

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is seeking the assistance of academic researchers to assess broadband availability data for the United States in connection with the upcoming release of the National Broadband Map.

NTIA's State Broadband Data and Development (SBDD) Program, in partnership with the FCC, is preparing to launch an interactive national broadband map, by February 17, 2011. This map will include data collected from the 50 states, 4 territories, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia on the number of broadband service providers offering service, the maximum advertised speeds of those services, and the type of technology used at a census block or street segment level. It will also include initial data on the broadband services utilized by community anchor institutions such as schools, libraries, and hospitals.

NTIA is offering early access to this selected portions of this data to academic researchers willing to commit to delivering their preliminary analyses by the end of January 2011. NTIA intends for the analysis provided by the researchers to be presented publicly when the National Broadband Map is published. NTIA expects the launch of the National Broadband Map to generate considerable public interest, and participation in this project may provide an excellent opportunity for researchers to be featured in the public dialogue surrounding the map.

Participating researchers will be required to enter into a Joint Project Agreement with the Department of Commerce. The exact terms of the Agreement are not yet available, but a model agreement can be found [here](#). As part of the Agreement, researchers will be required to allow NTIA to copy, distribute, and display any deliverables provided to NTIA under the agreement. Researchers will retain all other rights to the materials produced, and may publish or otherwise distribute these materials after the public release of the National Broadband Map. Prior to the public release of the map, researchers will not be permitted to distribute the data from the National Broadband Map or their analyses, findings, or work products developed through use of such data. Participating researchers will be required to conduct their analyses and to develop any work products at their own expense. NTIA will not provide funding for this project.

Upon receipt of submissions from interested parties, NTIA staff will review and assess the project plans based on the following criteria:

- a) Eligibility and commitment to enter into a Joint Project Agreement with the Department of Commerce that includes the constraints on data use listed above;
- b) The qualifications, experience, and technical capabilities of the researcher(s) involved in the project;
- c) The potential for the proposed research to provide a high-quality and innovative analysis about broadband deployment to community stakeholders and policymakers interested in improving broadband access. NTIA is not placing any constraints on the type of analysis that is to be conducted, and researchers may want to consider projects as far-ranging as the development of an initial national broadband index, utilizing both the National Broadband Map data and other sources; a comparison of availability across similarly situated

communities; or a meta- analysis that compares this data to that now available in other countries; and

- d) Ability to complete analysis and deliver work product on or before January 31, 2011

NTIA staff will present the submissions and their findings to the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator who will select proposals that best meet the criteria above. NTIA will submit Joint Project Agreements to those researchers selected, no later than December 20, 2010. All deliverables provided to NTIA by participants on or before January 31, 2011, that NTIA determines to have met the potential described in criterion (c) above, will be featured in NTIA's launch of the National Broadband Map.

Once the Joint Project Agreement is signed, NTIA will make the data available to approved researchers via a secure website in several formats: file geodatabase (wireline and wireless), csv file (wireline only or wireline and wireless) and shapefiles (wireless). Researchers should consider that the total records for this census block and road segment-level dataset exceed 20 million. Please note that NTIA will not release data to participating researchers that is trade secret, commercial or financial information, or privileged or confidential.

To participate, researchers should email a proposal to sbdd@ntia.doc.gov before 10 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on December 13, 2010. The proposal should include the following elements and is not to exceed 5 pages, excluding CVs.

- a) One to two page summary of the relevant background and experience of the researcher(s) who will carry out the project;
- b) Description of the objectives and approach that will guide the proposed analysis, including any elements that are particularly innovative; and
- c) Description of the deliverable(s) to be provided to NTIA on or before January 31, 2011.

NTIA may contact researchers to request additional information about their proposals prior to selection. For any questions regarding this project, please contact Joseph Bissonnette at jbissonnette@ntia.doc.gov.