



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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THE PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL AND GOVERNMENTAL PROGRAMMING AND EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT ACCOUNT (PEGPETIA)

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You asked for a description of the Public Educational and Governmental Programming and Education Technology Investment Account and its financial viability.

SUMMARY

Established by [PA 07-253](#), the Public Educational and Governmental Programming and Education Technology Investment Account (PEGPETIA) provides grants to support public, educational, and governmental (i.e. community access) programming and education technology initiatives. The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) administers the account and awards grants using the requirements and procedures for evaluating funding requests it established in [Docket No. 07-10-11](#).

The account is funded by a .25% tax on the gross earnings of cable-TV, satellite-TV, and certified competitive video (e.g., AT&T U-Verse) service providers. According to PURA, the account collected over \$3.5 million from April 2011 through March 2012. In 2011, PEGPETIA awarded nearly \$736,000 in grants and this year it has awarded nearly \$466,000 as of August 1, 2012. With a PEGPETIA balance currently over \$5 million, PURA states it is looking for ways to expand awareness about the account and broaden its potential uses.

PEGPETIA GRANT ELIGIBILITY

By law, PURA must spend half of PEGPETIA funds on (1) local and state-wide cable-TV and video advisory councils and (2) capital and equipment costs of public, educational, and governmental programmers and studio operators. The other half of the funds must go towards the education technology initiatives of boards of education and other educational entities ([CGS § 16-331cc](#)). Under PURA's 2008 decision in Docket No. 07-10-11, PEGPETIA grants can be used for an applicant's capital costs and equipment (i.e., a project's one-time setup costs) but not operating expenses.

Eligible programming entities include public, educational, and governmental programmers, studio operators, and content producers. Individual producers with defined ideas and a commitment to produce ongoing and continuous programming are also eligible for PEGPETIA grants. However, under the 2008 decision, PURA does not consider individual producers producing an individual program or very limited amount of programming for grants. It instead encourages them to use the equipment available at their area's community access provider.

Expenses for educational technology initiatives can include (1) computer-assisted instruction; (2) information retrieval and data transfer; (3) telecommunications related to voice, data, and video transmission of instructional materials and courses; (4) the development and acquisition of educational software; and (5) the instructional uses of the Internet and other technologies.

Beyond these requirements, PURA also considers:

1. how the proposal meets PEGPETIA's goals;
2. what geographic areas will benefit;
3. how many subscribers or students will benefit in relation to the amount requested;
4. if the proposal is for new, supplemental, replacement, or upgraded media or equipment;
5. if the applicant received funding for similar proposals in the past;
6. if the applicant received funding for a similar proposal from another entity;

7. if the proposal has a reasonable budget and timeframe;
8. how well the proposal advances the public interest and values; and
9. how the proposal compares to similar proposals by other applicants and the amounts that were awarded to them.

Additional information on the PEGPETIA application process can be found at: <http://www.ct.gov/pura/cwp/view.asp?A=3360&Q=417150>.

2011 AND 2012 GRANTS

According to PURA, PEGPETIA awarded \$735,881.86 in 2011 and \$465,881.76 in 2012, through August 1. Tables 1 and 2 list the 2011 and 2012 grant recipients, respectively. The applicants are listed in the order that their grants were awarded.

Table 1: 2011 PEGPETIA Awards

<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Amount (\$)</i>
Town of Wolcott	27,119.00
West Hartford Community Television	32,055.00
Town of Glastonbury	13,282.00
Town of Tolland	3,802.00
Wallingford Public Access Association	34,941.25
Town of Wilton	36,354.24
Jennifer Poteau (Bridgeport YMCA)	30,580.47
Windsor Community Television	27,000.00
Town of Ledyard	10,010.00
Rocky Hill Community Television	72,031.75
Skills Camp (New Haven)	11,481.50
North Haven Community Television	15,973.42
Town of Rocky Hill	47,423.00
Simsbury Community Television	4,725.00
New Haven Public Schools	104,905.24
Norwich Public Schools	53,234.40
Florence E. Smith School (W. Hartford)	3,351.75
Gilbert School (Winsted)	68,102.38
Trumbull Cable TV Advisory Committee	39,873.66
Portland High School	31,971.80
Weston Education Foundation	67,664.00
Total	735,881.86

Table 2: 2012 PEGPETIA Awards (as of 8/1/12)

Applicant	Amount (\$)
St. Bridget School(Cheshire)	14,750.00
Hamden Public Schools	140,750.55
Walters Memorial Foundation(Bridgeport)	8,513.00
East Granby Television	24,740.00
University of Connecticut	9,332.75
Hebron Board of Education	19,500.00
Southeastern Connecticut Television	52,100.20
Wethersfield Community Television	42,001.90
Tri-State Community Television	20,010.35
Support Development Resources	12,020.84
Channel Xiro Media	41,534.00
Hartford Knights	55,784.73
Danbury Public Schools	24,843.44
Total (as of 8/01/12)	465,881.76

FUTURE INITIATIVES

PURA states that the PEGPETIA fund currently has a balance over \$5 million and it is exploring ways to increase public awareness about the account and broaden the account's use. The authority (1) sent letters to each of the 25 Cable Advisory Councils advising them of the availability of funding for local schools, municipalities, and community television organizations; (2) streamlined the 6-9 month application process to 3-4 months; and (3) is exploring an Internet cloud-based format for community access programming.

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