



**Broadband Non-Infrastructure Application
Submission to NTIA – Sustainable Broadband Adoption**

Submitted Date: 4/9/2010 3:57:18 PM	Easygrants ID: 6479
Funding Opportunity: Sustainable Broadband Adoption	Applicant Organization: VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITY
Task: Submit Application - Sustainable Broadband Adoption	Applicant Name: Mr. Julito A Francis

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A. General Application Information

1. Applicant Information	
Name and Federal ID for Applicant	
DUNS Number	789438293
CCR # (CAGE)	5MQ14
Legal Business Name	VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITY
Point of Contact (POC)	JULITO A. FRANNICIS 3407141635 Ext. jafrancis@usvipfa.com
Alternate POC	PERSIA LEONARD 3407141635 Ext. pleonard@usvipfa.com
Electronic Business POC	JULITO A. FRANCIS 3407141635 Ext. jafrancis@usvipfa.com
Alternate Electronic Business POC	PERSIA LEONARD 3407141635 Ext. pleonard@usvipfa.com

2. Name and Contact Information of Person to be Contacted on Matters Involving this Application:	
Prefix	Mr.
First Name	Julito
Middle Name	A
Last Name	Francis



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Suffix	
Telephone Number	340-774-2696
Fax Number	340-714-1635
Email	jafrancis@usvipfa.com
Title	Director, Office of Economic Opportunity

3. Additional Contact Information of Person to be Contacted on Matters Involving this Application:

Project Role	Name	Phone	Email
Secondary Point of Contact	Ms. Persia , Leonard	3407141635	pleonard@usvipfa.com

4. Other Required Identification Numbers

Easygrants ID	6479
Funding Opportunity Number	500001
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number	BTOP CFDA Number: 11.557 BTOP CFDA Title: Broadband Technology Opportunities Program

5. Organization Classification

Type of Organization	US Territory
Is the organization a small business?	No
Does the organization meet the definition of a socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern?	No

6. Authorized Organizational Representative



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AOR	A., JULITO
Result	Applicant Authorized

7. Project Title and Project Description

Project Title: viNGN Sustainable Broadband Adoption Program

Project Description: The viNGN SBA Program created by the Department of Libraries, Archives, and Museums with support from the University of the Virgin Islands will reach into communities to offer distance learning, online training, and technical support for all ages and especially for vulnerable populations. A telework program will create more jobs than any other current program in the Territory.

8. Other Applications

Is this application being submitted in coordination with any other application being submitted during this round of funding?

➤ Yes

Easygrants ID	Project Title
4816	viNGN Comprehensive Community Infrastructure Program
6478	viNGN Public Computer Centers Program

If YES, please explain any synergies and/or dependencies between this project and any other applications.

The U.S. Virgin Islands is submitting three cooperating BTOP grant proposals to create a truly “comprehensive community.” Related to this viNGN Sustainable Broadband Adoption Program proposal are the viNGN Public Computer Centers (PCC) Program and the viNGN Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (CCI) Program.

In the USVI few citizens have access to or can afford reliable high-speed Internet connection. The viNGN SBA program reaches into communities and provides distance learning, online training, and technical support aimed at citizens of all ages and socioeconomic levels. An



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extensive offering of online courses, including many technical certifications, will enable the unemployed and underemployed to train for new jobs. The project also provides telework support centers for video interviewing, training, technical support, and teleconferencing for new jobs.

The viNGN PCC program provides equipment to support the viNGN SBA program. It puts computers and peripherals in libraries and community centers, which allows reach to children, teenagers, the unemployed, small businesses in need of high capacity equipment resources, and senior citizens. The combination of the two programs provides training and continuous support to encourage fullest and most widespread use of the technology, equipment and the investment.

The SBA program leverages the viNGN CCI Program's new gigabit broadband connection to support high-speed, reliable, and wide-spread access to the Internet. This will allow HD teleconferencing video support to provide meeting attendance from distant locations, job interviewing from a distance for the new telework program, and enormous capacity for small businesses engaged in multimedia production and distribution. It will permit access to information, media, and software not possible with current low-speed, low-capacity, and high latency Internet technology.

The unique combination of these three programs provides high-capacity broadband access at free public workstations and venues. It counters problems of relative isolation, economic hardship and lack of access by not only allowing but encouraging use of 21st century technology, the explosion of information and media, and providing global reach. The programs will improve the quality of many aspects of life in the Virgin Islands, including the economy, not just immediately, but for the long term, and with a multiplier effect over time. Better education, the ability to easily connect from the Territory to the global marketplace, and better communication for public safety and health organizations cannot help but provide major stimulus to the USVI.

Should any of the three grants not be awarded, the total positive effect of the remaining grant programs would be greatly diminished, but the overall effect would still be a boon for the Territory.

9. Is the Applicant exempt from the Department of Commerce requirements regarding individual background screening in connection with any award resulting from this Application?

- Yes, Applicant is exempt because it is a unit of a state or local government



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If the answer to the above question is "No," please identify each key individual associated with the Applicant who would be required to complete Form CD-346, "Applicant for Funding Assistance," in connection with any award resulting from this Application:

Name	Title	Employer

B. Executive Summary, Project Purpose and Benefits

Essay Question

10. Executive Summary of the proposed project:

THE NEED FOR IMPROVING BROADBAND ADOPTION RATES

The proposed viNGN Sustainable Broadband Adoption Program specifically addresses a major problem that presses upon the U.S. Virgin Islands just as it does upon other U.S. rural communities, namely the need to attract industry and young people. As the population ages younger people move to more urbanized parts of the country for economic opportunities. The preponderance of unemployment and low-paying service jobs results in 23.7% of the population living below the poverty line, according to the latest numbers from the USVI Bureau of Economic Research.

To attract today's businesses and retain jobs, we need reliable high-speed Internet. Robust high-speed connections will allow more of our residents to telecommute and stay in the community, would afford them better opportunities to learn, and would allow their businesses to operate more efficiently. All our citizens can benefit from inexpensive training that will enable workers to enter career fields for which there is growing demand, particularly in the areas of health care and IT, which are at the center of the training offerings we are proposing to provide.

OVERALL APPROACH



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To maximize use of this investment, we need to maximize the ability of our residents to benefit from it. By helping to bridge the educational and skills gaps, we will make the entire investment more sustainable. Our innovative approaches are evident in four main ways.

First, we will use our viNGN broadband connectivity and our public technology centers to provide customized skills training for jobs that are in demand in the local area and for telework that will be a key growth industry in this area. We will not overlook, however, the needs of a significant proportion of the population we are serving, who may not have graduated from high school or who graduated without needed skills. We will encourage everyone in the Virgin Islands to become digitally literate and to prove their competencies by taking an industry-recognized certification known as the Internet Core Competency Certificate (IC3).

Secondly, we will set up teams of stakeholders, businesses, educators, health care and emergency service workers, and others to inform people about the use and value of the courses. These teams will set up groups of volunteers who will support workers in key job skill areas and use our telementoring platform if necessary.

The third innovative element is an electronic database (a job bank) that will be available to local and distant employers. It will document key information about our students, if they wish to be included, such as the courses they took, hours spent, tests passed and certifications achieved (validated from our state of the art Learning Management System). This will provide all parties a clear incentive to fully participate in the system and to find simple mechanisms to recognize and reward effort and results. We plan to celebrate achievements through public ceremonies where awards will be issued and media invited.

The fourth dimension of our attack will establish virtual call centers within the Territory using an established telework approach. BetterWorld Telecom will establish virtual call systems with a variety of large companies throughout the United States that will recruit teleworkers in the Virgin Islands using high fidelity videoconferencing interview techniques. The new library workgroup “pod” centers will then form a community hub and meeting place for teleworkers to gather regularly for the all-important “touch” staff meetings with their companies so that isolation will not be a major factor.

In addition to the payload training sessions, we will provide an orchestrated set of social events that will make the library centers a magnet for all ages. These social elements will be key to



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making the Internet relevant to those who do not yet use it. The abundant availability of cost-free access will make Internet use more closely approach that of the rest of the United States.

TARGET POPULATION

Our primary target population consists of workers between the ages of 16 and 64 who are either unemployed or underemployed – about 3,500 of the workforce. Many have been unable to find employment because of disability, lack of high school diplomas, lack of training, or because they are discouraged by the high unemployment rates. We target children to provide assistance in getting started with the use of the Internet at an early age as part of our children's program. We also target the older generation who do not feel comfortable with computers and require much support to learn to use the technology.

APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

The Department of Libraries, Archives, and Museums already provides some public computer services within the libraries for access to the Internet, and the expansion of library capabilities to be a digital hub for the community has been studied for some time.

The National Education Foundation is a popular source of online learning modules, programs, and certification methods that run nationally and have been used by BTOP Round One awardees elsewhere. They operate their courses and training programs nationally.

BetterWorld is focused on providing telework programs using VoIP services with a mission to reduce the number of workers that contribute to the environmental problem by driving to work. They currently operate their system in 22 states.

JOBS TO BE SAVED OR CREATED

The viNGN SBA project will create a total of 42 job years. The citizens of the Virgin Islands will also be in line for a forecast 420 new energy saving telework jobs that are expected to be garnered through the BetterWorld program.

NEF courses are designed to prepare citizens to be more competitive when applying for existing and new job markets. For example, Project Management, IC3, and Microsoft Office certification



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courses make workers in a range of industries (any field that uses basic computer skills or runs projects) more qualified. In turn, these workers then make the companies they work for more efficient and able to save and create jobs.

OVERALL COST

Federal funds needed: \$2,685,081.

The National Education Foundation will donate \$1,150,749 worth of online course licenses.

This adds up to a combined total project cost of \$3,835,831.

11. Project purpose:

THE COMPELLING PROBLEM:

In 2008, the per capita income for the territory was \$20,381 versus the U.S. average of \$39,751 (51%) according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. The USVI Bureau of Economic Research currently shows 23.7% of the population living below the poverty line. These factors put the general economic condition in the Virgin Islands below all states. Yet USVI broadband prices tend to be 156% higher than the mainland.

The combination of cost prohibitive broadband access and insufficient computer skills causes a vicious cycle in which our population falls farther and farther behind as our citizens struggle to compete in a job market that is evolving beyond their reach. As new jobs and markets require an ever-growing set of technical skills, our community must race to catch up if we are to effectively compete.

THE EFFECTIVE SOLUTION:

This proposed viNGN Sustainable Broadband Adoption Program aims multiple efforts at different aspects of the problem. First, it focuses on delivering broad-based skills development with online courses and certification programs. We will encourage local businesses to identify specific skills needed for new jobs and to develop our citizens to meet these needs. As our community-wide PCC broadband access network is installed, this project will establish a training program for four very strategically important populations:



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- Adults who are unemployed or underemployed as a result of insufficient training beyond the high school level or who may have dropped out of high school
- Adults who have jobs but are afraid they may lose them, or who are underemployed and want to enter new growth areas such as healthcare and green energy
- Individuals with disabilities, parents, and mothers in particular who have been out of the workforce raising children who now wish to re-enter and thus need more marketable skills
- Students in K-12, particularly in middle school, whose lack of math skills will effectively block them from following a college bound curriculum in high school, as they are likely to fail the gateway Algebra course in the 8th grade

Our second level of approach aims at providing young adults starting in the job market with opportunities to operate in helpdesk operations through the BetterWorld virtual call center for large corporations across the United States. This emphasis on telework brings instant jobs to qualified people by using our new broadband infrastructure.

Our use of the new library configurations is meant to neutralize the problems of people working alone by encouraging small teams to use the facilities and technology of the libraries as the technology-enabled meeting places.

Our solution can be replicated very cost-effectively. All our courses are web-based and made available to any broadband-accessed computer within seconds. An instructor/center director can be trained within two weeks. Thus, any center, school, community college, workforce development center, hospital, or community health center can replicate our blended education, training and awareness program in a matter of weeks.

WE SUPPORT THE STATUTORY OBJECTIVES:

This project, in conjunction with the other viNGN programs, addresses all the BTOP statutory purposes. Specifically, we stimulate demand for broadband by providing education, awareness, training, equipment, and access to support community anchor institutions and job-creating strategic facilities.



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Our community-led initiative approach to the BTOP grant ensures success. We understand making broadband access affordable is a vital first step. Inclusion of the viNGN SBA grant allows us to develop broad interest in using this important community asset. Our user-friendly education and training courses, with awareness programs will stimulate broadband demand. Studies show that people who start using broadband continue expanding their reach for education, information, job search and other applications that benefit them. Funds generated by viNGN will pay for these services long term.

Our program provides a number of benefits to our underserved community:

- Training to improve employment skills to obtain better jobs and higher incomes
- Entry level jobs on the helpdesks for major companies across the U.S.
- Education and the opportunity to start or expand home businesses/small businesses
- Additional educational resources for children (both K-12 and college) to improve their academic and workforce development skills
- Increased awareness of health care issues such as diabetes and swine flu

We will operate throughout our Territory, offering programs to provide or supplement education, awareness and training needs. We will support:

- Community anchor institutions such as schools, community colleges, universities, hospitals, community health clinics, libraries and employers, with representation on a steering committee that guides the project and provides feedback, especially in terms of course/program offerings. Volunteer groups will provide mentoring for students and trainees.
- Strategic facilities for job-creating education, such as workforce development centers, vocational centers, community college job training centers, and BetterWorld virtual call center helpdesks by providing appropriate courses/programs at different levels.



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- Vulnerable populations by providing basic courses and awareness programs to meet their specific needs, for example, swine flu prevention, diabetes education, basic digital literacy, basic financial literacy, and remediation learning.

The new programs supported at the libraries specifically target introduction of broadband access for children and they provide access to computers for students doing homework after school hours. This program is important to extending the usefulness of broadband to all ages.

12. Recovery Act and Other Governmental Collaboration:

This program provides the education and job opportunity access for the [REDACTED] viNGN Public Computer Centers Program and provides the community reach for the approximately [REDACTED] viNGN Comprehensive Community Infrastructure Program.

The entire viNGN set of programs is sponsored by the Territory as an economic development program. Preparations have been underway since July 2009 using the Territory's own funding. The PCC program is viewed as a catalytic start program for engaging a wide variety of needs for broadband in this area of underserved citizens. Even if adequate broadband is not readily available at contemporary speeds from homes, the use of globally up-to-date resources at the libraries and community centers is viewed by the Territory government as essential for adoption.

13. Technology Strategy:

The main software-as a-service applications all depend on browser access to the Internet and a quality Carrier Ethernet environment for high fidelity voice and video services. They heavily use the conference room and computer facilities that are part of the viNGN PCC Program. The depot of computers maintained in the PCC Program can be "checked-out" and used by telework participants.

The CYBERLEARNING program is from the National Education Foundation. Their approach is effective and appropriate in achieving sustainable adoption because they provide users with the experience of online learning and create conditions in which novice users (by far the majority) can be successful. Once residents see the value of courses and understand how training and industry certifications provide them with an employment boost, they will want to participate fully in the program. Carefully integrating this system within library- and community center-based local workforce training will increase synergies between blended learning, just-in-time learning, and self-paced online learning. This results in a wide range of flexible learning and



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training options for residents. Key program features include an initial needs analysis for each individual and the creation of a steering committee composed of key stakeholders, including employers, UVI, and viNGN representatives.

NEF has tested the basic plan in its work with K-12 schools, creating “virtual academies” in disadvantaged schools across several states. These academies have increased student scores upwards of 20 percent. The key success factors are quality courses, highly trained teachers and mentors, a robust and easy to use Learning Management System (LMS), well developed training modules and protocols, and stakeholder input.

The BETTERWORLD VIRTUAL CALL CENTER program is effective and appropriate for sustainable adoption purposes because it provides users with training for technical support operations, diction, customer service etiquette, videoconference interviewing skills, and creates conditions in which novice users (by far the majority) can be successful.

The approach is highly replicable and feasible, with every aspect of the system implementable anywhere in the U.S. BetterWorld now operates in 22 states in the U.S.

For additional information on system features and program offerings, please see the Supplemental Information section of this application.

14. Innovative Approach:

Our approach is innovative in at least four ways.

This is the first time, to our knowledge, that a diverse set of public institutions, such as the University of the Virgin Islands, the public library system, and neighborhood community centers have collaborated on a comprehensive program for workforce training and computer literacy. The resulting program includes a media module, small business applications, skills education, and physical training centers. In ancient times it was necessary for any community to locate near a reliable source of water, and in the 21st century, it is just as crucial for viable rural communities to locate their strategic services (educational and economic) near a robust source of broadband connectivity.

Second, these centers are integrated hubs that combine access to on-demand courses with “friendly” career guidance. Program vendors and partners joined in the viNGN SBA project have



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integrated the programs and link them to the network of workforce centers, UVI facilities, and other training locations in our region.

Third, all the anchor institutions will be linked through a core website which provides real time information concerning jobs, skill demands, and training opportunities. The tight program integration and a single, comprehensive source of job/skills-related information provides the missing link that enables teachers, school and job counselors, employers, parents, administrators, students and workers to make proactive plans with respect to multimodal courses to engage every type of learner, education plan, and career option. Individuals are more likely to invest their valuable time and commit to training if these crucial resources help them feel confident that the time they invest will yield returns when the job market expands with an improving economy in the near future.

Lastly, the program uses very contemporary videoconferencing and IP call center communications controls with high fidelity capability. These remote telework tools are essential in overcoming the perception that Virgin Islands employees are distant and isolated from opportunities with large companies in the rest of the United States.

The viNGN SBA effort plans to explore additional cost-saving programs with Federal Express and Ingram Digital by enabling small USVI-based businesses to implement print-media design, production, and distribution functions, moving them from large, high-cost distribution facilities on the mainland. Such facilities are generally dependent on access to high-speed broadband, and can be important to the library small business support program.

15. Is the applicant seeking a waiver of the Buy American provision pursuant to section x.Q of the NOFA?

➤ No

16. Is the applicant delinquent on any federal debt?

➤ No

If Yes, justification for delinquency:

➤ .



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17. Are you seeking a waiver of any requirement set forth in the NOFA that is not mandated by statute or applicable law?

➤ No

C. Partners

18. Are you partnering with any other key institutions, organizations, or other entities for this project?

➤ Yes

If YES, key partners are listed below:

Project Role: Sub-recipient Name: Doute, Chris Email: chris.doute@dpmr.gov.vi Address 1: 23 Dronningens Gade Address 2: Address 3: City: Charlotte Amalie State: Virgin Islands of the U.S. Zip Code: 00802 Organization: Dept of Planning and Natural Resources, Div. of Libraries Organization Type: US Territory Small business: No Socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern: No
Project Role: Sub-recipient Name: Koopmans, Tina Email: tkoopma@uvi.edu Address 1: 2 John Brewers Bay Address 2: Address 3: City: St. Thomas State: Virgin Islands of the U.S. Zip Code: 00802 Organization: University of the Virgin Islands Organization Type: Non-profit Institution Small business: No Socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern: No
Project Role: Third party in-kind contributor



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Name: Kuttan, Appu
Email: akuttan@cyberlearning.org
Address 1: 4926 C Eisenhower Avenue
Address 2:
Address 3:
City: Alexandria
State: Virginia
Zip Code: 22304
Organization: National Education Foundation
Organization Type: Non-profit Foundation
Small business: No
Socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern: No

Project Role: Sub-recipient
Name: Bauer, Matthew
Email: mbauer@betterworldtelecom.com
Address 1: 11951 Freedom Drive, 13th Floor
Address 2:
Address 3:
City: Reston
State: Virginia
Zip Code: 20190
Organization: BetterWorld Telecom
Organization Type: For-profit Entity
Small business: Yes
Socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern: No

Project Role: Contractor
Name: Mings, Stanford
Email: stanford@tech.vi
Address 1: 9160 Estate Thomas, Suite 195
Address 2:
Address 3:
City: St. Thomas
State: Virgin Islands of the U.S.
Zip Code: 00802
Organization: VI Technical Services, LLC
Organization Type: For-profit Entity
Small business: Yes
Socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern: Yes

Project Role: Contractor



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Name: Carty, Michael
Email: mcarty@alliancedata.vi
Address 1: P.O. Box 9257
Address 2:
Address 3:
City: St. Thomas
State: Virgin Islands of the U.S.
Zip Code: 00801
Organization: Alliance Data Services
Organization Type: For-profit Entity
Small business: Yes
Socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern: Yes

Project Role: Sub-recipient
Name: Kuttan, Appu
Email: akuttan@cyberlearning.org
Address 1: 4926 C Eisenhower Avenue
Address 2:
Address 3:
City: Alexandria
State: Virginia
Zip Code: 22304
Organization: CyberLearning
Organization Type: For-profit Entity
Small business: Yes
Socially and economically disadvantaged small business concern: Yes

19. Description of the involvement of the partners listed above in the project.

The following partners are part of the viNGN Sustainable Broadband Adoption Program:

- **Libraries:** (Territorial subrecipient) The libraries (DLAM) will have responsibility for the overall coordination of the sustainability program. The libraries in conjunction with the Housing Authority will implement, manage, and operate the SBA program.
- **UVI:** (subrecipient, non-profit institution) Will contribute to the curriculum of the sustainability program by providing advanced instruction in Carrier Ethernet in their computer science curriculum using distance learning techniques.



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- NEF: (third party in-kind contributor, non-profit foundation) Will contribute in-kind matching funds through their massive online learning library.
- Cyberlearning: (subrecipient for profit) SBA related partner that will have the role of training the trainers for this program.
- BetterWorld Telecom: (subrecipient for profit) Will provide virtual call center services for the telework program. Also will have the marketing role for finding the corporate customers needing the recruited call center staff.
- Technical Services VI: (for-profit SDB contractor) Will provide anchor tenant technical support. USVI-based SBA related partner for service and application implementation assistance and technical support.
- Alliance Data Services: (for-profit SDB contractor) Will provide anchor tenant network deployment, integration, and support. USVI-based SBA related partner for network implementation assistance and technical support.

In addition to the subrecipients, the major stakeholders in the USVI formed the USVI Broadband Coalition in July 2009 to organize their requirements in anticipation of the opportunity to apply for stimulus funds. At that time Stratum Broadband was selected by competitive bid by the applicant to perform consulting and engineering planning specifically for this proposal. Stratum interviewed over 100 people representing all the major stakeholders, either in vertical groups or as individuals. As part of this process, the USVI Technology Team was formed and continues to provide input on a wide variety of technical matters. The watchword from the anchor tenants is: “We are all in this together.”

D. Congressional Districts

20. Applicant Headquarters

- Virgin Islands of the U.S.

21. Project Service States

Virgin Islands of the U.S.



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22. Project Service Areas

Virgin Islands of the U.S. - At-Large

23. Will any portion of your proposed project serve federally recognized tribal entities?

➤ No

24. Indicate each federally recognized tribal entity your proposed project will serve.

25. Have you consulted with each of the federally recognized tribal entities identified above?

No

E. Community Anchor Summary

26. Community Anchor Institution	
Schools (k-12)	0
Libraries	7
Medical and Healthcare Providers	19
Public Safety Entities	42
Community Colleges	3
Public Housing	21
Other Institutions of Higher Education	0
Other Community Support Organization	15
Other Government Facilities	0



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TOTAL COMMUNITY ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS	107
27. Minority Serving Institutions	
Historically Black colleges and Universities	3
Tribal Colleges and Universities	0
Alaska Native Serving Institutions	0
Hispanic Serving Institutions	0
Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions	0
TOTAL MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS	3

F. Demographics

28. Will your proposed project be specifically directed to serve vulnerable population groups?

➤ Yes

If "Yes" which vulnerable population groups will your proposed project serve? Check as many as apply:

Hispanic

Black/African-American

Disabled

Low Income

Unemployed

Senior Citizen (55 and over)

Youth



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Other

Other: Homeless Persons

29. Vulnerable Populations

Hispanic

A significant portion (14%) of the V.I. population proudly claims some form of Hispanic heritage. The PCCs will be operated with staff and volunteers from their respective communities who have a demonstrated sensitivity of service to the needs of all. Those who may have linguistic barriers or require assistance with cultural transitions are deserving of respectful attention to those needs. Where appropriate software aids that may mitigate linguistic impediments will be utilized.

Black/African-American

76% of the V.I. population proudly claims Black or African descent heritage. Again, the PCCs will be operated with staff and volunteers from their respective communities who have a demonstrated sensitivity of service to the needs of all.

Disabled

Recognition of needs of the disabled are addressed below under the Accessibility heading.

Low Income

Fully 80 of the 261 public computer workstations will be located at community center sites within the public housing communities of the Virgin Islands. These sites were chosen because they provide ready access to those who are most often in need of targeted vocational training, reading and literacy programs and a broader exposure to opportunities for self-empowerment.

Unemployed



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The PCCs, in conjunction with the viNGN Sustainable Broadband Adoption Program, are specifically targeting the unemployed. In particular the videoconferencing systems' primary mission is to be used for job interviewing as well as continuing meeting support for those who are selected for employment in the various viNGN programs.

Senior Citizen

The technical support staff will be given specific instruction in the areas of focused support for the aged. The emphasis is on staying in touch with one's family: through email, free Skype telephone service, and management of photographs. These are the fundamental skills for entry level adoption.

Youth

Extensive programs are planned for the youth sector in the viNGN SBA program. Specifically the pod rooms are being designed from the success of the Chicago experience for groups of young people to work together in very fulfilling areas. This element is the critical success factor in the housing developments in the USVI.

Homeless Persons

The Virgin Islands Public Libraries have traditionally reached out to the homeless of our communities by welcoming them on an equal basis with all other patrons at our library facilities. The library system actively pursues a nondiscrimination policy with regard to access to information and confidentiality of patron data. Those policies will continue to apply to PCCs covered under this program and with which the libraries are affiliated. Our inclusion of the Methodist Outreach Center, (a nexus for the delivery of social services to the homeless and a statistical processing center on homeless data) as a PCC is an acknowledgement of the informational needs of that sector.

30. Accessibility

Although Virgin Islands residents are often challenged in their access to many services due to the historic construction aspects of the locations where those services are offered, the services cited herein are offered from locations that have been predominantly built with accessibility as a



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primary design criterion. As an example, both Class A PCC sites, and all the housing community sites are by default structures that are ADA compliant, thereby facilitating physical access in both districts within the Territory.

Additionally, assistive technology software that is used and tested at the Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (such as JAWS by Freedom Scientific, Inc. and Dolphin Guide by EVAS/Dell, Inc.) will be embedded as an integral part of the software suite at other strategically located PCC sites.

The Virgin Islands is wholly committed to practical access to information for all sectors of the population.

31. Other Languages

A significant portion of the population speaks Spanish as their primary language and the schools do provide special educational support. However language is not a major issue in the Territories and most native Spanish speakers are bi-lingual and at least comfortable with English. Most software has an option for selecting Spanish or other languages as the presentation language. So far there has been no need to offer courses only in Spanish but the workers and volunteers in each PCC are from the community and provide good language resources. We would provide additional language support if needed.

G. Project Budget

32. Project Budget	
Federal Grant Request	\$2,685,082
Total Match Amount	\$1,150,749
Total Budget	\$3,835,831
Match Percent	30.0%

33. Projects Outside Recommended Funding Range:





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34. Sustainability:

The viNGN Wholesale CCI Network Generates the Sustaining Revenues.

The arrangement with the viNGN coordinating group is to channel any net income accrued by the viNGN CCI program into the sustainability funding for this viNGN Sustainable Broadband Adoption Program and the viNGN Public Computer Center Program. This approach was suggested by the CEO of the incumbent service provider in the U.S. Virgin Islands during the Broadband Planning phase of the SBDD project. viNGN itself is chartered such that excess income from the operations of the wholesale broadband network are channeled back through both the viNGN PCC program and also the viNGN SBA program. The amounts of money each year will be determined by the viNGN board of directors and will vary based on the needs of each of the two programs and the availability of funds from the operation of the broadband network.

35. Matching Funds	
Applicant is providing matching funds of at least 20% towards the total eligible project costs?	Yes
Describe the matching contributions	The National Education Foundation (NEF) will provide 30% in-kind match of \$1,150,749, which represents the value of web-based course materials.
Unjust enrichment	Neither the Applicant nor any sub-recipient in this project is receiving nor has either of them applied for any federal support for non-recurring costs in the area for which we are seeking an award.
Disclosure of federal and/or state funding sources	Neither the Applicant nor any sub-recipient in this project is receiving nor has either of them applied for any federal support for projects to which this project relates.

36. Budget Narrative	
Budget narrative	The viNGN Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA) Program will require \$3,835,831 for expenses during the first two years. \$2,685,082 is requested in Federal funding. The balance will be covered by a 30% match which is an in-kind contribution of course licenses provided by the National Education Foundation (NEF) valued at \$1,150,749 for a



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	<p>total match of 30%.</p> <p>The largest portion of the budget is for contractual expenses which will cover the cost of the BetterWorld and CyberLearning implementation and administrative costs. These costs are budgeted at [REDACTED] and represent [REDACTED] of the total budget. Program management, training and counseling costs are [REDACTED] and represent 15% of the budget. Training courses are included as matching funds and represent 30% of the required budget. The remaining 15% includes fringe benefits for personnel, minor travel and advertising. Personnel expense will fund the following positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Manager – Will oversee all aspects of the SBA program • Administrative Assistant – Will manage administration, data collection and reports, and procurement processes • St. Thomas Location Trainer • St. Croix Location Trainer • St. Thomas Location Counselors • St. Croix Location Counselors • Library Reference Content Coordinator • CyberLearning Instructor <p>For the trainees, CyberLearning will provide a certified Master Train the Trainer/Training Supervisor who will train and continuously supervise the training center directors/trainers/counselors.</p>
Budget reasonableness	Content and delivery for the SBA training program will be delivered by CyberLearning and BetterWorld.



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	<p>The CyberLearning cost of \$197 for training a trainee for blended learning (online courses and onsite trainers) is far below the average market cost of training. For example: The cost of training a trainee in GRE = \$197 vs. \$499 for Princeton Review online-only courses. See http://www.princetonreview.com/grad/online-gre-test-prep.aspx</p> <p>The cost for training a trainee in IC3 (digital literacy) = \$197 vs. \$2,400 for Computer Success Center classroom course. See http://fs3.formsite.com/CSC-LLC/form066065916/index.html</p> <p>The cost for training a trainee in Microsoft Office = \$197 vs. \$299.95 for Webucator online only courses. See http://www.webucator.com/AtYourOwnPace/srs.07word.5ax.cfm</p> <p>The cost for training a trainee in Cisco's CCNA certification = \$197 vs. \$2,400 for Netwind online only courses. See http://www.netwind.com/html/cisco-all-access-live.html</p> <p>The cost for training a trainee in Project Management Professional (PMP) certification = \$197 vs. \$1,800 for RMC Project Management classroom course. See http://www.rmcpjroject.com/class/view-all-classes.aspx#prep</p> <p>Allocation of funds will be sufficient to complete the tasks outlined in the project plan. The total cost of blended training per trainee is \$267 (= \$197 from Federal funds and \$70 Online Course License match of 26%+ from the nonprofit National Education Foundation (NEF), a national nonprofit leader in bridging the employment divide).</p> <p>BetterWorld teleworker recruitment, training, and support costs \$2,836 per teleworker.</p>
Demonstration of need	<p>The USVI Territorial Government is the provider of funds for such programs as this sustainable broadband adoption. The Public Finance Authority is the instrumentality that raises money through bonding and</p>



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	<p>other sources for operating the Territory. When discussing the ability to borrow such funds through bonding, bond counsel advised that due to the temporal nature of the instruction as opposed to capital assets that the Public Finance Authority's authorization to cover expenses such as this program are really not bondable. The essence of the reason was stated as follows:</p> <p>“The issue relates to the maturity of the bonds and hence the annual debt service payment requirements. The longer the maturity the lower the annual debt service payment. A bond maturity cannot exceed a capital item's useful life by more than 15%. Hence, if a capital item has a useful life of 10 years, the weighted average maturity of all bond series cannot exceed 11.5 years.”</p> <p>Therefore, unless there is a grant such as the BTOP program, these activities would not be fundable.</p>
--	--

37. Funds to States/Territories

States	Amount of Federal Grant Request
Virgin Islands of the U.S.	2,685,082

Funds to States/Territories Total: \$2,685,082

H. Historical Financials

38. Matching Funds			
	2007	2008	2009
Revenue	81,280,083	78,218,023	82,376,194
Expenditures	82,462,292	83,560,188	87,594,363
Net Assets	65,165,242	59,823,077	59,514,908
Change in Net Assets from	-1,182,209	-5,342,165	-5,218,169



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Prior Year			
Bond Rating (if applicable)	BBB+	BBB+	BBB

I. Program Benefits

39. Jobs	
How many direct jobs-years will be created from this project?	42
How many indirect jobs will be created from this project?	18
How many jobs will be induced from this project?	15

40. Methodology used to estimate jobs:

The viNGN SBA project will create a total of 42 job years. The CEA Guidelines were used to estimate the number of job years that viNGN will create, but were then adjusted to reflect significant per capita income differences between the USVI (51%) and the US figure used in the CEA's calculation. Using the CEA's \$92,000 figure for the viNGN's \$2,685,081 project, generates 29 job years (19 direct/indirect, 11 induced). However, we estimate that 50% (25% labor, 25% materials) of this will be directly spent within the USVI. Adjusting for the USVI's lower income level, the viNGN project produces:

	Total	Direct	Indirect	Induced
In the USVI	28	9	9	10
US, Outside USVI	14		9	5
Total Job Years	42	9	18	15

The viNGN team has reviewed this approach with the USVI Bureau of Economic Research, and they are in agreement with it.

41. Adoption Metrics	
How many total new home subscribers (household accounts) to broadband do you	21471



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expect to generate through use of BTOP funds over the entire life of the program funded?	
How many total new business and/or institutional subscribers to broadband do you expect to generate through use of BTOP funds over the entire life of the program funded?	2500
How many total users of broadband in public computer centers or users of broadband outside the home (e.g., in a community college) do you expect to generate through use of BTOP funds over the entire life of the program funded?	10800
What is the total cost of your project per new subscriber (household, individual, or institutional) or new end-user?	\$179.00

42. Measuring Adoption Impact:

The benefits from this program can probably be measured in terms of how many new people adopt the use of broadband on a regular basis as compared to the number who had access and used broadband before the program started. The comparisons of the use of broadband can start with statistics garnered from the FCC 477 reports. A certain trend can be established as a baseline. Then, following the introduction of the viNGN programs featuring a significant reduction in costs to retail service providers, SBA adoption programs with their viral effect, and availability of computers with very fast access spread rather uniformly among the population, we will be able to see the change in the trend.

It is also important to maintain a sense of what service we define as broadband. The vast majority of services actually used in the USVI are below the speed definition in the NOFA of broadband. Our attempt is to bring service up to the accepted speed. Therefore, the forecasts for adoption will include estimates of advancing the number of households that will have broadband by the NOFA definitions.

We will also be able to see the changes in the measurements as reported from the SBDD program, along with those trends that can be correlated.

We will be able to track the number of jobs generated by our BetterWorld program very objectively from our computer records.

Lastly, the reporting from our Learning Management system and job bank filing statistics will show us the direct results of the training activities that we will use.



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Perhaps the most subtle measurement will be the statistics of those who have registered on our viNGN Facebook page and what they have to say about the programs.

We will track these trends as a part of our quarterly reporting.

43. Broadband Training Programs	
If you intend to provide training or education, how many people in total will your program(s) reach?	2000
How many hours of training do you expect to provide per person on average for each participant in your training program(s), through completion of training for that individual?	250
How many Full time employee (FTEs) instructors or facilitators will you employ for broadband and digital literacy training purposes?	7

44. Describe their qualifications (training and experience):

Instructors must have the following qualifications:

- Microsoft Office Certification.
- Demonstrated experience in providing instruction to others in the use of basic computer skills.
- Familiarity with distance learning techniques, preferably as they are now used in Caribbean settings.
- In depth familiarity of professional certification programs in either the medical, public safety, or similar professions.
- Experience with the use of videoconferencing and the etiquette of distance interaction. This includes public speaking and diction training.

Counselors must have experience with assisting others in job searches and with interviewee techniques.



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45. Equipment Affordability Programs		
What is the total up-front cost of this equipment?	\$0.00	
If you are providing an equipment purchase or loan program, for how many households, businesses and/or institutions do you expect to provide equipment or computers?	420	Households
	0	Businesses
	0	Institutions
If you are employing a loan program for purchases of service or equipment, what will be the total cost to the typical customer you assist over the life of the loan, including all interest and fees?	\$0.00	
How many broadband-related equipment units (e.g. computers, wireless devices) do you intend to purchase overall?	420	

46. Broadband Awareness Programs	
If you are conducting an awareness campaign, how many people do you expect your campaign will reach in total per year?	6000

47. Awareness Campaign Methods: Briefly describe the targeting, media, and messaging strategies your awareness campaign will employ.

We will initially announce the program using traditional media: newspapers, radio, and TV news. However, the viNGN Facebook website will attempt to organize groups and stay in touch with individuals on a more personal basis. Word of mouth between teenagers will spread the news the most rapidly.

Our outreach program will be structured on the familiar 1-2-3 marketing approach.

1. The first communication will be a very one-directional, simple awareness announcement. There will intentionally be no way for the listener to respond to the initial awareness announcements.



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2. The next week, the webpage will open. Another set of announcements will go out, this time providing the webpage URL and a telephone number of the inbound viNGN Help Desk for answering questions about the new services.
3. Two weeks later, the splash about the “open house” at the libraries will be announced, inviting people to come by and experience the power of gigabit Ethernet and to meet all the people who created the new service. This will be a social experience and fun will be the intent.
4. Two weeks later, the seminar series will launch on all three main islands at the main conference rooms. This is where demonstrations of capabilities of the continuing education will take place. Alan November, famed introducer of technology in school systems will be sought to lead the seminar in the engaging way that has made him world famous. The Cyberlearning instructors will be there to introduce the new education series to the public.
5. Two weeks later, the Telework Program will kick off led by the BetterWorld group to inaugurate the virtual call center concept. The trainers and job counselors will also be present to introduce their programs for ongoing support and meeting facilities for those who are curious about telework.
6. The organization of the island-wide competition between youth groups for the “Civilization” championships begins next. This will include a demonstration and pointers for winning strategies. The instruction will continue at the community centers each week following the grand announcement at the libraries. Announcements will be made by the school principals in the K-12 system. The Facebook page will keep everyone up to date.
7. FedEx will then introduce and demonstrate the use of their remote high capacity media production facilities for small businesses.
8. The National Lambda Rail representative will introduce the new videoconferencing facilities at the libraries to the public.
9. The open house for senior citizens then provides an entertaining awareness of how to stay in touch with the family and will allow all who attend to meet the helpers personally.



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At this point, we will re-evaluate the introduction experience and make adjustments for each age group or sector. With adjustments in hand, the second cycle will begin. We estimate three cycles will need to occur before the rhythm and habitual use are underway.

48. Measuring Campaign Impact: Describe how you will measure the impact of the awareness campaign.

The access to the Internet will be moderated as everyone will have to have a library card to use the library or the PCC facilities. Although no usage will be tracked, we will keep a record of how many unique individuals used the network during each reporting period.

J. Project Readiness

49. Licenses and Regulatory Approvals

No licenses or regulatory approvals are required for conducting the classes. All contractors supporting this project must have business licenses to conduct business. Resources who already provide these services in the USVI already have business licenses. Any off-island contractors will have to obtain business licenses. The viNGN legal administrator will arrange for the licenses in plenty of time prior to the commencement of any work on the project.

50. Organizational Readiness

The PCC/SBA program manager is already successfully accomplishing the required responsibilities. He has held responsibility for managing all technology matters for DLAM for several years and is quite capable in all areas of the described technology.

RadioShack will coordinate all logistics using a special team at their corporate headquarters.

The National Education Foundation and Cyberlearning have national scope for their course management. They also have been selected in prior BTOP Round One projects. They are comfortable in their role both in providing the courses as well as their process for training the trainers in the use of their learning management system.

BetterWorld operates in 22 states.

The network and software tier-2 support groups are prominent throughout the USVI for these roles.



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All groups individually appear to be ready. The coordination and exercise of the teams working together will occur prior to the award so that all will be in readiness once it is appropriate to start the project.

51. Project Timeline and Challenges

1.0 Meet with the governor, civic and business leaders. Gather local feedback particularly concerning changed conditions during grant award. Week 1-2

1.1 Develop training manuals and formally hire or transfer staff. Week 1-4

1.2 Create local community volunteer groups to spearhead training initiative to gather local buy in with free demonstrations. Week 4-6

2.0 Training of staff. Week 5-8

2.1 With employer community and BetterWorld, set up community job bank. Week 5-8

3.0 Community and media outreach commencement. Week 9

4.0 Issue first licenses -- Launch program and test. Week 10

4.1 Commence first job interview for telework. Week 11

4.2 Pilot and assist first teleworker Week. 12

4.3 Make adjustments to telework instruction. Week 14

5.0 Community Recognition Day – For outstanding students who have earned certifications etc. Week 15

5.1 First quarter evaluation. Week 22

5.1.1 Convene with stakeholder groups and review evaluations and feedback. Week 24



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5.1.2 Make necessary adjustments. Week 30

5.2 Launch new outreach efforts as appropriate. Week 31

5.3 Community Recognition Day – For outstanding students who have earned certifications etc.
Week 31

5.4 Second Quarter Evaluation. Week 34

5.5 Make necessary adjustments. Week 36

5.6 Launch new outreach efforts as appropriate. Week 38

5.7 Third Quarter evaluation. Week 46

5.8 Community Recognition Day – For outstanding students who have earned certifications etc.
Week 46

5.9 Make necessary adjustments. Week 47

6.0 Launch new outreach efforts as appropriate. Week 48

Repeated except for training in 2nd and 3rd years.

52. SPIN Number

K. Environmental Questionnaire

53. Does the proposed action involve the procurement of materials? If so, will the materials be installed, stored or operated in an existing building or structure? If yes, please click "Add" to include the list of equipment and peripherals to be procured.

No



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54. Does the proposed action involve procurement of electronic equipment? If yes, will the equipment be disposed of in an environmentally sound manner at the end of its useful life?

No

55. Does the proposed action involve construction, remodeling, or renovation? If so, will these activities be limited to only minor interior renovations to a structure, facility, or installation? If yes, click "Add" to include a description of the proposed renovations with your project summary.

No

56. Does the proposed action involve the production and/or distribution of informational materials, brochures, or newsletter?

No

57. Does the proposed action involve training, teaching, or meeting facilitation at an existing facility or structure? If yes, click "Add" to explain.

Yes

The proposed action involves training, teaching, and meeting facilitation primarily at the libraries and the community centers. Training will also occur at the University of the Virgin Islands campuses and at the community centers.

58. Does the proposed action involve ground or surface disturbance to accommodate new fiber optic cable? If yes, please click "Add" to include a description of the extent of service upgrade, a list of the permits required, and linear footage of underground fiber optic cabling required.

No

59. Does the proposed action involve an upgrade of broadband service to an existing facility or structure? If yes, please include a description of the extent of service upgrade, a list of the permits required, and linear footage of underground fiber optic cabling required?



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Funding Opportunity: Sustainable Broadband Adoption	Applicant Organization: VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITY
Task: Submit Application - Sustainable Broadband Adoption	Applicant Name: Mr. Julito A Francis

No



**Broadband Non-Infrastructure Application
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Uploads

The following pages contain the following uploads provided by the applicant:

Upload Name	File Name	Uploaded By	Uploaded Date
Management Team Resumes and Organization Chart	SBA Org Chart and Mgt Resumes.pdf	Francis, Julito	04/09/2010
Government and Key Partnerships	SBA Key Partner Letters of Support.pdf	Francis, Julito	04/08/2010
Historical Financial Statements	Historical Financial Statements.pdf	Francis, Julito	04/08/2010
Community Anchor Institutions Detail	SBA Anchor Details.xls	Francis, Julito	03/15/2010
BTOP Certifications	BTOP Authentication and Certifications.pdf	Francis, Julito	03/09/2010
Detailed Budget	SBA Detailed Budget.xls	Francis, Julito	03/15/2010
SF424 A Budget	SBA Form 424A.pdf	Francis, Julito	03/15/2010
SF424 B Assurances - Non-Construction	SF-424B Assurances Non-Construction Programs.pdf	Francis, Julito	03/11/2010
Supplemental Information	SBA Supplemental	Francis, Julito	04/08/2010



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