

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



July 1, 2026

Re: **Administrative Letter No. 33**
Announcement of the Digital Divide Grant Program – Round Four for FY 2026-2027

To Interested Applicants:

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) is excited to announce the fourth round of the Digital Divide Grant Program (DDGP) to help bridge the digital divide for low-income schools and community-based organizations in our local communities.

The CPUC will accept applications from July 1, 2026 through October 30, 2026. Under Resolution T-17921, the CPUC's Communications Division (CD) staff has the authority to provide timely announcements for DDGP application instructions, requirements, and deadlines through Administrative Letters.

SUMMARY

Public Utilities Code (Pub. Util. Code) Section (§) 280.5, enacted by AB 855 (Ch. 820, Stats. 2003), established the DDGP and requires the CPUC to award grants to fund digital divide programs.¹ The DDGP is funded through an allocation of a percentage of revenues generated from lease agreements for wireless telecommunications facilities located on state-owned property, which is then deposited into the Digital Divide Account.² Currently, the Digital Divide Account maintains a balance of approximately \$200,000 dollars.³

This Administrative Letter announces the fourth round of DDGP applications for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2027. This funding includes up to \$100,000 allocated for projects aimed at low-income rural schools or urban schools, as well as two awards of up to \$50,000 each for projects supporting community-based organizations (CBOs). The projects aim to deliver holistic solutions through digital literacy training, take-home devices, and broadband connections.

The two categories for funding include school-focused projects aimed at improving access to technology in educational settings and community-based projects that enhance digital resources at the local community level. If one category does not meet the qualifying criteria, then CD staff have the flexibility to reallocate funds to the other categories as needed to fulfill the funding cycle.

WHO CAN APPLY?

- Low-income rural schools or urban schools
- Non-profit CBOs with a demonstrated record of completed work in addressing the digital divide. The CBO may partner with an eligible public school or district to deploy the project. The beneficiary of the project will be the partner public school or district.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested applicants must complete the DDGP application packet (hereby included in this Administrative Letter in Appendix A, B, C and D) available on the DDGP website at: [Digital Divide Grant Program](#). The complete application packet must be emailed to digitaldividegrantprogram@cpuc.ca.gov by **October 30, 2026**.

¹ All statutory references refer to the Public Utilities Code, unless otherwise stated.

² Pursuant to Pub. Util. Code § 280.5 (b), the Digital Divide Account, established in the California Teleconnect Fund Administrative Committee Fund, must be used only for digital divide pilot projects.

³ [Department Detail Of Appropriations And Adjustments](#)

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

CPUC CD staff will evaluate and score applications for the DDGP-Round Four grant cycle using the competitive process described in the CPUC's [Resolution T-17770](#).

Activity	Date
Application period begins	July 1, 2026
Application period ends	October 30, 2026
Staff will complete the application review and scoring of each application	January 2, 2027
Notice of the awardees through an Administrative Letter	January 5, 2027

AWARDED GRANTEES

Grantee will receive grant funds at three points throughout the project period to be allocated as follows:

- o **First disbursement:** 25% of the grant award to be issued after the grantee announcement in the Administrative Letter to fund the project's initial ramp up period.
- o **Second disbursement:** Up to 50% of the grant award after the Project Status Report is submitted, based on approved invoices.
- o **Third disbursement:** 25% of the grant award after the Project Final Completion Report is submitted, plus any remaining funds, if applicable.

After the first disbursement, grantees must provide two reports required by [Resolution T-17892](#) (Appendix E) prior to the CPUC issuing the second and third disbursements:

- o **Project Status Report:** due no later than **June 1, 2027**, and
- o **Project Final Completion Report:** due no later than **January 5, 2028** or when the project is completed, whichever date is earlier.

The relevant project report must be submitted for a payment request to be granted. The grantee shall submit final requests for payment no later than 3 months after completion of the project or by April 5, 2028, whichever date is earlier.

QUESTIONS

For more information about the Digital Divide Grant Program, please visit the CPUC's website at: [Digital Divide Grant Program/](#). Please direct all DDGP related questions to digitaldividegrantprogram@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Robert Osborn
Director, Communications Division
California Public Utilities Commission



CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION

DIGITAL DIVIDE GRANT PROGRAM (DDGP)

FY 2026-2027

APPLICATION PACKET

APPENDIX A-F

Appendix A

Digital Divide Grant Program Application

An eligible Community Based Organization (CBO) is limited to one application per grant funding cycle. Applicants shall focus on a single proposed project, but the scope of the project may include more than one school.

Responses and supporting documentation should be organized consistently with these instructions. For each document, applicants must include a cover page identifying the applicant's name, project name, date of submission, and the relevant application section, question, and/or item. Digital files should use a file naming convention that includes the following descriptive elements: project name, document name, and relevant application section, question, and/or item.

The DDGP will begin accepting applications upon the issuance of an Administrative Letter establishing application deadlines and requirements. The window to submit applications will adhere to the timelines established in the Administrative Letter. Applicants must submit their completed application, including all required documents, to DigitalDivideGrantProgram@cpuc.ca.gov.

Applicants must identify the partner school(s) if any, in their application. A list of eligible schools, as identified by the California Department of Education, is available at www.cpuc.ca.gov/ddgp. Applicants can apply for multiple partner schools in the same application. Each school must review the application, agree to be a partner in the program, and sign separate Partnership Agreements.

The application is organized into six sections. Applicants must respond in full to the following:

Section 1. Basic Information.

This section of the application requires that the applicant provide basic information about the CBO or their partner school(s).

- 1.1 Provide the following information for the applicant CBO: organization name, Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), location address, mailing address, website, contact person, contact phone number, and contact email.
- 1.2 Provide the applicant CBO's mission statement and other documents on the CBO and its activities, including charter, annual reports, brochures, etc.
- 1.3 Required document: Franchise Tax Board Entity Status Letter (FTB 4263A).
- 1.4 Required document: Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Letter.
- 1.5 If your organization files an IRS Form 990 or California Form 190, please submit the most recent copy.

- 1.6 For schools, provide the following information for each beneficiary school(s): district, school name, county-school-district (CDS) code,¹ school address, mailing address, contact person name, contact phone number, contact email, low grade, high grade, number of students, year-round (Y/N), and charter (Y/N).
- 1.7 Provide a list of the Board of Directors and Principal Officers. Include an organizational chart.
- 1.8 Submit resumes of personnel relevant and integral to the success of this project, especially those who have experience in deploying community technology programs, as well as resumes of those who have experience in collaborating with schools, students, and teachers.

Section 2. Scope of Work.

This section requires the applicant to present their digital divide project. The information provided must sufficiently demonstrate that the project meets all eligibility requirements. Applicants should provide a narrative description to the questions below.

2.1 Describe the digital divide project. Identify and describe project functions, activities, schedules, locations, and deliverables. How does/will the project provide a holistic solution to bridge the digital divide? For example, a response to this question can include responses to the following questions:

- Provide a detailed list of the technology the organization or school currently uses, such as software, devices, connections, or technical training. Also, describe what digital resources the organization or beneficiary school or its students currently lack or what barriers to access the beneficiary school or its students are experiencing, and how will the CBO utilize the digital divide grants to procure the necessary digital resources or mitigate any barriers to access for the beneficiary school or its students.
- Will the project provide a broadband connection(s)? If so, where will end users utilize the broadband service? Who will be the end users of the broadband service? What type of broadband services? Who is the service provider? What are the costs of the broadband services (per connection and in total)? How many student homes will receive a broadband connection? How many students reside at those homes? Will the broadband service continue after the project term ends?
- Will the project provide hardware devices? If so, what type of hardware devices will the project provide? What is the cost of the devices (per device and in total)? What will happen to the devices after the project term ends? Who will be responsible for maintaining the devices during the project term and after the term ends?
- Does the project include an educational curriculum focusing on the use of technology that will be taught? If so, please describe that curriculum. What is the curriculum schedule? Who will teach the curriculum? What are the credentials of the teachers?

¹ The county-school-district (CDS) code is the CA Department of Education's method for tracking California schools. Refer to <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/si/ds/>. The data source, Unduplicated Student Poverty – Free or Reduced-Price Meals Data was used to identify eligible schools and school districts and can be found on <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/filessp.asp>.

- Will the project deploy software installed on devices? If so, what software will be installed? What is the purpose of the software? Will the software enable distance learning? What is the cost of the software? Will use of the software continue after the project ends?
 - Will the project provide training on distance-learning technology? If so, please describe the training. What is the training schedule? Who will provide the training? What are the credentials of the teachers?
 - Describe any additional benefits, functions, activities, goods, and/or services provided as part of the project to help bridge the digital divide.
- 2.2 Provide a timeline identifying the term of the project and key milestones, including commencement and completion dates.
 - 2.3 Describe the population that the project serves. How many participants will benefit from the project? Are the participants from low-income households, disabled, or belonging to urban, rural, or disadvantaged communities? Do the participants have special educational needs? Are the participants living in a residence or area that lacks access to high-speed internet? Describe the causes and effects of the digital divide experienced by the participants.
 - 2.4 Identify and enumerate specific target goals for the project's primary functions/activities.
 - 2.5 Identify and describe methods of tracking outcomes and assessing results, including quantitative and qualitative metrics to measure accomplishments against target goals.
 - 2.6 Explain whether (and, if so, how) the project benefits will extend beyond a single year.

Section 3. Experience.

This section requires the applicant to provide information on their ability to execute the project and meet the requirements of the DDGP. The applicant should provide a narrative description to the questions below.

- 3.1 Describe the applicant CBO's existing or past efforts in providing and implementing community technology projects and/or projects to bridge the digital divide. Provide documentation on previous or past efforts.
- 3.2 Describe the applicant CBO's experience deploying grant-funded projects.
- 3.3 Provide at least three letters of recommendation endorsing the ability of the CBO. The letters of recommendation must be from entities unrelated to the beneficiaries in the DDGP application, including state or local government agencies, public schools or school districts, county offices of education, persons holding public office, trade associations or groups, community groups, and/or anchor institutions.
- 3.4 For school projects, describe the relationship between the applicant CBO and the partner school(s). How did the relationship start? Has the CBO previously worked with the school(s) on other projects? Confirm that the partner school(s) has reviewed the application and agrees to execute the project if selected.

- 3.5 For school projects, provide at least three letters of endorsement per partnership school supporting the digital divide project. A letter is required from each of the following categories: (1) the beneficiary school's district office, (2) the beneficiary school's school board, (3) the beneficiary school's Parent Teachers Association.²
- a. If your project proposal requires that your staff be present at school and interact with school children and/or teachers, the letter of endorsement from the district office must confirm and explain that you have discussed this with the school district and school and have met all school requirements for fingerprints and/or background checks. Explain how you plan to meet those requirements.
- 3.6 Is the CBO sustainable? How do you get your funding? Do you have other government funding?

Section 4. Proposed Project Budget.

This section requires the applicant to provide information on the project's proposed budget.

- 4.1 Provide a narrative description of the project's proposed budget plan. The maximum narrative length for this item is three pages.
- 4.2 Submit a proposed budget for the project. A sample budget is attached to Appendix B or available for download at www.cpuc.ca.gov/ddgp.
- 4.3 Will the project be funded by additional funding sources? Provide a description of other funding sources and amounts. Include documentation verifying those secured sources and funding amounts.
- 4.4 Will the project continue to provide benefits or services beyond the grant's one year funding cycle? Provide a plan for how the CBO and partner school(s) will sustain the program for future years.

Section 5. Partnership Agreement.

- 5.1 Review and complete the Partnership Agreement form, attached to this document at Appendix C or available for download at www.cpuc.ca.gov/ddgp. Each beneficiary school is required to sign a separate form.

END OF APPENDIX A

² Applicants must submit all three letters of endorsement to meet the requirements of a complete application.

Appendix B

Example of Proposed Budget and Administrative Expenses

Budget Line Item	Price Per Item	Number of Units	Total Amount
Student home broadband connection;	\$200.00	120	\$24,000.00
School hardware A	\$300.00	10	\$3,000.00
School hardware B	\$100.00	10	\$1,000.00
Student hardware C	\$300.00	120	\$36,000.00
Student hardware D	\$50.00	120	\$6,000.00
Student curriculum E	\$300.00	120	\$36,000.00
Student curriculum F	\$600.00	120	\$72,000.00
Teacher curriculum G	\$800.00	20	\$16,000.00
Software H - Teachers	\$15.00	10	\$150.00
Software I - Students	\$100.00	120	\$12,000.00
Administrative Costs *	n/a	n/a	\$9,550.00
Total			\$215,700.00

This example is for projects to beneficiary schools. Community Based Organization (CBO) applicants can follow the same format.

*The Digital Divide Grant Program will only reimburse up to 10% of the total awarded grant amount for administrative expenses for CBOs and up to 5% for schools.

Administrative expenses of CBOs exclude costs associated with services and goods used by students, teachers, or schools served by the digital divide project. Administrative expenses of CBOs include, but are not limited to, costs associated with the following:

- Administrative activities of the CBOs.
- Project planning, technical project management, oversight work, program execution and reporting, and procurement of goods and services.
- Wages, benefits, and payroll taxes of administrative staff (including accounting, human resources, etc.), legal staff, and management.
- Ongoing operating expenses such as rent, utilities, IT, and other similar costs.

- Travel: Transportation, lodging, and meal costs associated with staff travel.
- Supplies and Materials: Office supplies, equipment, and other materials.
- Contracted Services: Third-party services including consulting, legal or technical support for proposal evaluation, data subscriptions to supplement benefits analysis, and augmentation of internal staff for project oversight and program coordination.
- Event Fees for Hosted and Attended Events: Costs associated with sponsoring, hosting, or attending events – including consortia, memberships, conferences, venue rentals, and other similar costs.
- Insurance.
- Audit fees and costs.
- Costs are usually included within GAAP General and Administrative Expenses and Overhead.

END OF APPENDIX B

Appendix-C

Partnership Agreement

DIGITAL DIVIDE GRANT PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

This Partnership Agreement formalizes the agreement between the community-based organization, _____ (a non-profit corporation), and _____ (a school, or “Partner School”) (collectively, the “Grant Partners”) for the purposes of implementing the Digital Divide Grant Program (DDGP) _____ (the “Project Proposal” or “Project”), as described in the accompanying application.

If selected to receive a grant by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), the Grant Partners agree to execute the approved Project in good faith, with the Partner School as the sole beneficiary of all assets, interests, and/or services funded by the DDGP. **The Grant Partners understand that it may be necessary for the parties to execute a separate agreement to further define the parties’ respective roles and responsibilities, especially if the Project is expected to continue beyond the DDGP one-year funding term and/or exceeds the CPUC approved budgets.** By participating in the DDGP, the Grant Partners agree to comply with the terms, conditions, and requirements of the California Public Utilities Commission, the Digital Divide Grant Program, California Public Utilities Code § 280.5, Decision 21-10-020, Resolution T-17770, and any successor decisions and administrative letters.

We, the undersigned, have reviewed the application and supporting documents and are duly authorized to execute this Partnership Agreement.

CBO Representative:

Signed this ___ day of _____, 20__

Signature

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Partner School Representative:

Signed this ___ day of _____, 20__

Signature

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

By signing this application, I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that I am authorized to act on behalf of the applicant and that the information submitted with this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand and acknowledge that if selected as a grant award recipient, the organization and any of its officers, employees, agents will carry out the approved project in good faith and shall adhere to terms and conditions of the California Public Utilities Commission, the Digital Divide Grant Program, California Public Utilities Code § 280.5, Decision 21-10-020, Resolution T-17770, and any successor decisions and administrative letters.

Signed this ____ day of _____, 20__.

By: _____

Name:

Title:

On behalf of:

Address:

Phone:

END OF APPENDIX C

Appendix-D

Terms and Conditions of the Digital Divide Grant Program

By signing this application, I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that I am authorized to act on behalf of the applicant and that the information submitted with this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand and acknowledge that if selected as a grant award recipient, the organization and any of its officers, employees, agents will carry out the approved project in good faith and shall adhere to terms and conditions of the California Public Utilities Commission, the Digital Divide Grant Program, California Public Utilities Code § 280.5, Decision 21-10-020, Resolution T-17770, and any successor decisions and administrative letters.

Signed this ____ day of _____, 20__.

By: _____

Name:

Title:

On behalf of:

Address:

Phone:

END OF APPENDIX D

Appendix-E

Project Status Report for the Digital Divide Grant Program

(For DDGP awardee to complete)

Each project status report should include a cover page with the following table:

Grant Recipient (CBO Name):	
Project Name:	
Beneficiary Public Schools:	
Report Type (Progress or Completion):	
Report Submission Date: (MM/DD/YY)	
Payments Received to Date: (\$)	
Project Completion Date: (MM/DD/YY)	
Attestation: I certify that all statements and representations made in this report are true and correct under penalty of perjury.	Name: Signature: Report submission date:

The two project status reports must respond to each of the items enumerated below. Organize and label responses in a manner consistent with the list of items below.

1. What are the total project expenses incurred to date?
2. Are the expenses incurred during this reporting period consistent with the approved project budget? If not, please explain and provide justification for the difference.
3. Describe progress on the approved Scope of Work. Using both qualitative and quantitative terms, describe accomplishments made during this reporting period. Identify and organize accomplishments according to the approved Scope of Work. For each item within the approved Scope of Work, identify whether all the milestones/goals set for this reporting period were achieved. If any of the goals or milestones set for this reporting period were not met, explain why.

4. Are the accomplishments described consistent with the approved project plan? If not, please explain.
5. Describe any additional project accomplishments for this reporting period that were not part of the approved Scope of Work.
6. Identify, describe/explain, and provide justification for any changes or diversions from the approved Scope of Work during this reporting period. How will the changes and diversions during this reporting period affect project completion (e.g., delays, set goals that cannot be accomplished, etc.)? Was CPUC notified of these changes or diversions, and if so, were the changes or diversions approved by the CPUC? If not, please explain why CPUC was not notified.
7. Identify, describe/explain, and provide justification for any changes or diversions from the approved project budget during this reporting period. How will the changes and diversions during this reporting period affect project completion (e.g., delays, set goals that cannot be accomplished, etc.)? Was CPUC notified of these changes or diversions, and if so, were the changes or diversions approved by the CPUC? If not, please explain why CPUC was not notified.
8. Are additional changes or diversions anticipated to the approved Scope of Work during the remainder of the project period? If so, please describe and provide justifications, and explain how the changes or diversions will affect project completion or project goals.
9. Are additional changes or diversions anticipated to the approved project budget during the remainder of the project period? If so, please describe and provide justifications, and explain how the changes or diversions will affect project completion or project goals.
10. Identify challenges to the project experienced during this reporting period and describe the course of action taken to address the challenges.
11. Identify future challenges anticipated during the remainder of the project. For each challenge identified, what is the planned course of action to address the challenge. Will the challenges affect project completion? If so, please explain how project completion will be affected.
12. Identify and describe any unexpected benefits that resulted from the project during this reporting period.

END OF APPENDIX E

Appendix-F

Disbursement Schedule and Conditions of Payment

(The schedule for DDGP awardees)

- Grantee will receive grant funds at three points throughout the project period to be allocated as follows:
 - **First disbursement:** 25% of the grant award to be issued after the grantee announcement in the Administrative Letter to fund the project's initial ramp up period.
 - **Second disbursement:** Up to 50% of the grant award after the Project Status Report is submitted, based on approved invoices.
 - **Third disbursement:** 25% of the grant award after the Project Final Completion Report is submitted, plus any remaining funds, if applicable.
- After the first disbursement, the subsequent reimbursement payments will accompany two of the reports required by [Resolution T-17892](#) (Appendix E). Reimbursement will require the following:
 - **Project Status Report:** due no later than **June 1, 2027**, and
 - **Project Final Completion Report:** due no later than **January 5, 2028** or when the project is completed, whichever date is earlier.
- The relevant project report must be submitted for a payment request to be granted.
- The grantee shall submit final requests for payment no later than 3 months after completion of the project or by April 5, 2028, whichever date is earlier.
- Payment will be based upon receipt and approval of invoices and other supporting documents showing the expenditures incurred for the project are in accordance with their approved application and budget.
- Grantee shall notify the Commission as soon as it becomes aware that they may not be able to meet project deadlines.
- Payment will be made in accordance with, and within the time specified in California Government Code § 927 et seq.
- The Commission has the right to conduct any necessary audit, verification, and discovery during project implementation to ensure that DDGP funds are spent in accordance with the terms of approval granted by the Commission.
- Grantee invoices will be subject to audit by the Commission at any time within three

years of final payment.

Certification Requirement: Grantee must certify that each report and payment request submitted is true and correct under penalty of perjury.

All required reports and payment requests, including invoices and other supporting documents should be submitted via email to: DigitalDivideGrantProgram@cpuc.ca.gov.

END OF APPENDICES