

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Tribal Technical Assistance Grant Program

1. What is a Tribal Technical Assistance Grant?

Definition Tribal Technical Assistance Grant: Funds available to aid tribes in developing market studies, feasibility studies, and/or business plans which support Tribes in their pursuit of improving communications. Includes assessing communication assets or spectrum and wireless coverage studies, locate nearby fiber optic internet routes, pricing, and various other studies are eligible. Answers to these questions can also be found in [Decision \(D.\) 20-08-005, Appendix 1](#).

2. How much grant money is available?

Grants amounts are up to \$150,000: per Tribe per fiscal year. Subsidy levels up to 100% of the cost of technical assistance for Tribes in California.

3. What type of projects are eligible for the Tribal Technical Assistance Grant?

Eligible Grant Projects: Projects that aid in improving tribal communications such as, consultation services to assess communication assets or spectrum and wireless coverage studies. Locating nearby fiber optic internet routes, costs, market studies, feasibility studies, business plans, and various other studies.

4. Who is eligible to apply for a Tribal Technical Assistance grant?

Who May Apply: An eligible applicant is a California Tribe, with or without federal recognition, that demonstrates Tribal leadership support. Tribal support is established, for example, by the furnishing of a letter from the Tribal administrator, chair, or council.

5. What information must an applicant provide?

Information Required from Applicants: A completed Commission application, the Tribal applicant must provide a letter from the Tribal administrator, chair, or council that demonstrates Tribal leadership support, and a proposed contract or a written estimate.

6. What is included in the proposed contract?

A proposed contract or written estimate: Contains the scope of work from the Tribe's approved contractor for the purpose of the Technical Assistance.

The contract or estimate must state the following details:

- Proposed work, including a statement of work to be completed
- Detailed cost estimate
- Proposed timeline for completion

7. When can an application be submitted?

Submission and Timeline: Applicants must submit the Commission-provided [Application Form](#) with required documentation. Applications may be submitted at any time, however, they will only be considered on or before each deadline listed below and ongoing, until the funding is exhausted.

- October 1, 2020 - First Round
- January 1, 2021 - Second Round
- April 1, 2021 - Third Round
- July 1, 2021 - Fourth Round and so on.

Deadlines that fall on a holiday or a weekend will be extended to the next business day.

8. How and where is the application submitted to the Commission?

- **To Submit Electronically:** Email a completed application with required documentation, to the Commission's email address: CASF_Application_Questions@cpuc.ca.gov
- **To Mail a hard copy:** Address to Communications Division, Attn: California Advanced Services Fund, Technical Assistance Grant, 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102

Notice of received applications are published on the Commission's website on a quarterly basis.

9. How are applications reviewed?

There are two types of reviews, Ministerial/Expedited Review and the Resolution process.

Ministerial Review: The expedited review is where Staff reviews and approves grant requests. For projects that meet Ministerial Review criteria, the Commission may subsidize 100 percent of the cost of Technical Assistance, not to exceed \$150,000 per assistance, study, or plan per Tribe, in any one fiscal year. Communications Division Staff are authorized to approve applications that meet each of the following criteria:

- Requested amount of technical assistance grant does not exceed \$150,000 per fiscal year per Tribe.
- The application specifies that the technical assistance will advance the CASF program goal to "provide broadband access to no less than 98 percent of California households in each consortia region" where broadband access is defined as service at 6 megabits per second download and 1 megabit per second upload.
- The Technical Assistance project must be completed within 24 months.
- The application meets the requirements of the Tribal Technical Assistance grant if it is a California Tribe, meets the definition of Tribal Technical Assistance Grant, is an eligible applicant, provides the proposed contract or written estimate, and submits the application form by the stated deadlines.

Resolution Review Criteria: Applications that do not meet Ministerial Review criteria may be referred by Staff to the Commission for review and approval via the Resolution process. Staff will prepare a resolution which may be approved by the Commissioners at a regularly scheduled Commission meeting.

10. What Reporting and Public Postings are required at completion of the project?

- **A Completion Form must be submitted:** Upon completion of the Technical Assistance project, the applicant must provide a signed Completion Form stating that the Technical Assistance work has been completed. This is required before payment is made.
- **A Short Two Sentence Description of the project:** This form should include a short description in two **sentences**, of the work suitable for posting on the Commission's web page. Upon completion of the work, Tribes should provide Staff a copy of the Final Report(s), plan(s), studies, etc. The Final Report(s) will be presumed confidential.

11. How is Notifications of awards provided?

Award Notification: will be made by letter from the Communications Division Director. Award letters will be regularly posted to the Commission's website with a short summary of the funds utilized for Tribal Technical Assistance.

12. How are payment requests made?

Payment Request: Payments will be made directly to the Tribe. Payment will be based upon receipt and approval of the invoice submitted by the Tribe showing the expenditures incurred for the Technical Assistance along with the supporting documents. The invoice must be supported by documentation such as cost of labor and any other expense that will be recovered by the grant.

13. What are the requirements and responsibilities after project completion?

Execution and Performance: The Commission has the right to conduct any necessary audit, verification, and discovery for work proposed or completed under the Technical Assistance for Tribes to ensure that CASF funds are spent in accordance with Commission rules. Invoices from the Tribe or its approved contractor are subject to financial audit by the Commission any time within 3 years of completion of the work.

14. What is a consent form and why must it be signed?

Consent Form: All grantees are required to sign a [Consent Form](#) agreeing to the terms stated in the resolution or award letter authorizing the CASF award. The agreement will provide the name of the person who is managing the consulting contract and must be signed by the grantee.

Additional Questions: For help and questions about the Tribal Technical Assistance grant.

E-mail: Tribal_Tech_Assist@cpuc.ca.gov