Advancing Digital Equity: Roles for Research & Education Institutions

Internet2 Community Exchange
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NDIA NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

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National Digital Inclusion Alliance advances digital equity by supporting community programs and equipping policymakers to act.

1250+ Affiliates
50 States + DC, Puerto Rico & Virgin Islands
12 Tribal Entities
About NDIA

- Practitioner Support
- Policy
- Awareness
- Data & Research
About Digital Inclusion

DIGITAL EQUITY
Individuals and communities have the capacity for full participation in society, democracy, and the economy.

DIGITAL INCLUSION
The activities to ensure that all individuals, including the most disadvantaged, have access to and use of:

- Affordable home broadband
- Appropriate devices
- Digital literacy
- Tech support
- Applications
Why ‘Digital Equity’?
Key Barriers to Digital Inclusion

**BROADBAND**
- Unaffordable
- Unreliable service
- Digital Redlining
- Complicated by land ownership rights on Tribal Lands

**DEVICES**
- Unaffordable
- Outdated software
- No access to device
- Device is not matching the needs of the user

**DIGITAL SKILLS**
- Limited digital skills
- Trainings are not accessible
- Fear & shame
- Privacy concerns
The Solution

Affordable Broadband

Affordable Devices

Digital Literacy Trainings
Device Refurbishing & Distribution Services

- Computer Recycling Center
- Refurbished electronics made available to students, faculty, & staff
Alliance for Navajo Broadband

- Diné College & Navajo Technical University partnering with providers
- Courses designed to build awareness & capacity among Tribal leadership
- Diné College student hired to do outreach & enroll participants
- Currently in NM, plans to expand to AZ & UT

https://alliancefornavajobroadband.org
Digital Equity Leadership Program

- Digital equity support on campus and in anchor communities
- Four Core Activities
  - Digital equity assessment & planning
  - Digital equity training
  - Community engagement & service
  - Evaluation
- Connecting Minority Communities Grant
Digital Literacy Resources & Digital Navigators

- Serves students, faculty & staff
- Self-serve online trainings & resources
- Currently hiring digital navigators at all 4 campus libraries

https://www.pcc.edu/digital-literacy-support
Digital Navigators
Digital Navigators consistently provide holistic, individualized support through repeated interactions.
Drexel University ExCITe Center

Digital Navigator Program

- Focused on West Philadelphia Promise Zone
- Leverages university’s capacity - Drexel & UPenn undergrads, refurbishing, procurement, age-friendly program
- Local partnerships - city & school district

https://drexel.edu/excite/community/digital-navigators
Visit **NDIA’s Digital Navigator Model** page to learn more about the open, flexible model & access:

- Skills Assessment
- Follow-up Survey
- Baseline Digital Navigator Job Description
- Intake Form & Exit Survey
- Digital Navigator Toolkit

Watch Now: [Digital Navigators Webinar](#)
Coalitions
Digital Inclusion Coalitions

- Are a collective of organizations
- To align & enhance efforts of those working on digital inclusion
- To raise funding for digital inclusion programs
- To raise awareness about digital inequities and the impact on your communities
Center for Digital Equity (CDE) at Queens University

Coalition Leadership

- University is backbone organization
- Philanthropic endowment supports staff & operations; public & private funding for programmatic work
- Led by Advisory Board & Community Council

https://thecenterfordigitalequity.org/
Our **Digital Inclusion Coalition Guidebook** provides an in-depth look at successful models across coalitions.

- How coalitions form and are structured
- Keys to successful coalition operations
- Ways coalitions adapt over time
Policy
Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Law: $65 Billion

- Digital Equity Act-$2.75B
- Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment Program-$42.5B
- Affordable Connectivity Program-$14.2B
- Tribal Connectivity Program-$2B
- Middle Mile Connectivity-$1B
- Digital Discrimination section
Digital Equity Act Programs

- NTIA
- STATES
  - STATE PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM
    - $60 MILLION
  - STATE CAPACITY GRANT PROGRAM
    - $1.44 BILLION
  - COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM
    - $1.25 BILLION
**TIMELINE**

- **Nov. 15, 2021:** IIJA passed with Digital Equity Act
- **May 13, 2022:** DEA Notice of Funding Opportunity released
- **July 12, 2022:** Applications due to NTIA
- **Sept.-Dec. 2023:** State Digital Equity Plans due to NTIA
- **Fall 2024:** Competitive grants open for application
- **Early 2022:** RFC comments submitted
- **Sept.-Dec. 2022:** States receive funds for planning (12 months to complete full plans)
- **Spring 2024:** Capacity grants open
State Digital Equity Planning

Purdue University
- Leading State of Indiana planning process
- Data & analyses to several states

Northern Iowa University
- Supporting data collection and community engagement for Iowa’s planning process

University of Louisiana-Lafayette
- Led Louisiana’s process - data collection & community engagement
The **State Digital Equity Plan Toolkit** is the essential guide for states, territories, and DC, working on a state digital equity plan.

**What to expect inside:**
- General recommendations to consider for the entire planning process
- Suggested outline for your plan
- Tactical recommendations for building a digital equity plan
NTIA Internet For All Map

- NTIA Federal Program Officer contact info
- State Broadband Office contact info
- Fund allocations, status, & timeline of states’ participation in federal funding programs

https://www.internet4all.gov/interactive-map
Affordability Connectivity Program (ACP)

**Program Administrator:** Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

**Total Allocated:** $14.2 Billion
- $30/month benefit
- $75/month Tribal benefit

[www.fcc.gov/ACP](http://www.fcc.gov/ACP)
Digital Equity Research & Data
Digital Equity Research

- Michigan State University - Johannes Bauer
- Purdue University - Roberto Gallardo
- University of Southern California - Hernan Galperin
- Arizona State University - Karen Mossberger
- University of Texas at Austin - Sharon Stover
- University of Washington - Stacey Wedlake
- Oklahoma State University - Brian Whitacre
Southern Rural Development Center

Advancing Digital Equity in the Rural South

- Focused on role university extension programs can play in advancing digital equity in rural communities
- Key digital equity initiatives
  - Bridging the Digital Divide in Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Communities in the South
  - National Digital Education Extension Team (NDEET)

http://srdc.msstate.edu/digital-divide.html
Research & Education Networks Tackling Digital Equity
MERIT’s Michigan Moonshot

Deep Investment in Digital Equity

- Community network planning tools & grant funding
- Statewide data collection & research
- Public Wi-Fi & statewide middle mile fiber buildout
- Community engagement (annual summit, webinars, etc.)

https://www.merit.edu/community/moonshot/
Link Oregon

Collaborating to Meet Statewide, Tribal, & Rural Digital Equity Needs

- Host Oregon’s crowdsourced broadband mapping initiative, Faster Internet Oregon
- Facilitated 3 Oregon Tribal Broadband Summits with the 9 recognized Tribes
- Convene the 7-state Western States Broadband Alliance

https://www.fasterinternetoregon.org
North Carolina Shared Research & Education Collaborative Infrastructure (NCShare)

Advancing Digital Equity in Higher Education

- Extending high-speed research network capacity to minority-serving, small, & mid-sized institutions
- Lowers cost & barriers to access to research computing resources
- Funded through NSF grant

https://ncshare.org
Join the NDIA Community

Become an Affiliate and get free access to:

- NDIA listserv with free resources, research and tools
- Monthly Community Calls
- Monthly Newsletter

Join NDIA: digitalinclusion.org/join/
SCAN FOR NDIA RESOURCES
THANK YOU!
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