

Leverage Federal Funds to Advance Digital Equity in Your Community



The federal government is making historic investments in advancing digital equity, literacy, and inclusion for all through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which has three goals:

- Build infrastructure that provides reliable high-speed Internet **access** to all Americans for **today and tomorrow**.
- Make high-speed Internet **affordable** and **reliable** so **everyone** can participate.
- Providing resources needed to equitably expand the adoption and use of the Internet so everyone can experience the benefits.

Three IIJA programs are of particular relevance for U.S. libraries:

1

Digital Equity Act (DEA)

- \$2.75 billion program, with funds for state planning, state implementation, and national competitive grants.
- Aim to ensure all communities can access and use the Internet to meet their needs and improve their lives.
- Prioritizes “covered populations” disproportionately impacted by digital equity:
 - Aging populations (60 yo+)
 - Incarcerated individuals
 - Low-income households
 - People with disabilities
 - People with language barriers
 - Racial and ethnic minorities
 - Rural inhabitants
 - Veterans
- Focused on equity outcomes:
 - Access
 - Education (including digital literacy)
 - Workforce
 - Health

DEA is administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

2

Broadband, Equity, Access, and Development (BEAD)

- \$42.45 billion program focused on building infrastructure to increase adoption of high-speed Internet.
- Focus is first on unserved areas (below 25/3Mbps), then underserved areas (below 100/20Mbps), and community anchor institutions.
- States will create action plans that must align with state digital equity plans.
- Strongly encourages collaboration with community organizations.

BEAD is administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

3

Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

- Helps ensure eligible households can afford needed broadband for work, school, healthcare, and more.
- Provides qualifying low-income households with a monthly discount of up to \$30 per month (and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands) and a one-time \$100 discount toward a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from a participating provider.
- A household is eligible if the household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or if a household member participates in an eligible program.
- To learn more about the program, including a full list of eligible programs, visit [fcc.gov/acp](https://www.fcc.gov/acp).

ACP is administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Check Out the American Library Association's Digital Equity Resources landing page for more information

ala.org/advocacy/broadband/digital-equity-resources



State Digital Equity Plan

States submit two separate plans, one for BEAD (which is due first) and one for DEA. The visions for both must be closely aligned. The Digital Equity Action Plan includes:



1. **Executive Summary.** Provide a clear and concise summary of the Digital Equity Plan.
2. **Introduction and Vision for Digital Equity**
 - Clear, specific vision for digital equity in the context of their State.
 - Alignment with existing efforts to improve outcomes.
 - Strategy and Objectives. States should provide an overview of the measurable objectives to realize the vision for digital equity in their State. The objectives will inform the plan's implementation strategy and should ensure the plan's sustainability and effectiveness. State's should consider long-term objectives for closing the digital divide by addressing the needs of covered populations.
3. **Current State of Digital Equity** with an asset inventory of current resources, programs, and strategies that promote digital equity for covered populations and a needs assessment that identifies the current baseline and barriers to digital equity, especially those affecting covered populations.
4. **Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement.** Description of how the State plans to collaborate with key constituencies.
5. **Implementation.** States must clearly lay out their strategy, the barriers addressed, measurable goals, corresponding activities, and estimated timeline for achieving the Plan.
6. **Conclusion.**

Plans are due on a rolling basis based on when planning grants were issued. **Plans are now or will soon be available for public comment for 30 days.** Check your state's broadband office website for more information. The BroadbandUSA State Broadband Leaders Network webpage lists the contact information at broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/resources/states (see QR code at right).

Contact Information
State Broadband
Leaders Network



NOTES

What programs does your library offer—or want to offer—to advance digital equity for covered populations? Which organizations in your community can you collaborate with to build capacity and/or can help you connect with covered populations?

Additional Resources



**Affordable
Connectivity
Program**
FCC



**BEAD
Program**
BroadbandUSA/
NTIA



**DEA
Program**
BroadbandUSA/
NTIA