



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

NTIA Innovation Fund AI RAN Listening Session

AGENCY: National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) will convene a hybrid industry listening session on the Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund (“Innovation Fund”). The session will discuss Innovation Fund progress to date and solicit industry input to help inform a future funding opportunity.

DATES: The listening session will be held on March 23, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

ADDRESSES: The session will be held hybrid, with participation available both via Microsoft Teams and in-person at The MITRE Corporation’s location in McLean, Virginia. Online slide share and dial-in information to be posted at www.ntia.gov/program/innovation-fund.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Please direct questions regarding this Notice to Richard Upchurch at innovationfund@ntia.gov, indicating “Innovation Fund Listening Session 2026” in the subject line, or if by mail, addressed to National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20230; telephone: 202-482-3806. Please direct media inquiries to NTIA's Office of Public Affairs, press@ntia.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background and Authority:

The Innovation Fund is authorized under section 9202(a)(1) of the *William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021* (Pub. L. 116-283; 47 U.S.C.

906(a)(1)). It supports U.S. leadership in the global telecommunications ecosystem, fosters competition, and strengthens our supply chain. The Secretary of Commerce, acting through the NTIA Administrator, shall establish criteria for grants awarded to support the following:

(i) Promoting and deploying technology, including software, hardware, and microprocessing technology, that will enhance competitiveness in the fifth-generation (commonly known as “5G”) and successor wireless technology supply chains that use open and interoperable interface radio access networks.

(ii) Accelerating commercial deployments of open interface standards-based compatible, interoperable equipment, such as equipment developed pursuant to the standards set forth by organizations such as the O-RAN Alliance, the Telecom Infra Project, 3GPP, the Open-RAN Software Community, or any successor organizations.

(iii) Promoting and deploying compatibility of new 5G equipment with future standards-based, interoperable equipment.

(iv) Managing integration of multi-vendor network environments.

(v) Identifying objective criteria to define equipment as compliant with open standards for multi-vendor network equipment interoperability.

(vi) Promoting and deploying security features enhancing the integrity and availability of equipment in multi-vendor networks.

(vii) Promoting and deploying network function virtualization to facilitate multi-vendor interoperability and a more diverse vendor market.

Listening Session Focus: This listening session will focus on advancing AI-native telecommunications networks through the Innovation Fund. This effort is aligned with the Administration’s July 2025 AI Action Plan and the Executive Order on Promoting the Export of the American AI Technology Stack with the goal of establishing U.S. leadership in secure AI technologies.

Time and Date: NTIA will convene the public listening session on Monday, March 23, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. Please refer to NTIA's website, www.ntia.gov/program/innovation-fund for the most current information.

Place: For those attending in-person, the listening session will be held at The MITRE Corporation located at 7525 Colshire Drive, McLean, VA, 22102. For those attending virtually, online slide share and dial-in information will be posted at <https://www.ntia.gov/program/innovation-fund>. Please refer to NTIA's website, for the most current information.

Other Information: The meeting is open to the public and the press on a first-come, first-serve basis. The hybrid meeting is accessible to people with disabilities and/or individuals requiring accommodations such as real-time captioning. Those individuals who need other ancillary aids should notify the Department at innovationfund@ntia.gov at least seven (7) business days prior to the listening session. Access details for the meeting are subject to change. Please refer to NTIA's website, <https://www.ntia.gov/program/innovation-fund> for the most current information.

Dated: March 6, 2026.

David Brodian,

Chief Counsel, National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

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