including how the financial sustainability plan for your network(s) takes into consideration local contexts and community needs.</p> <p>Read more in the <a href="#">Community Network Readiness Assessment Handbook</a> section on financial sustainability.</p> <p>Note: Reviewers understand that there will be varying levels of expertise with financial sustainability. Focus on demonstrating your ability to consider the questions and respond intentionally.</p>
<p>[Scaling and Systems applications only]</p> <p>How do you plan to implement your financial sustainability plan? What is the anticipated size, scale, and scope of the network long term (i.e.: two years after the grant period is over)?</p>	<p>[Scaling and Systems applications only]</p> <p>Describe how you will sustain the network financially after the grant period ends, including anticipated revenue sources, partnerships, or cost-recovery strategies.</p> <p>Explain the expected long-term size, scale, and scope of the network (e.g., number of users served, coverage area, or services offered) approximately two years after the grant concludes.</p>
<p>Estimate the total number of people who will have the opportunity to gain Internet</p>	<p>This is an estimate. This can involve aggregating data on individuals who will use the internet at project locations (e.g., schools, digital hubs, health centers, homes, and Wi-Fi</p>



<p>access as a result of your project.</p>	<p>hotspots). Population data, user groups, and age segmentation can be useful for this estimate.</p> <p>If awarded a grant, you will be asked to report on your progress at the end of your grant.</p>
<p>Based on the total number of people who will have the opportunity to gain Internet access as a result of your project, what proportion (%) will be women?*</p>	<p>This is an estimate. To answer this question, take the total number of people who will have the opportunity to gain Internet access (previous question) and estimate the percentage (%) of those people that will be women.</p> <p>If awarded a grant, you will be asked to report on your progress at the end of your grant.</p>
<p>Estimate the total number of households you expect will gain Internet access as a result of your project.*</p>	<p>This is an estimate. This question refers to the availability of Internet access for any person in a household at any time, regardless of whether the household owns an Internet access device. This means there could be multiple Internet users per household.</p> <p>To answer this question, estimate how many people will be able to use the Internet as a result of your project. When estimating, count only 1 person per household, even if there are multiple Internet users that live there.</p> <p>If awarded a grant, you will be asked to report on your progress at the end of your grant.</p>
<p>How many Internet service providers are available in the area today?*</p>	<p>Provide an estimate of how many Internet Service Providers (ISPs) provide Internet service to the location(s) where you plan to implement the project. This information can be collected from the community the project aims to serve or it may be available through the national regulator office.</p>



	<p>If your project is being implemented in multiple locations, consider the total number of providers across all locations where your project will be implemented. Do not count the same provider more than once.</p>
<p>Please describe the current average cost of connectivity and average speed of connectivity in the community where the proposed project will be implemented.:</p>	<p>Provide information on the typical cost residents or institutions currently pay for Internet service in the community, as well as the average download and upload speeds available. If data varies across the community, describe the range or note any areas with limited or no service.</p> <p>Ideally, this information would come directly from the community where the project will be implemented. They can tell you how much they are paying for their connectivity and what speed levels they experience. You can also measure connectivity speed using open tools online. In your answer, explain how this information was determined and share sources if available.</p> <p>If awarded a grant, you will be asked to report on your progress at the end of your grant.</p>
<p>For each of the community locations below, indicate how many you plan to connect as part of your project. If a location does not apply, enter 0. (Local Businesses, Health Centers, Community Hubs, Schools, Government Offices, Public Hotspots)</p>	<p>Provide target numbers for which community locations you plan to connect through your project.</p> <p>If awarded a grant, your responses to this question will be used as target numbers for your project. You will be asked to report on your progress at the end of your grant.</p> <p>Note: It is not required to select all of the locations in this list. Provide reasonable and appropriate estimates for your project.</p>



Indicate the number of people you plan to train.*	If your proposed project includes training, provide a target number for the number of people you plan to train.  If awarded a grant, your responses to this question will be used as a target number for your project. You will be asked to report on your progress at the end of your grant, including the training participants and topics.
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#### 4. Guidance for uploading Documents to your application

##### a. Application Documents section

This section is for uploading documents that are relevant to your specific project proposal.

- **Required:**
  - A full project budget, workplan, and equipment support request; [find the required template.](#)
- **Recommended:**
  - Letters of Support: if you are partnering with other organization(s) to implement your project, attach letters, agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, or other documents that demonstrate your partnership.
  - Any other documents such as: financial or operational plans for the project, network diagrams, recent annual reports, feasibility studies, consultations with communities, quotes for services or equipment etc.

##### b. Organization Documents section

This section is for uploading documents that are relevant to your organization. Once uploaded, they will automatically be attached to any application you create in Fluxx. Ensure that the most up-to-date documents are uploaded and delete or replace old files that are no longer relevant.



- **Required:**
  - Tax Identification Document(s): organizational tax documents that demonstrate your organization's non-profit/charitable status
  - Equivalency Determination Certificate: A certification that your organization is equivalent to a U.S. 501c3 public charity. Include only if you already have one and it is current.
  - Governing Document(s): such as Articles of Incorporation or Charter documents. If you have multiple governing documents, please upload the one that most clearly and comprehensively outlines the organization's purpose and activities.
  - Financial Documents: Current organizational budget, latest audits or national tax returns within the last two years

If your official tax identification or governing documents are written in a non-English language and saved in PDF, please submit the certified version in PDF as well as a Word version.

## 5. Application process

Our grants programs are extremely competitive, and even strong applications may not be awarded grants. Our goal with this guide and other resources is to provide prospective applicants with as much helpful information as possible. We cannot provide individualized application guidance during the application window.

All applications must be submitted through the Internet Society Foundation's grants management platform, [Fluxx](#). Applications sent by email will not be accepted.

If your organization is not registered in Fluxx, you will need to register. It may take 1-2 business days for your registration to be complete so plan ahead. If you have any issues with registering to the Fluxx platform, please email [fluxx\\_help@isocfoundation.org](mailto:fluxx_help@isocfoundation.org) in advance.



## 6. CCC GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- You have confirmed that your organization has a bank account in its name and can receive funds from a foundation based in the United States.
- Completed the CCC Funding Track Eligibility Quiz on the webpage and you know which funding track your project fits best.
- Completed registration in Fluxx (allow 1-2 business days for registration).
- A clear, comprehensive response provided for each question.
- At least two different points of contact (Primary, Additional, and Signatory).
- All Required documents uploaded.
- Submit application at least 24-48 hours before deadline to avoid technical issues or last-minute disruptions.