



INTERNET FOR ALL • CALL FOR PROPOSALS

CONNECTING UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES TO THE INTERNET

Deadline: 12 April 2023

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IEEE Communications Society & IEEE Humanitarian Technologies Board ComSoc Internet for All Call for Proposals

<https://www.comsoc.org/membership/internet-for-all>

The IEEE Humanitarian Technologies Board (HTB), formerly the IEEE Humanitarian Activities Committee (HAC), inspires and empowers IEEE volunteers around the world carrying out and supporting impactful humanitarian technology activities at the local level. The IEEE HTB mission is to support impactful and ethically informed volunteer-led initiatives, programs and projects, and mutually beneficial partnerships, as well as to inform policy formulation that harness technology and innovation to address societal challenges (including disaster recovery) in a responsive, effective, and sustainable way.

In conjunction with the IEEE Communications Society (ComSoc), HTB will administer a Call for Proposals for ComSoc Internet for All projects.

The “Digital Divide” is the gap between those able to benefit from the digital age and those who do not. The absence of connectivity is not merely a technological barrier¹, but one that affects access to healthcare, education, social services, work, and participation in the global and local economies.

A similar problem exists with local infrastructure. Internet providers may not be focused on deploying the infrastructure necessary to bring services to all rural homes and villages. According to UNESCO, only 55 percent of households globally have an internet connection.

The power of connectivity lies within the expertise found in our membership. As communications engineers, we can help to solve this situation.

The starting point for a project should always be the needs of the community as evidenced through dialogue and relationship with local community organizations and leaders. Projects must focus on people first, rather than starting with a particular technology that needs to find a use.

Projects must have a connection to the local IEEE Section and ComSoc chapter and engage a significant² number of IEEE ComSoc members. HTB and ComSoc require that teams have relevant technical and other expertise to credibly execute the project.

[1] <https://www.unesco.org/en/tags/digital-divide>

[2] “Significant” will depend on the scope of the project. Project teams should make a concerted effort to involve as many IEEE members as appropriate for the project.

1. Teams from around the world will submit project proposals identifying a locality where internet connectivity is needed, and how local ComSoc members and peers will create, plan, and implement the connectivity.
2. The Internet for All reviewers will select 2 projects from each Region to be implemented. Regions are defined as:
 - a. North America
 - b. Europe, Middle East, Africa
 - c. Latin America
 - d. Asia Pacific
3. Each selected project will receive up to US\$12,000 to implement and sustain the project.
4. Teams will train local partners to maintain and sustain the project.

Term of funding: Up to 6 months following the project start date.

Attributes of projects considered:

- Applicants must clearly articulate how the project addresses a pressing need of their local community.
- Proposals must involve deployment of technology, customization of technology, and/or development of technology.
- Projects should have active “local” IEEE volunteer involvement. That means that key IEEE members responsible for implementing the project are currently living in the country/countries where the project is to take place. Notably, there must be active participation by a local IEEE ComSoc chapter member(s) with a statement of involvement confirmed by the chapter chair.
- The local community must be actively involved in determining what is needed/desired and how a project will be designed and executed. Projects must supply letter(s) of support from the community to demonstrate this.
- Proposals must clearly articulate the impact of the project and how it will be measured, using the [Project Assessment Matrix](#). Applicants are required to take the free online HAC/SIGHT course on IEEE ILN, “[Project Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation](#)” for clear instructions on how to complete the matrix and how to implement monitoring and evaluation best practices at all stages of a project.

Entrants must articulate a proposed solution that includes the following criteria:

- Articulate the needs of an unattended community and clearly state how and why they will benefit from the Internet implementation.
- The project must also articulate the project risks and mitigation for each point, including but not limited to: schedule risk, resource risk, financial risks, etc.
- The project team should propose a project plan for the
 - Implementation
 - Training
 - Engagement of the community

- Expected performance measurements.
- Additionally, the team should outline an adoption plan for the promotion, marketing and visibility of the project in conjunction with the supporting region and chapter.
- A detailed budget for the project not to exceed US\$12,000 using the provided template.
- A description of how it is expected that the equipment will be maintained after the implementation.
- The project proposal must meet the following technical criteria:
 - Have performance measurements plans to demonstrate that the implemented solution would be successful. For example, they could be:
 - The maximum throughput at each serving point independently.
 - The maximum throughput at each serving point at the same time.
 - Continuous measurement of the network usage for at least one week.
 - A measure of how effective the management system is to detect failures in the network.

Community Criteria

The community identified in the project must meet the following criteria:

- There is a real need for Internet access (e.g. service providers do not offer it in that community, or it is prohibitively expensive for members of the community).
- As the project proposal is focused on the Internet distribution and not on the link provisioning of the Internet connection, the individual or project team should demonstrate how the community will continue to have access when the current project is finished (e.g., involving other funding, public or private).

Projects NOT considered:

- Projects that do not directly relate to a pressing need of a specific community.
- Projects that do not involve deployment of technology, customization of technology, and/or development of technology.
- Projects that do not clearly articulate active community involvement.
- Projects that are *primarily research* or *commercial in nature*.
- Projects with no clearly articulated plan for impact measurement.

Any proposal which (i) is incomplete, (ii) does not meet the attributes of projects considered, (iii) requests more than US\$12,000, or (iv) for which a completed [IEEE ComSoc & HTB Projects Budget Template](#) is not submitted will not be reviewed. All proposals must disclose if an identical or similar proposal is currently under evaluation for funding elsewhere.

Legal, Compliance, and Risk:

Humanitarian technology and sustainable development projects, due to their real world nature, may involve a certain amount of risk. It is imperative that potential risks are acknowledged and mitigated wherever possible. IEEE has taken steps to mitigate several of these risks. While not a comprehensive list of risks or mitigation strategies, please review the following carefully:

- Projects MUST comply with all national/federal, state/provincial, and local laws, guidelines, safety codes, and restrictions.
- IEEE is subject to the full range of U.S. economic sanctions and export control laws and as such IEEE may not be able to provide certain services to certain designated countries or entities or individuals from those countries or entities. A more detailed description of OFAC, economic sanctions and embargoes applicable to IEEE can be found at <https://legal.ieee.org/compliance/ofac>.
- All projects that involve children must follow [IEEE Guidelines for Working with Children](#). Any project funding will be contingent on policy compliance.
- In the event the project collects, uses, processes, or otherwise involves the personal data of any individual, the grantee agrees that they shall, to the maximum extent possible, respect the privacy of those individuals. Grantee will comply with all applicable data privacy laws or regulations.
- All projects considered for funding will be shared with the IEEE Office of Risk and Insurance Management Services (ORIMS) and, in some cases, the IEEE Legal & Compliance Department, for their review prior to final decision.
- Projects must avoid any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. Project teams must abide by the [IEEE Principles of Business Conduct](#). For more information on what should be disclosed and how to avoid conflicts of interest, see the [HTB website](#).
- Projects selected must agree to the [HTB Intellectual Property Policy](#) as a condition of funding.
- Legal agreements between IEEE and external entities must be vetted by IEEE Legal prior to signing.
- Funds will not be disbursed to individuals or external organizations. All funds must flow through a local IEEE OU - generally the local Chapter or Section. Any funds that are not used according to the approved budget will be returned to IEEE ComSoc & HTB.
- Please note that, depending on the nature of a project, additional review may be required at any stage of the project.

Submission Timeline:

- **Applications may be submitted starting 13 March 2023.** We encourage applicants to submit their proposals as soon as they can.
- **Final deadline to submit a proposal: 12 April 2023 at 11:59pm EDT.**

Eligibility to apply:

- The primary applicant must be an IEEE ComSoc professional member grade or higher in good standing. Student members may be secondary applicants. HTB and ComSoc check all member numbers during the intake process. If membership status of the primary applicant is in arrears, the submission cannot move forward.
- In addition, the project lead who is a ComSoc member must be a member of the chapter in the local community where the project is to be implemented.
- **Each team may submit only one proposal.**

- An IEEE OU - preferably the local Section - must act as the fiscal agent. Applicants must discuss this with the OU Treasurer prior to proposal submission. HTB generally cannot transfer funds to a Society Chapter or Student Branch. IEEE financial requirements for funding disbursements will apply. Please see [IEEE FOM 2.E - IEEE Unit Reporting](#) (Including, but not limited to, Societies, Technical Councils, Geographic Units, and Conferences).
- Because U.S. economic sanctions and export controls are subject to frequent change, please review the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control's [Sanctions list](#) to determine if your country can receive funding or contact internetforall@comsoc.org with any questions before applying.

Eligible Project Costs

IEEE ComSoc & HTB projects prioritize support of direct project costs, including necessary equipment, materials, supplies, and travel. Travel expenses must comply with [IEEE Travel and Expense Reimbursement Guidelines](#). Given that projects are local in nature, travel costs should be minimal. Any non-essential travel and in-person components may need to be avoided.

No reimbursement of volunteer salaries or honorariums will be provided. Reimbursing the salary of anyone contributing to the project must be carefully justified. Associated salary costs should be clearly explained and not constitute any more than a minor part of the overall budget proposed.

No indirect costs will be considered for funding, including but not limited to overhead expenses, honorariums, competition or contest prizes, Facilities & Administrative (F&A) costs, tuition, etc.

Please discuss in advance with the IEEE OU that will be your fiscal intermediary (generally the local Section) if there are any mandatory bank or administration fees that are incurred with a transfer of funds from HTB to the OU. These fees may be included in the project budget; however, the OU must confirm to HTB that these are mandatory.

Questions

Do you have any questions you wish to ask about the potential suitability of your proposal? If in doubt, please contact IEEE ComSoc at internetforall@comsoc.org before developing and submitting your proposal and we have a team member get back to you.

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1. Project Overview

- a. Please provide an executive summary of the project, including location, needs, and intended solution. Please articulate the needs of an unattended community and clearly state how and why they will benefit from the Internet implementation. (Maximum character length – 2,000)

- b. Please explain the IEEE-relevant technology that will be used in the project. (Maximum character length – 1,500)
- c. Please check no more than three relevant [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) that the project addresses.

2. Local Community Need and Stakeholder Engagement

- a. Please explain the local community need, including context about why it is a challenge and why it is important to the community. (Maximum character length – 1,500)
- b. Who are the stakeholders (individuals, groups of people or organizations that affect or are affected by an intervention) and how will they be engaged in the project? (Maximum character length – 1,500)
- c. Please explain that if implemented how the project would be promoted and marketed bringing visibility of the project in conjunction with the supporting chapter and region. (Maximum character length – 1,500)
- d. Please upload a statement from the local chapter chair about the chapter involvement and the chapter chair's endorsement of the project.

3. Project Assessment

- a. Please upload the completed Project Assessment Matrix, which measures outputs and outcomes.

4. Project Implementation Plan

- a. Project work plan and milestones and timelines (Maximum character length – 2,000) (Do not duplicate what is in the executive summary or project assessment matrix.)
- b. Describe the potential risks and unintended consequences associated with this project. This should include, but not be limited to, schedule risk; resource risk; financial risk; and risk to people, property, and IEEE reputation. Your risk assessment plan should clearly outline risk mitigation for each point. Make sure to explain what measures will be taken to prevent safety hazards. Please be as detailed as possible. Highlight any political or economic risk associated with the country in which the project is located. The IEEE Office of Risk and Insurance Management Services (ORIMS) may review proposals to assess risk and provide guidance. (Maximum character length – 1,500)
- c. Are there any restrictions in place that would impact the execution of your project? For example, travel or mobility restrictions. Please share details of the mitigation plan. (Maximum character length – 1,500)
- d. Implementing team. Provide a summary of the members of the implementing team. Please indicate if the team is an IEEE SIGHT group. (Maximum character length – 1,500)
- e. Please outline how your project would address the following technical criteria: Have performance measurements plans to demonstrate that the implemented solution would be successful. For example, they could be: 1) The maximum throughput at each serving point independently. 2) The maximum throughput at each serving point at the same time. 3) Continuous measurement of the network usage for at least one week. 4) A measure of how effective the management system is to detect failures in the network.
- f. Please describe how the equipment would be maintained after the implementation.

- g. Are any approvals needed to undertake this project, such as approval from the government, community entity, Institutional Review Board, and so on? If so, please include them as attachments. If these approvals have not yet been secured, please explain your plan to do so. (Maximum character length – 1,500)

5. External Collaboration

- a. What external organizations, such as NGOs, government organizations, companies, etc., are you collaborating with? For each, please provide:
 - o Name of collaborating organization
 - o URL
- b. What are the roles and responsibilities of the external organizations and IEEE? Please attach any documentation. If there is the need for a legal agreement to execute the project, please note that here. All applicants should be aware that at least one letter of support from a community entity will be required in order for the proposal to advance to the second round of evaluation. So while a letter is not required for submission of the application, project teams should make sure they are ready to supply one in the near future. (Maximum character length – 1,500)

6. Requested Funding

- a. Completed [IEEE ComSoc & HTB Project budget template](#). Note that all amounts should be stated in US Dollars.
- b. Budget Justification. Do not simply list expenses. Please use this area to provide the reason as to why each budget line item has been included. This is meant to be a narrative. Also, if your project is to be co-funded by one or more other entities, please explain whether this funding is confirmed or what your plan is to confirm it. (Maximum character length – 2,000)
- c. What, if any, mandatory bank fees would be incurred with a transfer of funds from HTB to the OU?
- d. Have you submitted, or do you plan to submit, this proposal to another funding source? All proposals must disclose if an identical or similar proposal is currently under evaluation for funding elsewhere. Please state any entity(ies), including both IEEE and external funding sources.

7. Additional Information

1. Disclose any potential conflicts of interest regarding this proposal. [Please note: project teams must abide by the [IEEE Principles of Business Conduct](#). Project leads and any other members of project teams with decision-making authority must complete the [Principles of Business Conduct/Conflict of Interest](#) disclosure prior to receiving funding.]
2. HTB and IEEE ComSoc encourage the submission of videos and/or photos that introduce the project team, demonstrate the need identified, or explain the technological solution to be implemented.
3. Any supplementary materials that further demonstrate worthiness of the project, as well as evidence of any co-funding commitments.

Appendix: Other Supporting Material (including publications, letters of community support, etc.)

How to Submit

- Please submit via the IEEE HTB/SIGHT [Online Funding Opportunities Portal](#). First-time users will first need to create a profile.
- Please download this template files which will be required to be uploaded into your online application
 - [Project Assessment Matrix](#)
 - [IEEE ComSoc and HTB Projects Budget Template](#)

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Benefit to the affected local community
- Project scope well defined
- Strength of team and capacity to attain goal
- Involvement of relevant stakeholder network
- Relevance to IEEE's mission of advancing technology for the benefit of humanity, but specifically bringing internet to an underserved community
- Overall potential for success

Acceptable Time Frame to Utilize Funds & Reporting Schedule

- Funds must be expended within a maximum of 6 months from the approved project start date.
- Brief progress reports must be submitted at regular intervals after the project's approved start date.
- A final report must be submitted with evaluation metrics within 60 days of the conclusion of the project grant period.
- Updates on the project are to be provided upon request throughout its duration.
- Reports on longer-term outcomes and impact of the project may be requested for up to 3 years after the conclusion of the project's grant period.

Final Comments: Please note that this funding program is highly competitive. Not all worthy projects may be funded due to budget limitations, or may be offered lower funding than requested.