Internal wiring and wireless access points in Montana Libraries

Montana State Library ($3,800,000)

Program Description

COVID has forced people to work, learn, access telehealth, and other critical services, online and libraries provide critical internet services to address these needs. Montana libraries are challenged to provide adequate broadband for a variety of reasons including outdated internal connections that must be replaced. In addition to "last mile" broadband infrastructure, libraries require internal connections to support highspeed broadband access including sufficient cabling, modern routers, and wireless access points. A 2019 study conducted by Saddle Peak Technologies and Simmons University revealed that 70% of Montana's libraries have routers five years old or older and some hardware is more than 10 years old. This funding request would provide an average of $32,750 for Montana's 116 libraries to upgrade internal wiring, routers, wireless access points and managed wireless services.

George McCone Memorial Library, Circle, MT

Funding	
Total OTHER ARPA Funds	$3,800,000
Estimated Costs	
Cabling and hardware	$3,250,000
Contracted installation services	$550,000
Total	**$3,800,000**

Required Resources

The Montana State Library requires funds to procure the necessary hardware to upgrade libraries' cabling, routers and wifi access points. Technology would be procured under State of Montana term contracts. MSL would also contract with information technology contractors to perform the hardware installation in libraries that do not employee IT professionals.

Objectives and Measurable Outcomes

Montana libraries, whether open or closed, physically, during the COVID-19 pandemic, need to be able to offer adequate internet service to meet the needs of those Montanans who lack access to affordable broadband and continue to work, learn and access services online. The purpose of this funding request is to ensure that the current state of Montana libraries' internal wiring and wireless access points are not barriers to libraries ability to maximize broadband internet speeds during the pandemic. When fully deployed, all 116 Montana libraries will have sufficient wifi access points, new routers that meet current broadband standards, and cabling that allow libraries to make use of high-speed broadband.

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