

Janice K. Brewer  
Governor



Arizona Office of  
Economic Recovery

James J. Apperson  
Director

# ARRA Update

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## ARRA SPOTLIGHT

### BTOP Round 1 Award for AZ Libraries

Arizona's libraries have seen a tremendous increase in demand for their public access computers. The economic downturn has sent Arizonans to their local libraries for online access to everything from job listings, to employment applications and social services. The Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records (ASLAPR), a division of the Secretary of State, surveyed public and tribal libraries to determine the number of computers necessary for each library to serve its community. Of the libraries surveyed, the project team identified 84 that were shovel-ready to participate as project partners in a Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) application. These partner libraries serve diverse populations, many with no service or inadequate home Internet access. For many Arizonans, the library provides the only Internet access.

Next, ASLAPR conducted a series of meetings with county librarians to begin critical communication between the project team and the library partners. The meetings began with a detailed description of the stimulus program, including familiarizing county librarians with the statutory purposes of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the main contents of the BTOP Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), specifics about the Public Computer Center (PCC) category of funding, and some of the reporting requirements that would be expected. Participating libraries were asked to provide justification for equipment requests and the 20 percent match.

The project team created a comprehensive audit trail documenting the "pre-application" data for each library including: computer wait times (some over one hour); number of public access computers; library hours of operation; and population served. This data was a critical success factor along with the strong support and match commitment from partner libraries. The data also provides a benchmark for post-award tracking and reporting.

With the federal award of \$1,278,528 and match of \$313,040, this PCC project will deploy more than 1,000 computers across the state. Once deployed, the computers will increase awareness and use of broadband to enhance Arizonans' access to valuable online tools and resources. The 84 public computer centers will serve more than 75,000 users per week or more than 450,000 residents throughout the term of the grant. For a list of partner libraries on BroadbandUSA, click here: [AZ PCC Summary](#).