

CONNECTING INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES TO HIGH SPEED INTERNET

by Gary Kissack, Ross Francis, William Taggart and Elizabeth Armstrong

With the opening of the application period for the Universal Broadband Fund (UBF), which was announced by the federal government earlier this month, there is great opportunity for Indigenous communities to improve internet and mobile connectivity in their communities and surrounding areas at a very low cost.

Quick Facts about the UBF

- The UBF is a 1.75 billion dollar fund established to support infrastructure projects that will increase internet and mobile connectivity in remote and rural areas in Canada
- In order for a project to be eligible for funding under the UBF, the project must deliver high-speed internet to an area not yet receiving 50/10Mbps service, or deliver 4G LTE mobile service to an area that will primarily benefit Indigenous people
- While all other projects under the UBF will only be able to receive funding for up to 75% of the project's costs, projects that serve remote areas or Indigenous communities will be eligible to receive funding for up to 90% of the project's costs
- The federal government also announced a 150 million dollar Rapid Response Stream of funding which is intended to fund broadband projects in areas that are "shovel ready" and can be completed on a short timeline before November 2021
- The list of "eligible applicants" for funding under UBF include Indigenous entities such as band councils or other Indigenous governments
- Eligible applicants must either build, own and operate broadband infrastructure or enter into a contractual agreement with a partner to design, build, own and operate broadband infrastructure

For a complete review of both funding streams visit:

- https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/139.nsf/eng/h_00012.html
- <https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/139.nsf/eng/00010.html>

Application Deadlines

Applications for funding under the Rapid Response Stream may be submitted until January 15, 2021 and will be assessed and selected on a rolling basis as received, so



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applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Applications for all other UBF projects will be accepted until February 15, 2021 and assessed and selected in the months following the deadline.

Get Connected

The Indigenous Law Group at Fogler, Rubinoff LLP would be pleased to assist your community or business in taking advantage of the Universal Broadband Fund.