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# IDEC Support Webinar Series

## Device Distribution, Digital Literacy, Tech Support Illinois Digital Equity Capacity Grant (IDEC) Application

February 3, 2025



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
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Project types of focus for today:



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# Agenda

- **10 min: Illinois Digital Equity Capacity Grant (IDEC) Context**
- **20 min: Device Distribution and Tech Support**
- **20 min: Digital Literacy, Learn-to-Earn Program**
- **10 min: Q&A**



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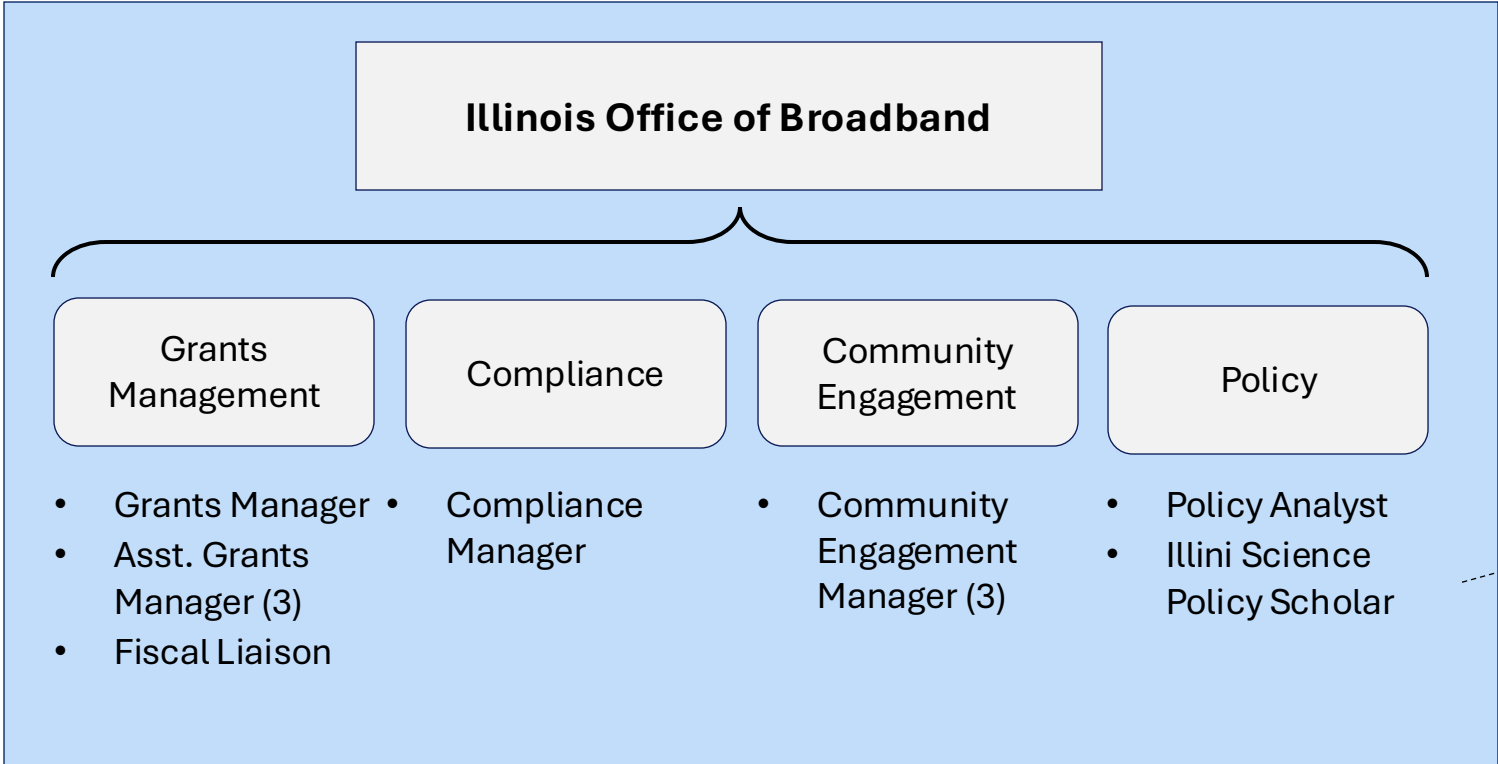




# **Illinois Digital Equity Capacity Grant (IDEC) Overview**

# Illinois Broadband Team

- The IOB was founded in 2019, yet is now one of the 50 state broadband offices tasked with **carrying out \$1B+ in federal broadband infrastructure and digital equity programs**
- How?
  - Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Program (2020 - 2024)
  - Broadband Equity Access & Deployment (BEAD) Program (2024 - 2029)
  - Digital Equity Act Capacity Grant (2024 - 2029)



**Illinois Broadband Lab at the University of Illinois System**

- Mapping & Data
- Regional Engagement
- Digital Navigator Network

# Digital Equity and Inclusion

**Digital Equity:** The condition in which individuals and communities have **sustained access and the capabilities for productive use** of information technology that is needed for full participation in the society and economy of the United States.

**Digital Inclusion:** The activities that are necessary to ensure that all individuals have access to and the use of, affordable information and communication technologies such as:

- Reliable broadband
- Devices
- Digital skills training
- Tech support
- Privacy and cybersecurity

*When we use the word equity, we accurately acknowledge the systemic barriers that must be dismantled before achieving equitable outcome for all.*

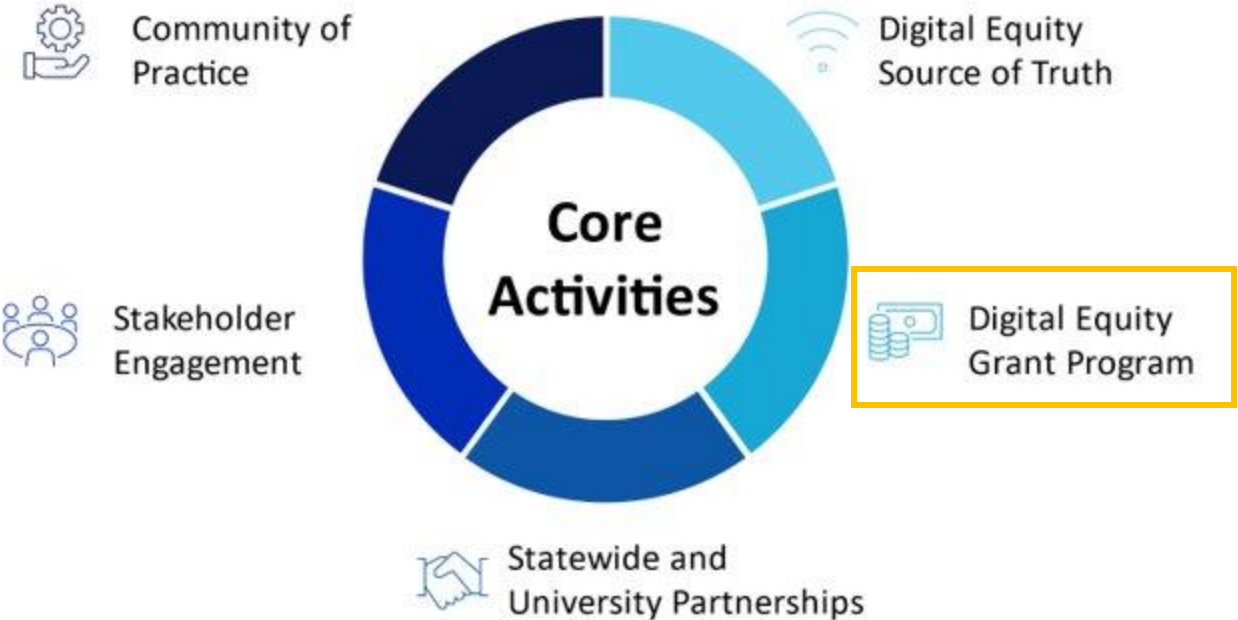


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# Illinois State Digital Equity Plan

The **2021 Digital Equity Act** provides over \$30 million to Illinois to implement the State Digital Equity Plan (SDEP). The goals of the plan are to ensure that all people and communities have the skills, technology, and capacity needed to reap the full benefits of our digital economy. Core Activities of the SDEP include:

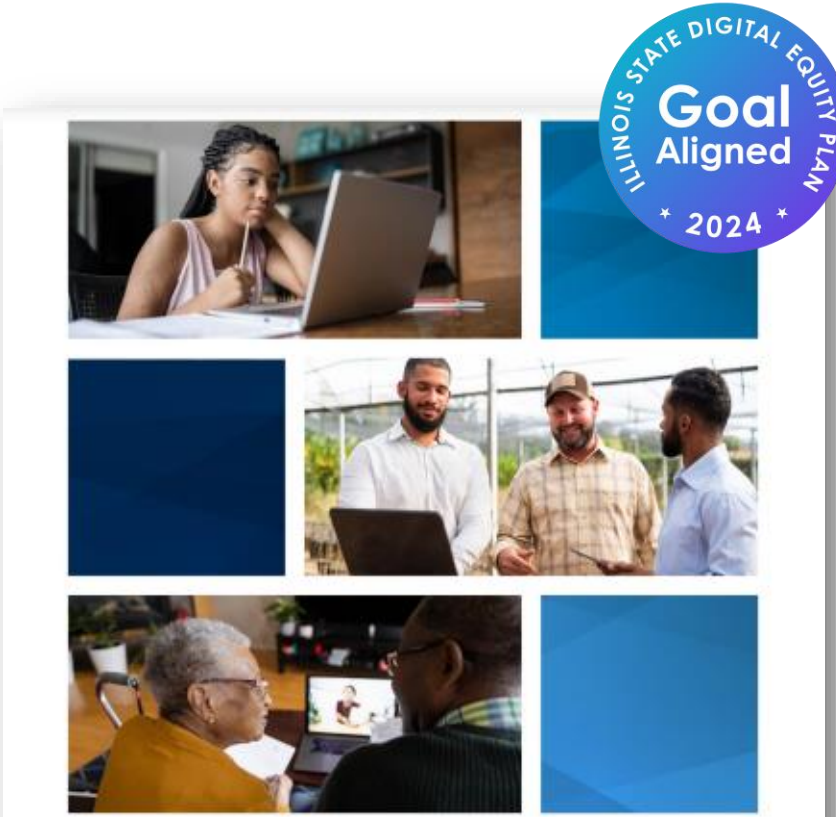


Creating a statewide **Digital Equity Grant Program (IDEC)** is one of the Plan's Core Activities




# State Digital Equity Plan Vision


- Ensuring universal access to high-speed broadband that is affordable, reliable, and fully scalable for residences, businesses, and community anchor institutions (CAIs) across Illinois by 2030.
- Leveraging new and existing resources to advance the adoption of internet use through targeted digital-inclusion strategies and sustainable broadband-equity outcomes to help communities identify and address current gaps in broadband equity.
- Empowering all Illinoisans to use and participate fully in an increasingly digital economy and society.




**ILLINOIS STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN**  
Goal Aligned  
\* 2024 \*

**ILLINOIS STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN**  
Digital Equity Act Programs  
Illinois Office of Broadband  
March 2024

 ILLINOIS BROADBAND LAB

 Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity  
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JB Pritzker, Governor

 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SYSTEM





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# NTIA Requires Prioritization of Covered Populations

Low-income households

Incarcerated individuals

People with disabilities

Racial and ethnic minorities

Aging populations

Veterans

Rural inhabitants

People with language barriers

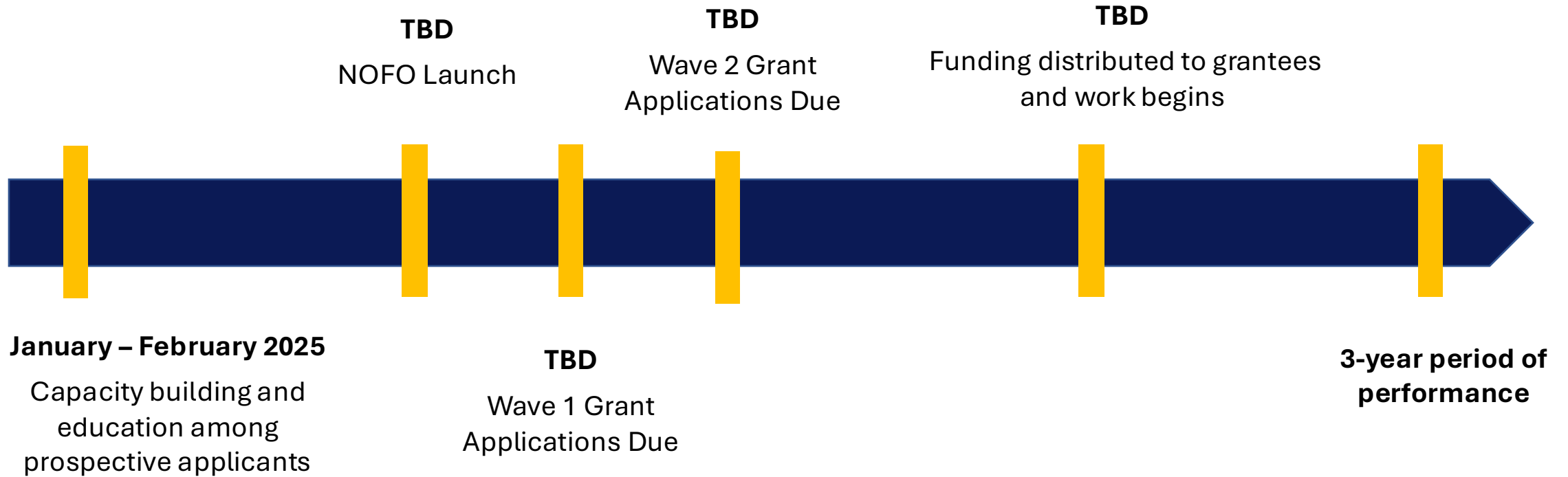
**80% of Illinoisans are part of these identity groups and communities disproportionately impacted by digital inequity**



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# Timeline and Funding for State Digital Equity Grant Program



Total amount of funding expected to be awarded is up to \$13,500,000. Awards will range from \$30,000 to \$300,000 on an annual basis, for a three-year term.



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# Eligible Entities

A **foundation, corporation, institution, or association** that is a not-for-profit entity and not a school.

A **partnership** between any of the entities described above.

An **Indian Tribe, an Alaska Native entity, or a Native Hawaiian organization**

A local **educational agency**

Entities that carry out **workforce development programs**

**Political subdivision, agency** including those supervising adult education and literacy activities or for providing public housing

**Community anchor institution**, meaning a public school, housing authority, library, healthcare provider, higher education institutions and other nonprofit or community support organizations.



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# IDEC Project Types

*Focus for Today*



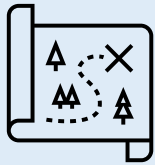
## Digital Literacy and Skill Building

Classes, workshops, coaching, or other learning opportunities to help Covered Populations build digital skills.



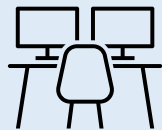
## Device Distribution

Distribution of devices, including laptops, computers, tablets, or other devices that address barriers faced by Covered Populations.



## Digital Navigation

Member of a community trained and designated to help Covered Populations enroll in high-speed internet service, navigate technology challenges, obtain devices, and find digital skill building opportunities.



## Computer Center

Establish, improve, or expand community spaces with no-cost access to computers and the internet.



## Local Broadband Planning

Resources for communities to create their own roadmaps to expanding broadband connectivity. This includes defining their access goals, assessing market and consumer dynamics, engaging internet providers, and exploring public-private partnerships and funding options.

*One application may cover one or more project type.  
Please refer to NOFO for details on each project type.*



# Application Review Criteria

| Criteria  | Description  |
|---|--|
| Community Need and Service of Covered Populations                         | The level of demonstrated need for improved broadband access, adoption, and/or use, and focus on serving one or more Covered Populations.  |
| Capacity of the Eligible Applicant  | The level of commitment and appropriate skills of the lead organization to manage the project(s), particularly experience in similar digital equity programming, initiatives, or activities OR demonstrated knowledge of and experience serving Covered Population(s).               |
| Quality of the Proposal, including Alignment to State Digital Equity Plan | The level of specificity and clarity in the applicant's implementation plan, outreach to and service of Covered Populations, and alignment to specific State Digital Equity Plan goals and outcomes.   |
| Support from the Community  | The level of demonstrated support from community stakeholders. Community support may be demonstrated through letters of support; committed resources (i.e., space, funding); evidence of community-based planning, program design or input; or other meaningful showcase of support. |
| Budget  | Reasonable and viable use of funding that aligns with project priorities and evidence of need. If staff salary is included, demonstrate equity in compensation.  |
| Plan for Sustainability   | The plan for program sustainability following the grant's period of performance.   |

*Consider language access, staff training, fair wages, and focus use of funding on direct community benefit.*

*Review NOFO for further details.*

# Digital Equity Act Resources

## Landing Pages, Links, & Resources:

### State Digital Equity Plan

- [State Digital Equity Plan](#) (Final, Approved by NTIA April 10, 2024)
  - [Appendix](#)
- Executive Summary
  - [English](#)
  - [Spanish](#)
  - [Polish](#)
  - [Simplified Chinese](#)
  - [Tagalog](#)
  - [Arabic](#)

### Digital Equity Plan Implementation

- **Webinars**
  - Grant Capacity Building Series
    - State Grant Basics – [Recording](#) | [Slides](#)
    - How to Write a Great Grant Application – [Recording](#) | [Slides](#)
    - How to Build a Strong Digital Inclusion Program – [Recording](#) | [Slides](#)
    - Building Digital Inclusion Coalitions – [Recording](#) | [Slides](#)
    - Equity in Digital Inclusion Project Implementation – [Recording](#) | [Slides](#)
    - Preparing for Grants – Deeper Dive into Grant Writing - [Recording](#) | [Slides](#)
    - Leveraging Data for Storytelling - [Recording](#) | [Slides](#)
- **Digital Equity Resources**
  - [Digital Skills Online Resources](#)
  - [Ventura County Digital Upskilling Training Program](#)
  - [Digital Equity Act Population Viewer](#)
  - [Free Digital Navigator Training by Community Tech Network](#)
  - [Free Digital Skills Library](#)
  - [NDIA's Digital Navigator Model](#)
  - [Data Sources](#)
  - [NDIA's Digital Inclusion Program Manual](#)

<https://dceo.illinois.gov/broadband/digital-equity-act.html>



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**Partner Presentation:  
Caitlin Nelson,  
National Impact Manager  
PCs For People**



pcsforpeople

# Device Distribution Partnerships

[pcsforpeople.org](http://pcsforpeople.org)





# Who We Are



Locations in Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Minnesota, Maryland, Missouri, and Ohio, Pennsylvania... and growing!

PCs for People is a national nonprofit working to get low-cost quality computers and internet into the homes of individuals and families with low income. By recycling and then refurbishing computers, PCs for People provides a valuable service to businesses, families, and the planet by keeping computers out of landfills and repurposing them to advance digital inclusion.



# Our National Impact

Since 1998



**650,000**  
people  
supported



**397,000**  
devices  
distributed



**13 million**  
pounds of e-waste  
recycled



**90,000**  
homes connected  
to internet

# Affordable Refurbished Computers

Desktops: \$150

Laptops: \$175

- Windows 11, i5 8th gen or higher, SSD, 8 GB RAM
- Upgrades and customization available
- One-year hardware warranty
- Ongoing tech support
- Optional install- MS Office (\$20)



**DISTRIBUTE**





# Mobile Hotspots

- 4G & 5G devices
- \$15/month + modem purchase
- Unlimited data
- 1 month - 3 year plans
- No contracts

# Affordable Internet

## National Initiatives for WISP

- Fixed wireless internet service for households within limited coverage areas for just \$15/month
- We are committed to expanding this service to different areas across the U.S.



**pcsforpeople**

[wisp@pcsforpeople.org](mailto:wisp@pcsforpeople.org)



### **Areas with Current Coverage:**

- Cleveland and Columbus OH
- Kansas City, KS
- Mankato, MN
- Milwaukee, MI
- East St. Louis, IL
- Atlanta, GA and others coming soon!

# Distribution Methods

## Partner Portal:

- Co-branded website
- Flexible distribution options (local office)
- Aggregate data available for project reports
- One-year hardware warranty
- Ongoing call center phone support in Hmong, Spanish, Somali, and English



# Get in touch!

Caitlin Nelson  
National Impact Manager,  
PCs for People

[cnelson@pcsforpeople.org](mailto:cnelson@pcsforpeople.org)  
[partner@pcsforpeople.org](mailto:partner@pcsforpeople.org)

[recycle@pcsforpeople.org](mailto:recycle@pcsforpeople.org)

# TOGETHER

we can make digital equity a reality.





# Partner Q&A



**Partner Presentation:  
Dwayne Douglas,  
Founder - CEO  
Quilt, NFP**



## CEO and Founder

### Dwayne Douglas, CEO

- 30+ years of industry experience in IT, Healthcare, Finance, Social Services and Telecommunications
- Expertise in leading cross-functional teams and driving innovation
- Background in software engineering and computer science
- Skilled in developing and executing strategies for growth
- Committed to community empowerment and sustainability



# QUILT

A Patchwork of Change

Turning  
Neighborhood  
Vision into  
Community  
Action



Be The Change

# QUILT

A Patchwork of Change



Turning Neighborhood Vision into Community Action

## **Our Mission**

Bringing together partners, resources, and communities to create opportunities that empower individuals with the knowledge, tools, and support to achieve self-sufficiency, drive sustainable change, and foster lasting community progress.

Be The Change

# OUR WORK

## BROADBAND ACCESS for BRIGHTER FUTURES



A campaign and engagement initiative focused on advocacy, partnerships, and education to drive broadband adoption and awareness.

- **Expand digital access**
- **Drive economic mobility**
- **Create sustainable opportunities**

In communities that have been historically underserved.

BBAF brings together **public, private, philanthropic, and community partners** to ensure that individuals, families, and businesses have the **internet connectivity, devices, and skills needed to thrive in today's digital world.**



# OUR WORK Cont.

## Community Access Broadband Initiative (CABI)

The **Community Access Broadband Initiative (CABI)** is **QUILT's** flagship program designed to expand **affordable broadband access** in marginalized communities.

- Focuses on **building sustainable broadband infrastructure** in historically disconnected areas.
- Uses **public-private partnerships** (e.g., ComEd, NODE Networks) to leverage **existing infrastructure** for broadband expansion.
- Designed as a **replicable, scalable model** for broadband deployment across multiple cities.



## N'SPIRE

**QUILT's** workforce development and digital skills training program, designed to equip individuals with the knowledge and certifications needed for careers in **broadband, Information technology, and digital infrastructure**.

- Provides certifications and apprenticeships in fiber optics, cybersecurity, IT networking, and digital infrastructure.
- Trains individuals in hands-on, industry-specific skills that align with workforce demands.
- Prepares participants for high-wage, sustainable careers in the technology and broadband sectors.

## OUR APPROACH



### Listen

Build programs and solutions with the community – listen to be informed and respond with purpose.

### Engage

Commit resources and experience get involved in the community agenda.

### Restore

Build trusting community partnerships, We are honest, transparent, and intentional.

### Empower

Create sustainable solutions that not only address needs of today yet create opportunities for tomorrow.





# Strategic Collaboration

QUILT is a dynamic consortium of public, private, philanthropic, and community organizations, united by a shared commitment to expanding access, creating opportunities, and driving lasting change.

## CIVIC LEADERS & REPRESENTATIVES

Key decision-makers who **convene stakeholders, champion policies, and advocate for initiatives that strengthen communities, expand access, and create sustainable impact.** Illinois Office of Broadband, DCEO, City of Chicago, Cook County...

## COMMUNITY

A network of **individuals, grassroots organizations, and local institutions** working together to **expand access, strengthen connections, and build resilient, empowered communities.** (POAH, Sinai Chicago, IAMABLE, NNA, Phalanx..)



## INDUSTRY

Organizations and companies that provide expertise, resources, and opportunities to **drive innovation, economic growth, and community well-being through strategic investment and collaboration.** (i.e. ComEd, Node Networks, Cambium, QTS...)

## TRAINING ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations offering certifications or technical training (e.g., private training centers, nonprofit organizations like **QUILT - N'SPIRE** ..)



# IT Takes a Village

Garfield Park Roseland Woodlawn Englewood North Lawndale Austin South Shore Maywood



# IT Takes a Village

At QUILT, we believe that **access to technology is fundamental to opportunity**. By **convening partners, collaborating on solutions, and cultivating sustainable partnerships**, we ensure that communities have the tools they need to thrive.

One key initiative is **device distribution**, where we work alongside organizations like **Compudopt** to provide reliable technology to individuals and families who need it most. By bridging the digital gap with essential devices, we **equip residents with the resources to pursue education, workforce opportunities, and digital inclusion**.

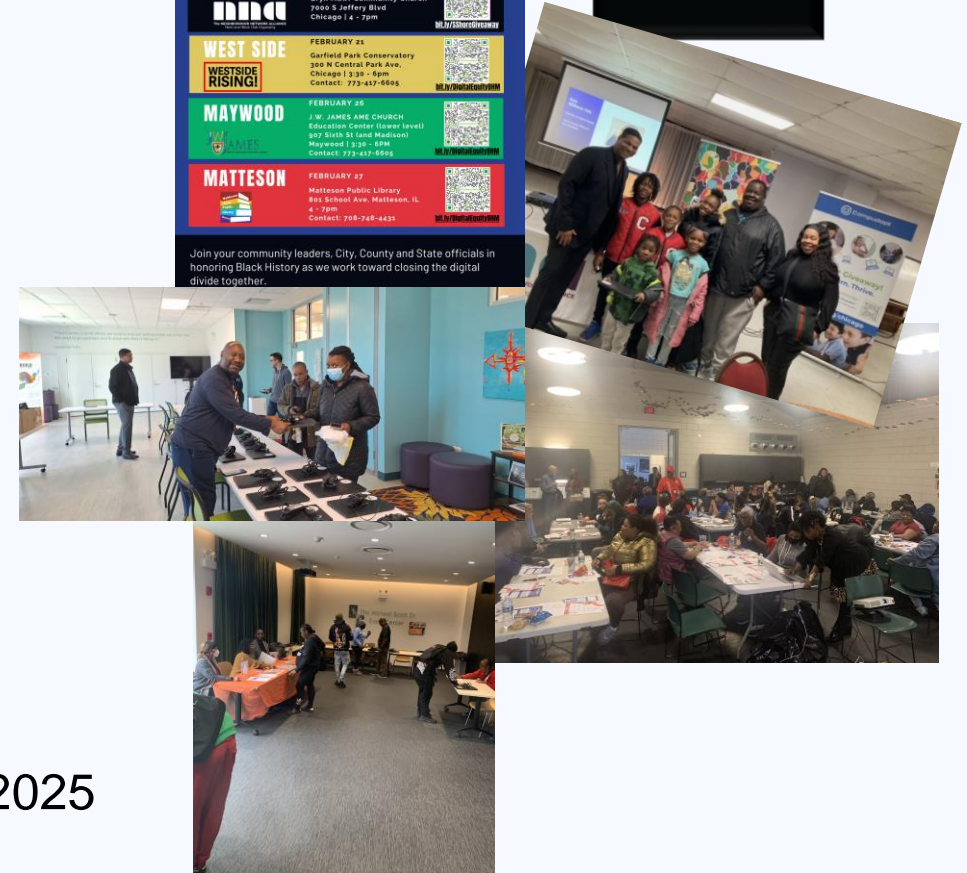


# Our Collective Impact

Device distribution is a **key enabler** that connects all three initiatives—**CABI, BABF, and N'SPIRE**—into a **holistic digital equity strategy**. Without access to **functional, affordable devices**, communities cannot fully benefit from broadband infrastructure, digital literacy programs, or workforce development opportunities.

Devices Distributed in partnership with Compudopt

- To date we have delivered – 1100 devices
- Across 7 Communities (including 2 in Cook County)
- We currently have 3 distribution planned for 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2025



# OUR VISION

A community where self-sufficiency is a shared reality, driven by accessible services and education. Where barriers are reduced providing access to opportunity. Where communities have sustained health, generational wealth, and community growth achieved through collaborative innovation, strong work ethic, and positive social impact. In this vision, every individual's journey towards success contributes to a resilient, interconnected community that thrives today and paves the way for brighter futures.



# LASTING IMPACT

Quilt  
a patchwork of change

## Differentiator:

Beyond Programs – We build Collaborations with Community, Public, Private and Philanthropic Partners. We form sector relationships sharing resources and experiences to solve for the community need.



Way Makers, Miracle Workers, Promise Keepers, Light in the Darkness

# Questions?

Email

[dwayne.douglas@quiltfp.org](mailto:dwayne.douglas@quiltfp.org)





# Partner Q&A

# Device Distribution Resources

| Name                  | Eligibility  | Cost  | How to Acquire Device  | Website  | Contact   |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|--|---|
| <b>PCs for People</b> | All people participating in certain income-based government assistance programs or having a qualifying household income (less than 200% of federal poverty guidelines or 60% of area median income)  | \$0-100 plus based on condition/operating system/availability   | Onsite<br>Online<br>Device distribution events   | <a href="http://www.pcsforpeople.org/eligibility">www.pcsforpeople.org/eligibility</a> | Loren Williams<br><a href="mailto:lwilliams@pcsforpeople.com">lwilliams@pcsforpeople.com</a><br>708-843-8450<br>4535 SW Highway, Oak Lawn, IL 60453         |
| <b>Compudopt</b>      | All people in Chicago who do not own a working computer at home and have a child in K-12 education.  | Free Computer giveaway with registration link. No guarantees.   | Online<br>Onsite<br>Device distribution events   | <a href="https://www.compudopt.org/">https://www.compudopt.org/</a>                    | Mike Carter<br><a href="mailto:mike.carter@compudopt.org">mike.carter@compudopt.org</a><br>630-376-6558<br>1414 Brook Drive Downers Grove, IL, 60515        |
| <b>Digitunity</b>     | <b>NOT A DISTRIBUTOR</b><br>They connect donors of computers with community-based organizations, who then distribute them to individuals in need.  | They have partnerships with distributors across country who offer no fee and low fee devices to covered population communities. | They collective devices (laptops, desktops) from companies & organizations with established partnership for refurbished devices. (NOTE: Seeking Illinois partners) | <a href="https://digitunity.org/">https://digitunity.org/</a>                          | Christopher Craven<br><a href="mailto:chris@digitunity.org">chris@digitunity.org</a><br>(203) 863-9100<br>Loveland, CO (REMOTE Company)                     |
| <b>Human IT</b>       | National and available for individuals in all covered population communities. For individuals a free membership program. For organizations a partnership to purchase refurbished fairly new in bulk. | Laptops & Desktops \$100-\$2k   | Purchase Online Offices are in Michigan and California. (NOTE: Seeking Illinois partners)  | <a href="https://www.human-i-t.org/">https://www.human-i-t.org/</a>                    | Kristina Parks<br><a href="mailto:kristina.parks@human-i-t.org">kristina.parks@human-i-t.org</a><br>888-268-3921<br>1400 Oakman Blvd,<br>Detroit, MI, 48238 |





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# Next Steps

The Office of Broadband is hosting ongoing Technical Assistance and capacity building webinars to help potential sub-grantees in their application process.

## **February 3 | 11 AM CT | Project Areas: Device Distribution/Digital Literacy/Tech Support**

Learn from an organization that effectively implements learn-to-earn device distribution programs. You will also learn from one of the Illinois device distribution partners on how they manage providing devices for their partners.

## **February 7 | 11 AM CT | Illinois Digital Equity Capacity Grant (IDEC) Technical Assistance Webinar**

This webinar will unpack the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) of the Illinois Digital Equity Capacity Grant (IDEC). You will get guidance on program requirements, budgeting and financial management and learn resources and tips to navigate the grant application process, project planning and compliance.

## **February 10 | 11 AM CT | Project Areas: Computer Tech Centers and Broadband Planning**

Hear from organizations who have implemented computer technology center projects and community broadband planning projects and learn more about who to effectively plan and implement these projects.

## **February 14 | 11 AM CT | Project Areas: Digital Navigators**

In this webinar, you will learn about setting up a digital navigation program and hear from organizations that host digital navigators, as well as digital navigators themselves about the essential services they provide to help communities achieve digital equity.

[Registration Link](#)



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# Get support and stay in the know!

Not sure where to start? Email [broadband@illinois.gov](mailto:broadband@illinois.gov)

For questions, guidance, or to schedule a guest presentation, contact your **Illinois Office of Broadband Community Engagement Manager**:

- Northern Region: [Alicia.Ross@illinois.gov](mailto:Alicia.Ross@illinois.gov), 217-720-8149
- Central Region: [Lingling.Liu@illinois.gov](mailto:Lingling.Liu@illinois.gov), 217-720-7718
- Southern Region: [Hillary.Rains@illinois.gov](mailto:Hillary.Rains@illinois.gov), 217-720-4768

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View our website [dceo.illinois.gov/broadband](https://dceo.illinois.gov/broadband) and [other helpful links](#)



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# Q&A



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