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## California Emerging Technology Fund

Connect + Communicate + Compete

### Overview

- The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) is a non-profit corporation established pursuant to requirements from the California Public Utilities Commission in approving the mergers of SBC-AT&T and Verizon-MCI.
- The merged companies will contribute a total of \$60 million as seed capital over 5 years to advance broadband deployment and adoption.
- High-speed communications is referred to generically as broadband and defined by the FCC in terms of speed—200 kilobits per second in at least one direction—it is technology-neutral. It is recognized that most current and future broadband applications require faster speeds than the FCC definition.

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*President & CEO* Sunne Wright McPeak

### Mission

*Provide leadership statewide to minimize the Digital Divide by accelerating the deployment of broadband and other advanced communication services to underserved communities and populations.*

This will be accomplished by making investments in programs and projects to improve access, applications, affordability, accessibility and assistance—the “5 As” which result in adoption of broadband technology to close the Digital Divide.

**Access + Applications + Affordability + Accessibility + Assistance = Adoption**



## **Initial Priority Focus on Three Consumer Communities**

1. Rural and Remote Areas that need broadband infrastructure.
2. Urban Disadvantaged Neighborhoods that need computers and affordable connections to the Internet with relevant applications.
3. People with Disabilities who need useful accessible technology (CETF will promote universal design for all technology and will require accessibility in all grants).

## **Basic Strategy**

- Compile conclusions about best practices from research, pilot projects and demonstration programs.
- Consult the most knowledgeable experts and stakeholders.
- Identify and invest in strategic opportunities (based on sound research and proven track records) to achieve the highest impacts in closing the Digital Divide.
- Seek out projects that will achieve the strategic goals, not just be a responsive grantmaker.
- Hold funded programs and projects accountable for performance and outcomes.
- Measure the progress quantitatively in terms of status of the Digital Divide statewide and for priority communities and populations.
- Publish regular reports, including an Annual Report on progress to close the Digital Divide.
- Establish and institutionalize partnerships with civic leadership and community-based organizations.
- Develop regional strategies and collaboratives for bridging the Digital Divide.
- Establish a presence throughout California through “affiliations” with key institutions.
- Leverage the seed capital of \$60 million by at least 4-fold to achieve impact of about \$250 million through partnerships and co-investments with private sector, government and foundations.
- Invest in broadband technology as part of a comprehensive integrated set of strategies to transform communities and improve the quality of life of residents.
- Invest in programs and projects that embrace best practices to improve performance and outcomes related to that application and the user population.

## **Strategic Action Plan**

The California Emerging Technology Fund Plan is conducting Fact Finding Conversations and Roundtables throughout California to listen to practitioners and stakeholders about strategies to close the Digital Divide and to identify programs and projects that are successful. This information has helped formulate the first CETF Strategic Action Plan which is online on the website. The Plan delineates strategies for the three priority consumer communities and sets forth best practices and opportunities for collaboration relative to specific program applications. CETF welcomes comments and suggestions about the Strategic Action Plan.

## **Request for Proposals**

The California Emerging Technology Fund released the first Request for Proposals (RFP) in 2007 for programs and projects that help lay the foundation for transforming communities and institutions. CETF periodically also invites proposals that will help implement the Strategic Action Plan. Please visit the CETF website for details. To date, CETF has approved approximately \$15 million in grants that will be implemented over the next three years.