

**Southeast Kentucky
Economic Development** 
A Regional Growth Corporation

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Moving Eastern Kentucky Forward with Broadband RFP Now Online

SOMERSET, Ky. – Leaders and business owners located within 26 coal-impacted counties in Eastern Kentucky are invited to submit their projects designed to Move Eastern Kentucky Forward with Broadband. The Request for Proposal is now available online at SKED's website: www.southeastkentucky.com.

Through Moving Eastern Kentucky Forward with Broadband, Southeast Kentucky Economic Development Corporation (SKED) is identifying short and long-term economic development projects in the 26 Kentucky counties that may be eligible for approximately \$500,000 to \$2,000,000 in funding from various sources. The projects will leverage the Kentucky Wired I-Way and other broadband networks in the eligible counties. SKED will prioritize the selected project finalists and seek resources, funding, and partnerships to see that the projects are realized and produce new jobs and investment for the region.

Deadline for proposal submission is: 4:30 p.m. EDT, December 12, 2016. They may be submitted by email to: Brett Traver, SKED executive director at btraver@centertech.com or by mail to: Southeast Kentucky Economic Development Corporation, 2292 S. Highway 27, Somerset, KY 42501.

Any questions regarding the project or process should be submitted before 4:30 p.m. EDT, December 5, 2016. Answers to those will be posted online on December 7, 2016 at www.southeastkentucky.com

SKED received a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) in September to conduct a feasibility study to identify short and long-term economic development projects leveraging broadband infrastructure. Thomas P. Miller & Associates (TPMA) was hired to assist in deploying the project's goals and developing project assessments. MSE of Kentucky is also a partner, with its expertise in engineering.

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The 30-year-old nonprofit organization is providing \$25,000 in matching funds for the project to identify economic development projects that can capitalize on the high-capacity telecommunications infrastructure to create jobs in 26 coal counties in the region that have been negatively impacted by the coal industry. These counties include: Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Clay, Elliott, Floyd, Harlan, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Morgan, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Rockcastle, Whitley, and Wolfe counties.

The process will consist of data analysis on available workforce, business sites and buildings; broadband utilization plan; and other planned activities related to the KentuckyWired project and other broadband providers in the region. Projects will be ranked based on number of created jobs, cost, timeline and local support and work in conjunction with other SOAR initiatives.

SKED Executive Director Brett Traver says the initiative is designed to guide Eastern Kentucky business owners and leaders direction in the use of broadband infrastructure to create jobs in the region.

“This is the first step in identifying the communities with the leadership to develop, support and implement economic development projects that will have the greatest impact on the region by utilizing the broadband technology,” Traver said.

For information about SKED, Moving Eastern Kentucky Forward with Broadband, its direct loan programs, Entrepreneurial SMARTS classes, visit: www.southeastkentucky.com.

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Formed 30 years ago by Fifth District Congressman Hal Rogers to create jobs in Southeast Kentucky, the economic development organization, based in Somerset, serves a 45-county region in Kentucky. Staff works with business owners, small and large, throughout its service area to identify financing solutions to fund their location, expansion and working capital needs.

Southeast Kentucky Economic Development



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Moving Eastern Kentucky Forward with Broadband Service Area

