BEAD Grant Award Management Platform
User Guide

Wisconsin BEAD Grant Award Management | SaaS platform

Developed for:

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW)

Authored by:

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Publication date:

January 3, 2025

Revision date:

January 9, 2025

Document Version: V1.1

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Document Version History

This guide continues to evolve based on user feedback and program updates. Each update reflects our commitment to providing clear, comprehensive guidance for all platform users.

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	Jan 2025	Initial release
1.1	Jan 2025	Expanded information around separable / non-separable project unit selection

1. Introduction

The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Grant Award Management Platform is the required platform that all approved organizations must use to create and submit BEAD project proposals. This comprehensive guide serves as a primary resource for navigating the platform effectively.

Purpose

This guide accommodates different learning and reference styles, providing multiple ways to access and understand the information needed. The content is structured in layers, allowing you to quickly find basic information while having easy access to more detailed explanations when needed.

Reasonable Accommodations

The Commission will provide reasonable accommodations, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, for qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. If you need accommodations, contact Alyssa Kenney at (608) 267-9138 or Alyssa.Kenney@wisconsin.gov.

Scope

This guide covers:

- Application creation and submission processes;
- User access and management;
- Platform navigation and functionalities;
- Reporting; and,
- Support access.

For new users, we recommend starting with the Getting Started section and progressing sequentially through the guide. Experienced users can use the quick navigation features to jump directly to specific topics of interest.

2. Getting Started

☐ Quick Start: System Setup

- Complete prerequisites
- Verify system requirements
- Whitelist platform domain
- Set up a user account

The path to full platform access involves several coordinated steps. Understanding this sequence helps ensure you complete all requirements efficiently and avoid common delays. We recommend following this process in order, as each step builds upon the previous ones.

2.1 Prerequisites

Starting your journey with the BEAD Grant Award Management Platform requires careful preparation and attention to several key prerequisites to ensure a smooth onboarding process and seamless platform utilization.

Approved Letter of Intent (LOI)

- Access to the BEAD Grant Award Management platform requires approval by the Commission of the Letter of Intent filed by the organization.
- For questions about the LOI process, contact the PSCW BEAD team at PSCBEADGrants@Wisconsin.gov.

Valid Access Credentials

- After LOI approval notification, PSCW will provide CostQuest with the name and email of the Administrative User approved by PSCW. The Administrative User will receive access instructions via email.
- If you are an Administrative User and have not received an email, check your spam email folder, then contact wibeadsupport@costquest.com if you require additional support.

2.2 System Requirements

The BEAD Grant Award Management Platform is a SaaS system designed to run smoothly on modern computers with up-to-date web browsers. While the platform may work on other configurations, we recommend the following setup for the best experience:

- **Hardware:** Desktop or laptop with sufficient processing power to run modern web applications smoothly.
- **Operating System:** Windows (latest versions) with all security patches and updates installed.
- **Browsers:** Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge (latest versions).
- **Additional Requirements:**
  - Internet access is restricted to approved regions (U.S., Canada, Germany, and Great Britain). Users attempting to access the platform from outside these regions will encounter difficulties.
  - Ensure "wi.grantaward.io" is whitelisted in your organization's IT system if domain filtering is used.

2.3 Account Management

The platform supports two types of users with distinct permissions and capabilities.

Administrative Users

Serve as the primary account holders for their organizations. Each organization is limited to one administrative user. They can:

- Manage user access for their organization
- Access all platform features, including creating, editing, and viewing applications
- Perform critical actions such as application approvals and submissions

Standard Users

Handle day-to-day application work. Organizations can have up to four standard users assigned by the Administrative User, who can:

- Create, edit and view applications
- Save draft applications

- Validate and request application approvals
- Upload files for use on all applications

⚠️ **Important:**

- Only Administrative Users can activate/deactivate standard user access
- Only Administrative Users can submit applications for official consideration
- A change in Administrative User must be approved by PSCW

2.4 Access and Authentication

Each organization's assigned Administrative User will get an email invitation from wibeadsupport@costquest.com to access the BEAD Grant Management platform. Following this, they will complete a simple setup process. Here's what to expect:

The administrative user must be the authorized organization representative, as listed in the letter of intent, who has the authority to bind the company legally and financially.

Initial Setup

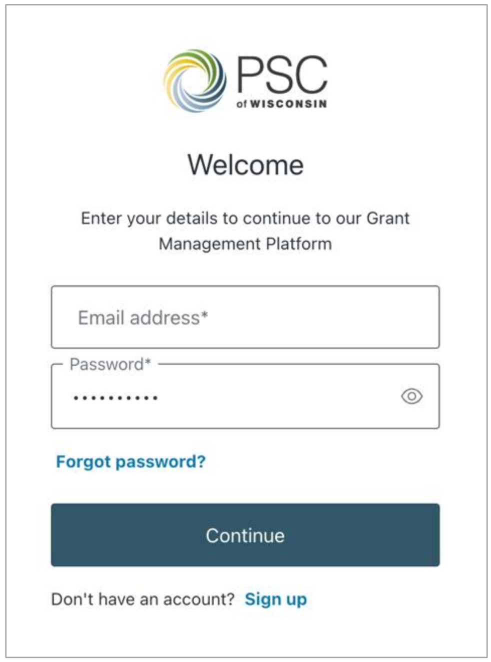
1. Click the "**Set Your Password**" secure setup link provided in the email.
2. Create a secure password following the platform's requirements (e.g., eight characters minimum, a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters, and at least one number or special character).
3. Log in to the platform and accept the End User License Agreement (EULA).

To reset your password

1. Click "**Forgot Password**" on the login screen.
2. Enter your registered email address.
3. Follow the instructions sent to your email to create a new password.

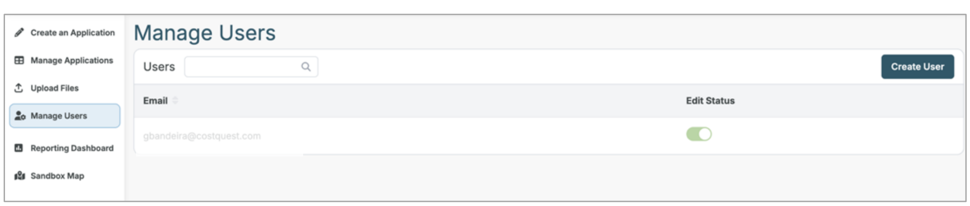
How to Access the System

1. Open your web browser and navigate to https://wi.grantaward.io.
2. Enter your registered email address and password.



User Account Setup

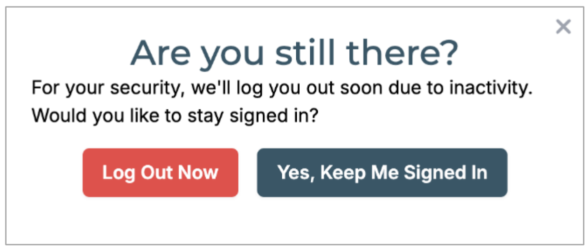
1. Administrative Users can log in and navigate to the "**Manage Users**" section. Only Administrative Users have access to this section.
2. Select "**Create User**" and enter the new user's name and email address.
3. The new user will receive an email with instructions to set up their account as well as an email to set up their Zendesk account for the WI Grant Award Management platform support desk.
4. The edit status indicator for the new user (and all active standard users) will be green in the system dashboard.



The Administrative User can deactivate a standard user by simply clicking the "**Edit Status**" button on the Manage Users page.

Session Management

To protect sensitive information, the platform includes automatic timeout features. Administrative users receive a warning after 5 minutes of inactivity, while standard users get a warning after 20 minutes. When the timeout warning appears, the user can choose to continue the session or log out immediately.



If the user does not respond, the system will logout the user after 2 additional minutes. This helps ensure security while preventing the loss of unsaved work.

3. Application Process

☐ **Quick Reference: Application Steps**

- Create new application
- Select counties and regions
- Specify funding and contributions
- Upload documentation
- Submit for review

The application process is a core interaction between grant seekers and the BEAD program, guiding you through each application stage. We encourage applicants to review all requirements thoroughly and develop their narratives alongside supporting documentation.

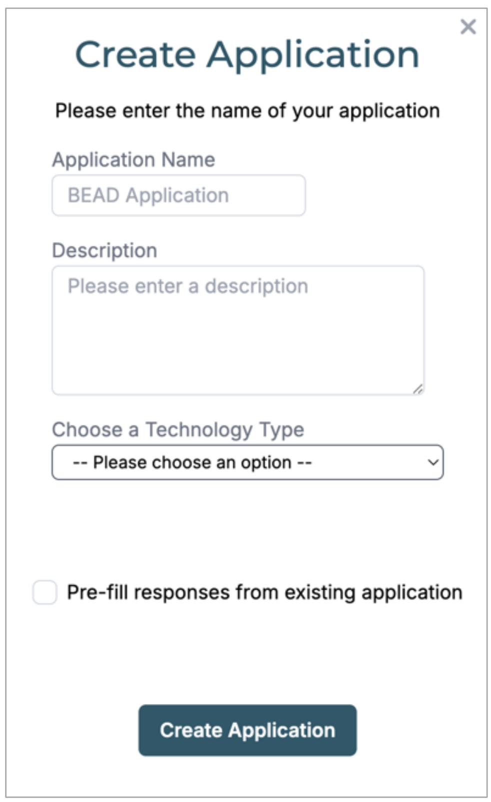
3.1 Creating Application

Click the "**Create an Application**" button on your dashboard. Start by providing fundamental information about your project.

The platform will prompt you to:

1. Enter a unique **Application Name** (50 characters or less)
2. Write a **Description** for the project (250 characters or less)
3. **Choose a Technology Type** from the dropdown
4. If applicable, select to **pre-fill responses from an existing application** in the dropdown
5. Click on “**Create Application**” to generate an application ID

Choose clear, descriptive names that help you identify your applications easily. For example, "Northern Wisconsin Fiber Deployment 2025" is more helpful than "Project 1." The application name will be the primary identifier for the application through the process.



Technology Selection

Select your technology option from the dropdown. Your choice of technology is a crucial decision that affects various aspects of your application, including the required questions and the scoring.

Option	Category	Description	Code
Optical Carrier	Priority	Fixed wireline service using end-to-end fiber-optic cable to the premise (FTTP)	50
Coaxial Cable/HFC	Non-Priority	Fixed wireline service using coaxial cable or hybrid fiber-coaxial (e.g., DOCSISx)	40
Terrestrial Fixed Wireless (Licensed)	Non-Priority	Licensed spectrum only (non-FTTP)	71
Terrestrial Fixed Wireless (Hybrid)	Non-Priority	Hybrid licensed/unlicensed spectrum (non-FTTP)	72
Copper/DSL	Non-Priority	Copper-based DSL services	10
Mixed Technology	Non-Priority	Projects using a combination of technologies	0

** When selecting mixed technology, you'll need to specify the distribution of Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs) across different technologies.*

Pre-fill Option

There is an option to pre-fill responses from an existing application. The only inputs that will not be included are the project units of the existing application. Since the technology choice is tightly interwoven with the application questions, any pre-filled application selection will determine the technology type for that application.

💡 **Pro Tip:** Use the pre-fill option to create templates and reduce the amount of effort required to complete each application.

Once an application is created, there are seven sections that must be completed:

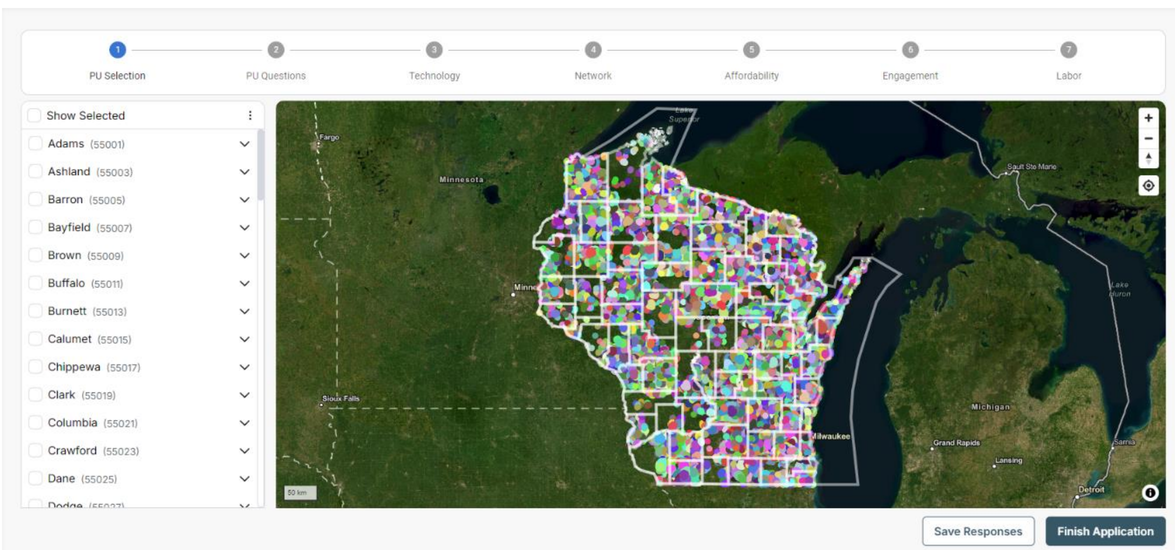
- Project Unit Selection
- Project Unit Questions
- Technology
- Network
- Affordability
- Engagement
- Labor

The specific content of each section depends on the choice of technology and the responses to various questions.

3.2 Project Unit (PU) Selection

Project units are organized based on the county in which they reside. The platform supports complying with program regulations by validating that:

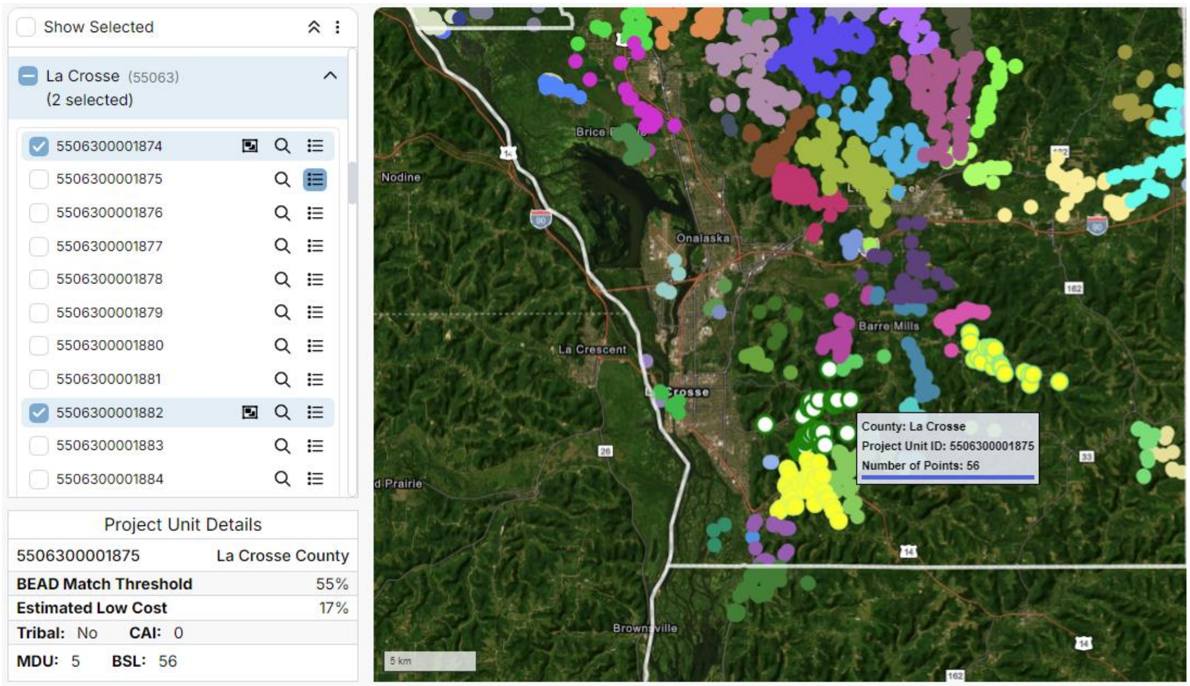
- Projects are within no more than four counties.
- Selected counties share at least one border.
- Project units appear on no more than two submitted/pending applications.



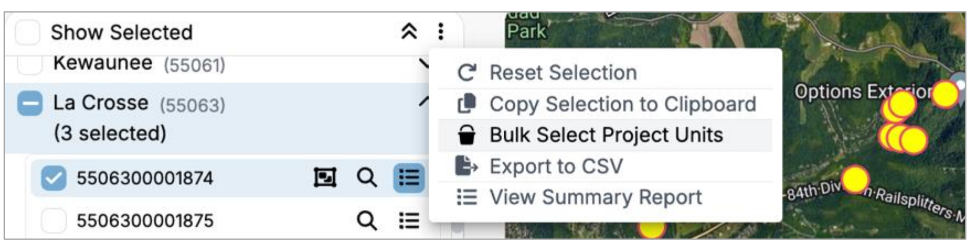
There are several methods for selecting project units in the Project Unit selection section.

- Choose from the list of counties based on the location of the project unit ID (e.g., 5506300001874 from LaCrosse County). Clicking the expansion menu to the right of each county reveals all the project unit IDs within that county.

- Click on the map. When hovering over a project unit, the map displays the county, project unit ID, and the number of points (BSLs and CAIs). Clicking on the project unit selects it in the list on the left.



- Click on the ellipsis (three vertical dots) next to "**Show Selected**" to bulk select. Enter a list of project unit IDs, separated by commas in the box. Once "**Add Selections**" is clicked, those project units will be shown as selected in the list.



Advanced Tools

Several tools and options can streamline the application process, regardless of how project units are selected.

- Using "**Show Selected**" will limit the project unit ID list and the project units displayed on the map to only those selected. This can make it easier to visualize the map and determine if adjacency and the four-county limit are met.

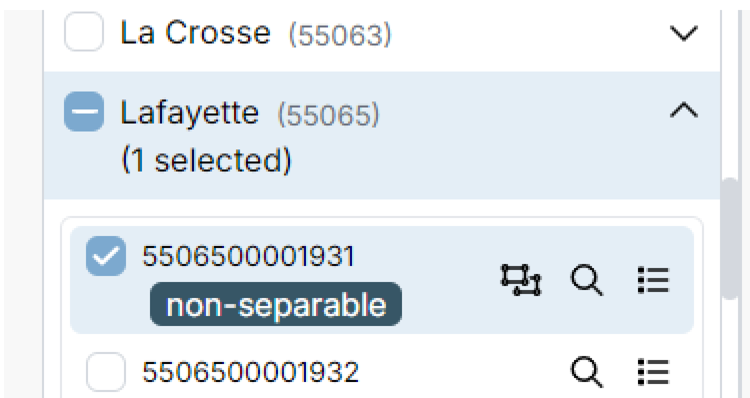
- To the right of each project unit ID in the list, there are three icons.
    - Selection of the rectangle icon toggles the designation of that project unit to separable or non-separable status.

      Note: The checkbox next to the project unit must be checked in order to reveal the separability icon.

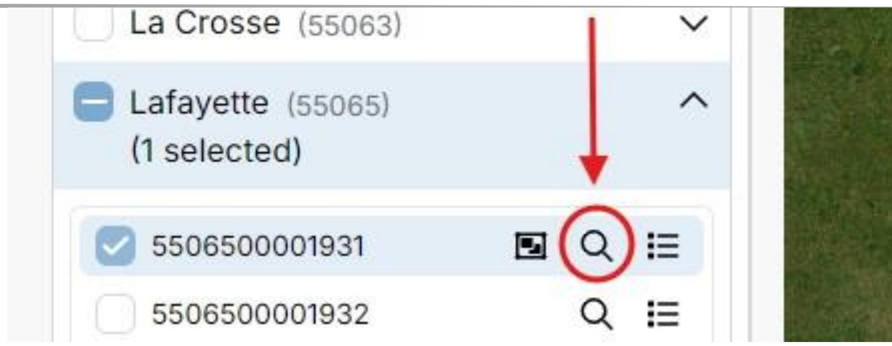
      Project units may be designated as "non-separable," meaning the provider would not accept funding if it did not receive that project unit.

      To set a project unit to "non-separable" status, click the rectangle icon. The project unit will now be displayed with a "non-separable" label.

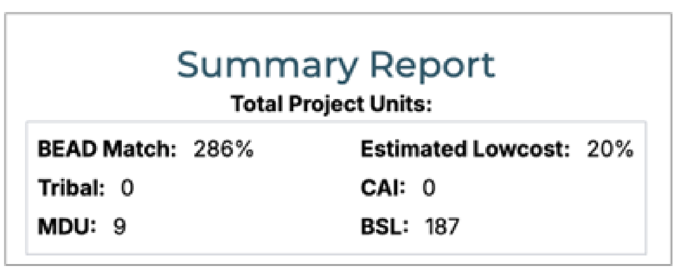
      Project units are added to applications as "separable" by default.

    - Clicking the magnifying glass will zoom to that project unit, highlighting it on the map.



- Selecting the details icon will open the **Project Unit Details** below the list, showing the details of individual project units.

- View **Summary Report**, selected from the ellipsis next to Show Selected, will create a pop-up window displaying the details of each project unit along with a summary of the combined statistics for the selected project units. This is important for tracking the number of BSL, MDU and CAI locations included in an application. The summary also provides the number of tribal project units selected, the application-level BEAD match threshold, as well as an estimated percentage of low cost BSLs within the project units selected for the application.



The details for each project unit are displayed underneath the Summary Report.

⚠️ **Important Validation Rules:**

- The platform checks county adjacency and county limit of four
- Validates against the organization LOI county list
- Monitors total unique BSL quantities against LOI limits
- Limit of using the same project unit on no more than two applications

These validations occur later in the process rather than at the time of selecting the project units in the PU Selection section.

3.3 Project Unit (PU) Questions

For each project unit selected in the project unit selection section, the following questions will be presented. Many questions will have a "Description" that can be expanded to provide more context about the response and when it is required.

Enter BEAD Fund Request Amount

1. In the designated field, enter the total amount of BEAD funds requested for this project unit. Ensure that the amount is in whole dollars (no cents).

Enter Contributed Match Funds

1. Specify the total contributed match funds, including amounts from the applicant and any third-party or government contributions. This amount should also be in whole dollars.

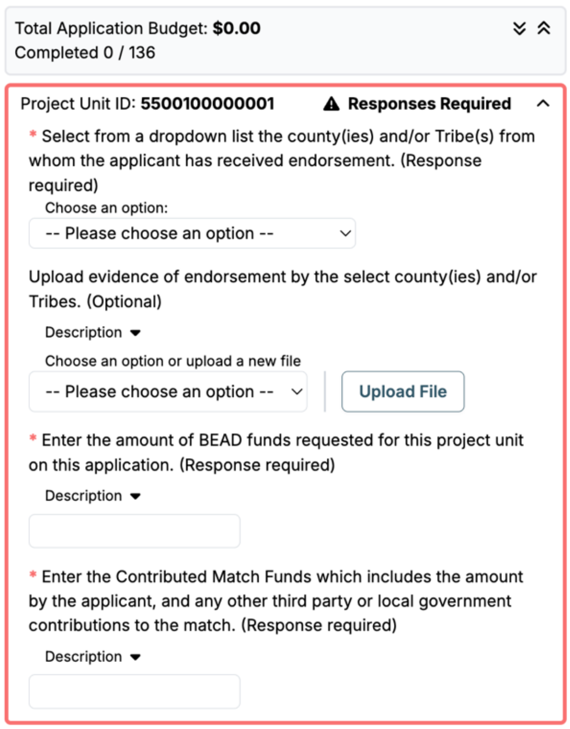
Select County or Tribe Endorsement

1. From the dropdown menu, choose the county or tribe that has provided an endorsement. Selections are in alphabetical order. If there is no endorsement for a project unit, the user must select "N/A."
2. If applicable, upload evidence of the endorsement, such as meeting minutes or a letter addressed to the Public Service Commission. The file must include:
    - The date of the meeting.
    - The name of the applicant.

- Details of the endorsement action.

3. For multiple letters, compile them into a zip file and upload it.
4. Click the "**Upload File**" button to submit evidence of the endorsement

⚠️ **Important:** The platform automatically calculates match percentages and validates them against program requirements. If you need to exceed standard match thresholds, be ready to provide a detailed justification post validation process.



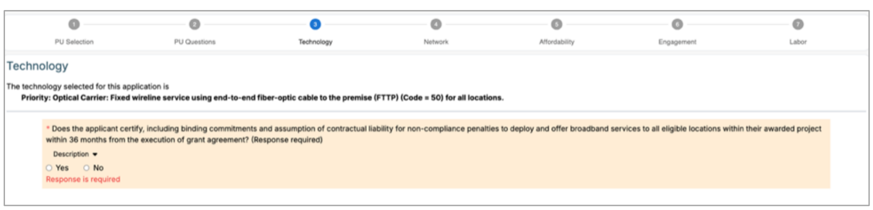
> **Tips for Completion:**
>
> - Click the "**Save Responses**" button periodically to avoid data loss.
> - For applications with many project units, it may be easier to tab through these inputs. The upload file and endorsement county/tribe selections can be aided by typing the first letter of the name of the entry.
> - Each project unit that has valid inputs will have a green border. Those with errors will have red borders.

3.4 Technology

Certify Deployment Speed

1. Read the certification statement regarding the commitment to deploy broadband services within 36 months of executing a grant agreement.

2. Select "Yes" if you agree to the terms. A response ("**Yes**" or "**No**") is required to proceed.



For Non-Priority Technology

1. Choose your committed speed and latency tier to be provided to all eligible locations within the proposed project. Options include:
    - 100/20 Mbps, 100ms latency
    - 200/20 Mbps, 100ms latency
    - 300/30 Mbps, 100ms latency
    - 500/50 Mbps, 100ms latency

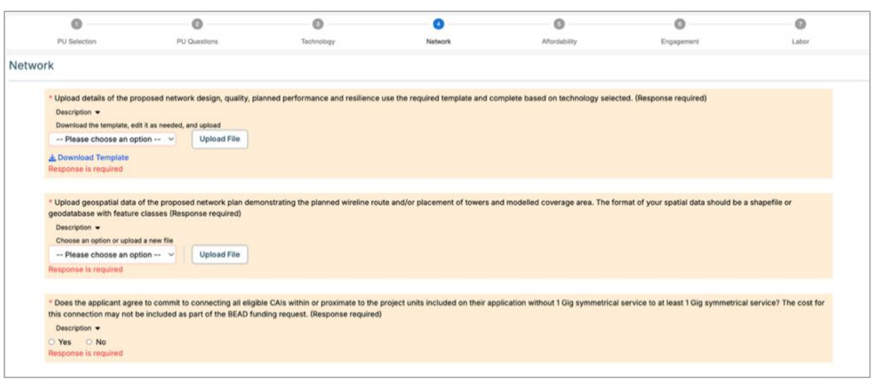
3.5 Network

Upload Network Design Details

1. Click on the "**Download Template**" link to download the provided template for network design and resiliency analysis.
2. Fill out the template with the following details:
   - Design of the network deployment.
   - Resiliency measures against severe weather and climate risks.
3. Once the template specific to the application has been completed, upload the file to the platform (it is not auto uploaded) and attach it to the application.

Upload Geospatial Data

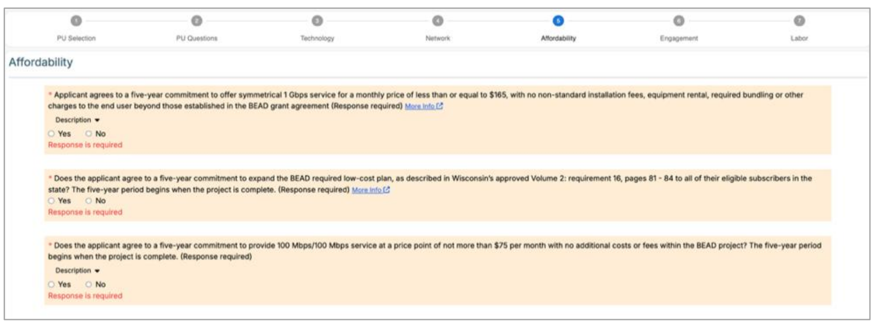
1. Provide geospatial data of the proposed network plan in shapefile or geodatabase format. This data must include:
   - Wireline construction routes.
   - Tower locations with attributes such as height and radio specifications.
   - Buffered polygons illustrating coverage of the planned route.
2. Once the file is uploaded to the platform, select and attach the geospatial data file.
3. On priority applications only, the user must respond ("**Yes**" or "**No**") to a commitment to support all eligible CAIs with 1 Gbps symmetrical service.



3.6 Affordability

Pricing Commitments

1. Confirm commitment to offering service at or below $165 per month for five years. For priority technology applications, the service level is symmetrical at 1 Gbps, while for non-priority applications, the service level is 100/20 Mbps.
    - If the user responds affirmatively to the service commitment for either priority or non-priority, they must input a price less than or equal to $165.
2. Commit to offering service at a price of $75 per month or less for five years. For priority technology applications, the service level is 100/100 Mbps, while for non-priority applications, the service level is 50/10 Mbps.
3. Agree to provide a low-cost plan in line with Wisconsin's approved requirements.
4. Select "**Yes**" or "**No**" to each question as applicable.



3.7 Engagement

Indicate Tribal Land Engagement

- Answer "**Yes**" or "**No**" to indicate if the proposed project includes tribal project units and connects or traverses tribal lands.
    - If the answer is "Yes," the user will be required to upload the Tribal consent documents or an explanation as to the substantial progress toward obtaining that consent.

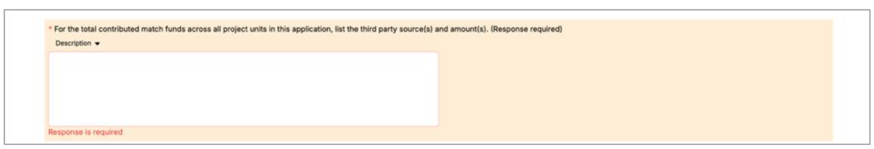
Upload Community Engagement Evidence (if available), including

- Documentation of public meetings that demonstrate community outreach during project planning.
- Evidence of support from the municipal government.
- Letters of support from school districts, public libraries or organizations within the application area.

- For each, select the appropriate file and attach it to the application.
- For any uploaded documents, the user will be required to enter a short description of the parties and or locations involved.

List Match Fund Sources

- Enter the third-party sources and amounts contributing to matching funds for all project units on the entire application. These are required to proceed.



3.8 Labor

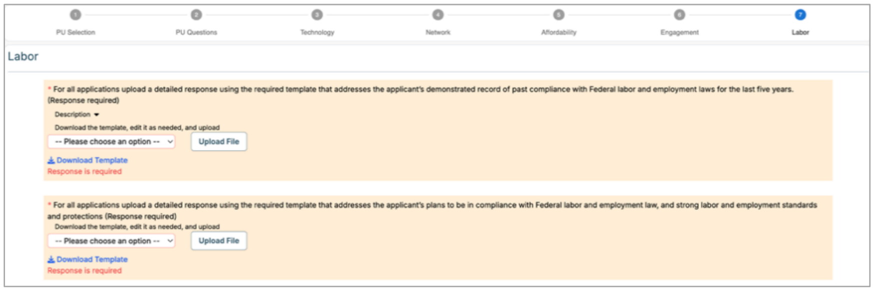
This section requires two uploads, one focused on the applicant's past compliance with Federal labor laws and one for the applicant's plan to comply going forward. PSCW has provided templates for each of these questions that must be used.

Upload Past Compliance Documentation

- Click the "**Download Template**" link to access the required template for compliance with federal labor and employment laws. The template will open in a separate tab where it can be completed, saved and uploaded to the platform. Once uploaded, attach the file to the application by selecting it from the dropdown list.

Upload Future labor plans

- Click the "**Download Template**" link to access the required template for future labor plans. The template will open in a separate tab where it can be completed, saved and uploaded to the platform. Once uploaded, attach the file to the application by selecting it from the dropdown list.



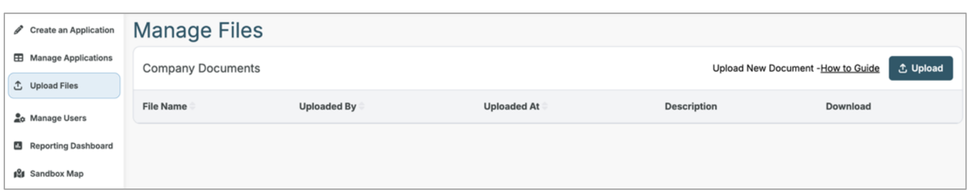
Tips for Completion:

- Click the "Save Responses" button periodically to avoid data loss.
- Double-check uploaded files for accuracy and completeness.

4. Managing Files

Required Uploads

1. Click "**Upload Files**" from the side menu to manage company documents. As noted above, the platform requires the applicant to upload several documents to support an application. Note that for the Network Design upload, Past Labor upload and Future Labor upload, the PSCW templates must be used. These can be downloaded from within the platform, from the BEAD Grant Award Management support site, or from PSC Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Grant site.



2. Select files to upload into the "Company Documents" section. Upon selecting the "**Upload**" icon in the upper right corner, an Upload File pop-up window will appear. In addition to the "**Choose File**" option, the permitted file types are displayed: pdf,

docx, xlsx, csv, shp, shx, dbf, gpkg, prj, and zip. No other file types are permitted to be uploaded to the platform. The files must be created externally to the Platform. The user selects the "**Choose File**" button and chooses a file from their directories. If the file selected is not of an appropriate file type, or the name contains unallowed characters, the system will provide an error. The user can choose to change the file name at this point but not after it has been uploaded.

3. Once the file is uploaded, the user can add a short description of the file.
4. Files are company documents, not user specific. Thus, once a file has been uploaded to the platform, it can be used by any user on any application.
5. Files cannot be deleted once uploaded.
6. Click on "**How to Guide**" on the top right for further instructions on how to upload files.

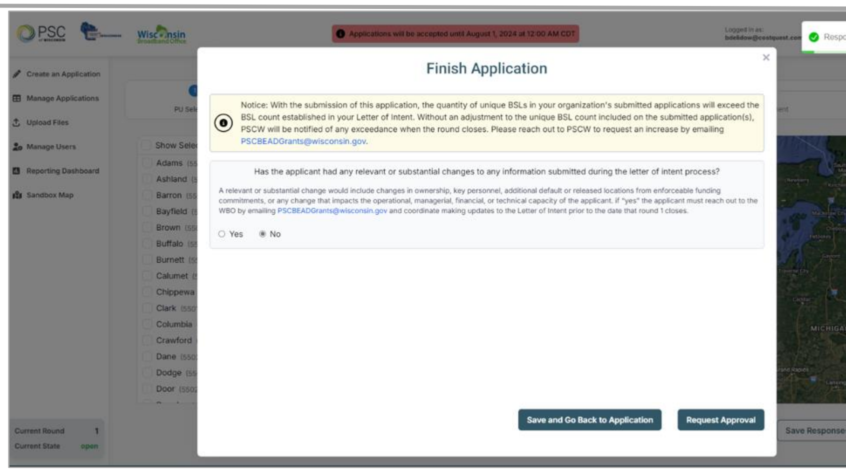
> **Pro Tip:** Download the required templates before starting the documentation process.

5. Submission Process

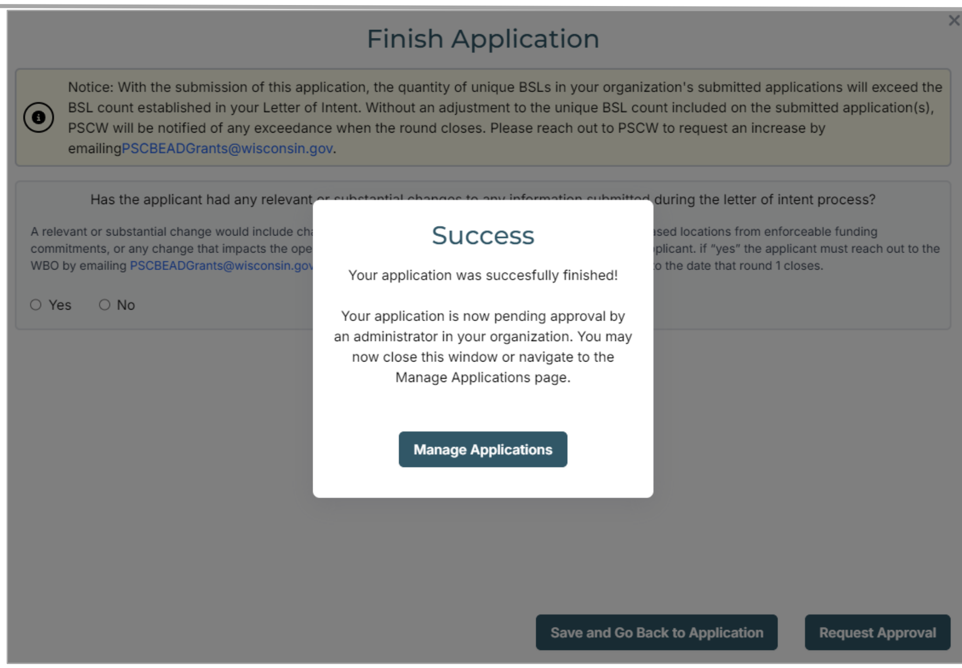
The application can be saved at any time, allowing any user to continue working on it later. Make sure to select "**Save Responses**." Then, if you click "**Manage Applications"** from the left navigation pane, the application will appear with an "In Progress" status, and the edit, view, and retract action buttons will be available to all users.

Finish Application

- If at any time the user selects "**Finish Application**," the platform will conduct a series of validations, ensuring all required questions are answered and checking the BEAD Match threshold, tribal consent, LOI county, and BSL limits. The platform will identify any exceptions or errors that must be addressed (e.g., the application includes project units outside the list of LOI counties).



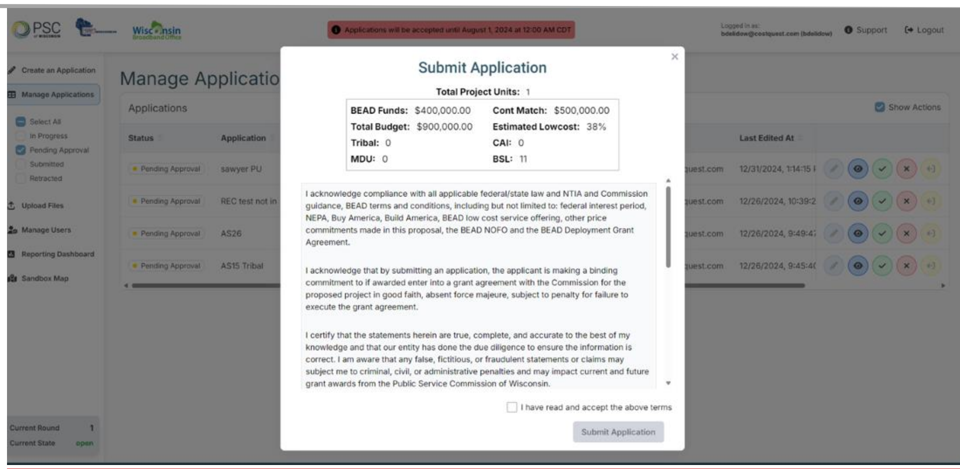
- If there are errors, the user can return to the application to resolve the identified issues.
- For exceptions, the user can address the problems in the pop-up.
- With each application, the user will be required to respond to one additional question regarding any changes to the information provided in the Letter of Intent. This is simply a "**Yes**" or "**No**" question, and either response will allow the application to proceed, pending any other issues. However, a "Yes" answer should prompt a call from the organization to WBO to request the LOI changes.
- The user can either choose "**Save and Go Back to Application**" or "**Request Approval**." The latter changes the application from "In Progress" status to "Pending Approval," and a pop-up "Success" window appears, indicating that the application has been moved to pending approval status.



Submit Application

Remember: Only Administrative Users can submit applications. Standard users can prepare applications, run validations and move them to "Pending Approval" status.

- From the "**Manage Applications"** page, an Administrative User can identify the applications in "Pending Approval" status, view the application and then approve or reject using the action buttons.
- The selection of the "**Approve**" button (green check) will result in the "Submit Application" pop-up window that includes a summary of the project unit data within the application as well as a series of statements that the Administrative User must attest to have read and commit by checking the box. Once the box is checked, the "**Submit Application**" button becomes available, and the Administrative User can submit the application.



6. Managing Applications

☐ Quick Reference: Manage Application

- Monitor application status
- Track decisions

Once an application has been created in Round 1, it will be in one of the following statuses:

- **In Progress**: The application is under development and can be edited by any user within the applicant organization. However, only one user can access the application at any given time. Applications marked as "In Progress" can be edited, viewed, or retracted.
- **Pending Approval**: The application has been created and validated by the platform as meeting the basic requirements and is available for the Administrative User to review, approve, and submit. Any user can validate an application and change its status from "In Progress" to "Pending Approval." Applications in "Pending Approval" status can be viewed, approved, or rejected; however, the latter two actions can only be performed by Administrative Users.
- **Submitted**: The application validated by the platform and moved to "Pending Approval" status by a user is now available for approval or rejection by an Administrative User.
    - If the Administrative User rejects the application, it will return to "In Progress" status.

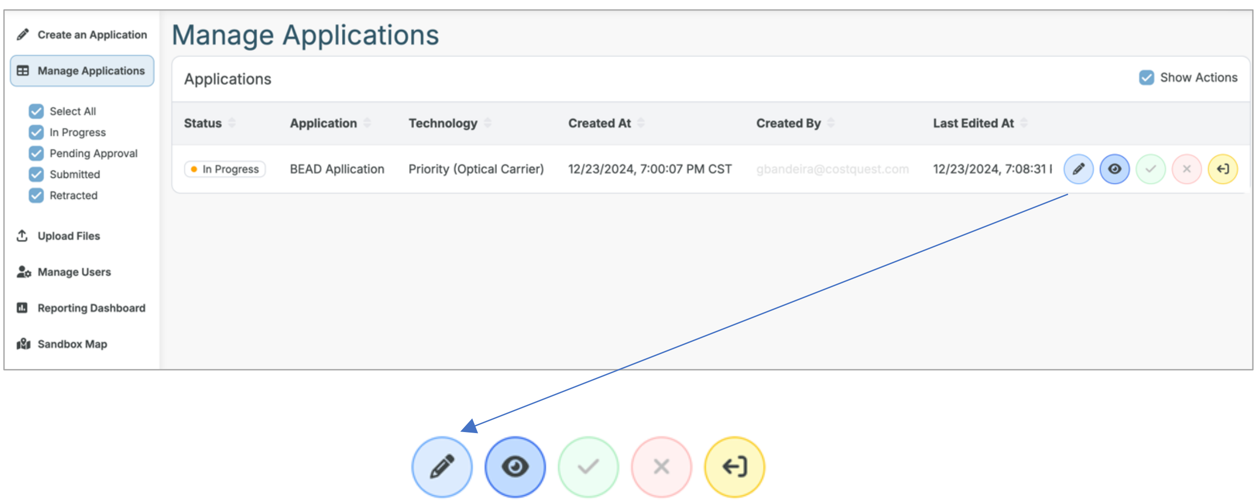
- If the Administrative User approves the application, they will have the opportunity to submit it by agreeing to a series of attestations and completing the process.

  Applications in “Submitted” status can only be viewed or retracted, the latter of which can only be done by Administrative Users.

- **Retracted**: At any point during Round 1 (as established by PSCW), the platform is open to applicants. Users can “Retract” an application from “In Progress” or “Submitted” status. Applications in “Retracted” status can only be viewed.

> ⚠️ **Important:** Only applications that are in submitted status at the end of the round will be considered by PSCW for selection/award.

1. View all applications from the "**Manage Applications**" dashboard.
2. Click "**Edit**" to make changes to drafts, “**View**” to see the application without making unintended changes, or "**Retract**" to pull back an application.
3. Monitor application statuses (e.g., "In Progress," "Pending Approval," "Submitted," “Retracted”).



Edit | View | Approve | Reject | Retract

7. Reports

Steps to Generate a Report

1. Navigate to the "**Reporting Dashboard**."
2. Select a report type from the dropdown menu (e.g., Application Rollup, Application Tracker, Project Unit Selection, Location ID Mapping).
3. Click "**Generate**."
4. Download the report in CSV format.

The following is a brief description of each report:

- **Application Rollup:** Includes the status, technology, BSL count, BEAD funds, and BEAD Match for each application.
- **Application Tracker:** Provides all inputs related to each application.
- **Project Unit Selection:** Identifies the project units associated with each application.
- **Location ID Mapping:** Identifies the location IDs and the associated project unit for each application.

8. Support & Resources

❑ Quick Reference: Platform Support

- Email: mailto:wibeadsupport@costquest.com
- URL: https://wibead.zendesk.com/
- Hours: M-F, 9 AM - 5 PM EST

Normal response time is 24 hours. Resolution time depends on the issue.