

Introduction to Rural Broadband

**Virtual Training
August 16 – August 26, 2021**

Rural areas across Appalachia face similar challenges in delivering broadband to homes and businesses: rocky and uneven terrain, profitability and sustainability concerns, and more. Local development districts are working to support broadband delivery to un- and under-served areas, but oftentimes leadership and staff need help getting up to speed in terminology, processes, and other details to get projects off the ground and running.

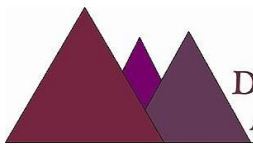
This training will introduce participants to fundamentals of broadband technology, institutions, infrastructure, regulatory issues, financing, and best practices. DDAA will deliver sessions virtually in a blended learning format. Attendees will receive pre-recorded webinars and resources that will be released at the beginning of the first week of training (August 16). The pre-recorded materials are available for you to review at your own pace.

In addition to the pre-recorded webinars, DDAA will sponsor four live webinars with an instructor to review the key concepts and discuss specific topics in greater depth. These live webinars also provide you with an opportunity to ask specific questions you may have about grant writing.

Meet Your Instructor

This grant writing series will be led by Andrew Cohill, President of WideOpen Networks and Design Nine; both companies have headquarters in Blacksburg, Virginia. Cohill has been helping communities develop, build, and operate modern broadband fiber and wireless networks since 1993, when Virginia Tech appointed him the first Director of the Blacksburg Electronic Village, the world's first Internet-based community broadband project.

Cohill has worked with more than 300 communities worldwide on telecommunications planning, design, and engineering of open access broadband systems. He has provided assistance to community broadband projects throughout North America, including Canada and the Caribbean. WideOpen and Design Nine provide broadband planning, network construction services, and network operations services for public and private clients throughout the U.S.



Agenda

(all times in Eastern)

Monday, August 16th at 8:00 am: Sessions 1, 2, and 3 (release of pre-recorded content)

These sessions have been pre-recorded so that you can view the content at your convenience. In addition to the webinars, each session includes companion resource material to reinforce the learning objectives. For maximum benefit, please review Sessions 1, 2, and 3 before joining Session 4 and 5 which will be delivered as live webinars on Tuesday, August 17 and Thursday, August 19 at 10:00am eastern.

Session 1: Overview of Broadband Issues

Covering:

- Evolution of the technology
- Local, state, and national leadership roles
- Ownership and governance issues
- Public vs. private telecom, history and development

Session 2: Leadership, Ownership, and Governance

Covering:

- Who owns what?
- Organizational model options, advantages and dis-advantages
- Public/Private Partnerships (PPP)
- Partner options — ISPs, coops, electric utilities
- Getting started locally, regionally
- Working with service providers
- Success factors and the broadband champion

Session 3: Overview of Broadband Infrastructure

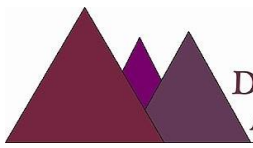
Covering:

- Overview of copper, wireless, and fiber technologies
- Wireless vs. fiber (either/or or and/both?)
- Why a feasibility study is important
- Key components of a feasibility study

Tuesday, August 17th from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm: Session 4 (live webinar)

This webinar will review Sessions 1 and 2, answering all your questions about how broadband deployment works, and discussing the upcoming sessions. Do you have a question you would like answered during the webinar? Submit your questions by the morning of the session.

Thursday, August 19th from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm: Session 5 (live webinar)



Do you have a question you would like answered during the webinar? Submit your questions by the morning of the session.

Monday, August 23rd at 8:00am: Sessions 6, 7, and 8 (release of pre-recorded content)

In addition to the webinars, each session includes companion resource material to reinforce the learning objectives. For maximum benefit, please review Sessions 6,7, and 8 before joining Sessions 9 and 10.

Session 6: Business Models and Regulatory Considerations

Covering:

- Business Models and Regulatory Considerations
- Business models—public, private, PPP, wholesale, retail
- Open access vs. single provider model-advantages and dis-advantages
- Federal and state regulatory issues
- Open ditch, dig once, one touch policies and considerations

Session 7: Funding and Financing Strategies

Covering:

- Overview of funding sources, including 2021 opportunities
- Elements of a successful grant proposal
- Local and regional funding strategies

Session 8: Best Practice for Local and Regional Efforts

Covering:

- Digital inclusion strategies
- Marketing and awareness strategies
- Best practice for equitable access
- Broadband planning best practice

Tuesday, August 24th from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm: Session 9 (live webinar)

Join us for this live webinar where we will be reviewing Sessions 6 and 7 and answering all your questions about financing broadband. Do you have a question you would like answered during the webinar? Submit your questions by the morning of the session.

Thursday, August 26th from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm: Session 10 (live webinar)

Join us for our final live webinar where we will be reviewing Session 8 and answering any final questions about grant writing not previously covered. Do you have a question you would like answered during the webinar? Submit your questions by the morning of the session.