

TBCP Round 3 Application Checklist

A step-by-step preparation guide for the September 17, 2026 deadline

\$540M

Available in Round 3

Sep 17

2026 application deadline

Spring '27

Rolling awards begin

NTIA opened TBCP Round 3 on June 17, 2026. Eligible applicants include tribal governments, tribal colleges and universities, tribal organizations, Native corporations, and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. Round 3 operates under reformed program rules; read the NOFO in full before building your application. This checklist organizes the work into four stages.

Stage 1: Governance and Eligibility (start immediately)

- ☐ Tribal council resolution authorizing the application and designating an authorized representative
- ☐ SAM.gov registration active and UEI number current (renewals can take weeks)
- ☐ Grants.gov account and NTIA portal access confirmed for the filer
- ☐ Decision on applying solo or through a tribal organization or consortium

Stage 2: Needs and Data (weeks 1-6)

- ☐ Community needs assessment: households, anchor institutions, current service levels
- ☐ Service area boundaries mapped and validated against the FCC National Broadband Map
- ☐ Broadband serviceable location data reconciled; challenge inaccurate map data where needed
- ☐ Documentation of unserved and underserved status at the 100/20 Mbps benchmark

Stage 3: Project Design and Budget (weeks 4-10)

- ☐ Scope defined: infrastructure deployment, use and adoption, affordability programs, or a mix
- ☐ Technology selection with engineering rationale suited to terrain and spectrum position
- ☐ Detailed budget with equipment quotes, construction estimates, and contingency
- ☐ Operations plan showing sustainability beyond the grant period
- ☐ Environmental and historic preservation review requirements scoped early

Stage 4: Assembly and Submission (final 4 weeks)

- ☐ Project narrative aligned to NOFO evaluation criteria, reviewed by an outside reader
- ☐ Letters of support from tribal leadership, anchor institutions, and partners
- ☐ All required federal forms signed and complete
- ☐ Submission completed at least 48 hours before the deadline to absorb portal issues

Numu tip: Applications that document real community demand and a credible operating plan consistently outperform applications that only describe construction. Budget staff time for the needs assessment; it pays for itself.

References

National Telecommunications and Information Administration. (2026). *Notice of funding opportunity: Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program Round 3*. https://broadbandusa.ntia.gov/sites/default/files/2026-06/NTIA_TBCEP3_NOFO.pdf

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National Telecommunications and Information Administration. (2022). *Tribal broadband planning toolkit*. [https://broadbandusa.ntia.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/Tribal%20Broadband%20Planning%20Toolkit%20\(PDF\)_1.pdf](https://broadbandusa.ntia.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/Tribal%20Broadband%20Planning%20Toolkit%20(PDF)_1.pdf)

Federal Communications Commission. (2026). *National broadband map*. <https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov>

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