NDIA Policy Update: Everything DEA

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Today's Agenda

1. DEA Background
2. DEA State of Play
3. DEA Advocacy Resources

About NDIA

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

2000+ Affiliates

50 States +
DC, AS, CNMI, GU, PR, VI

41 Tribal Entities

Definitions

Digital Divide: The Issue

The gap between:

- Those who have affordable access, skills and support to effectively engage online

- Those who do not have access

Digital Equity: The Goal

Condition where all individuals have the technology capacity needed to participate in:

- Society

- Democracy

- Economy

Source: NDIA Definitions Page

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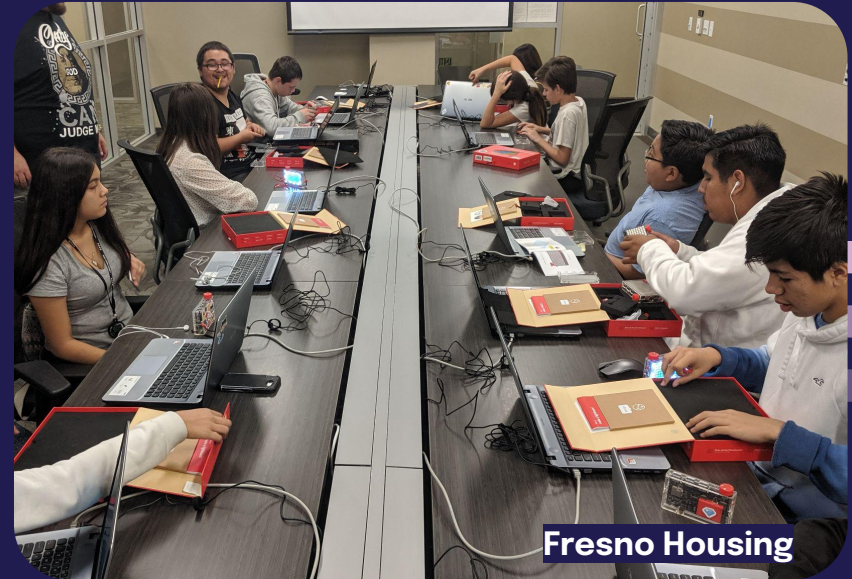
Why Digital Equity?

Digital Inclusion: The Work

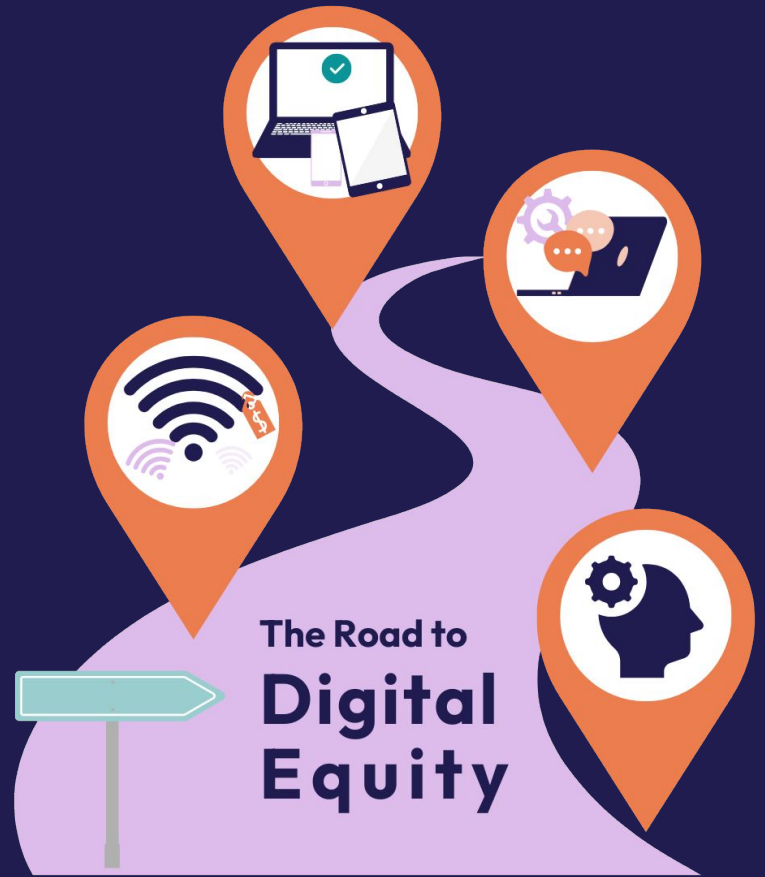**The activities necessary to ensure that all individuals have access to:**

- Affordable home broadband

- Appropriate devices

- Digital Skills

- Tech Support

- Applications

Source: NDIA Definitions Page

Fresno Housing

![NDIA] NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION ALLIANCE

Elements of Digital Inclusion

- Affordable high-speed internet

- Affordable and appropriate devices

- Access to digital skills training

- Quality technical support

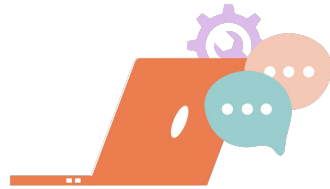- Online content designed to enable self-sufficiency

The Road to
Digital Equity

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Key Barriers to Digital Inclusion

Key Barriers to Digital Inclusion

Broadband
- ⊗ Unaffordable
- ⊗ Unreliable Service
- ⊗ Digital Redlining

Devices
- ⊗ Unaffordable
- ⊗ Outdated Software
- ⊗ Device not a good match

Digital Skills
- ⊗ Limited Skills
- ⊗ Fear & Shame
- ⊗ Inaccessible Trainings

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The Solution

Affordable Broadband

Affordable Devices

Digital Skills Trainings

Solution: Affordable & Low Cost Broadband

What is Broadband?

Broadband is the transmission of wide bandwidth data over a high speed internet connection

In March 2024, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines the minimum standard for broadband speed as 100/20

- 100 megabits per second for downloading

- 20 megabits per second for uploading

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Broadband Adoption

Broadband adoption is daily access to the internet:
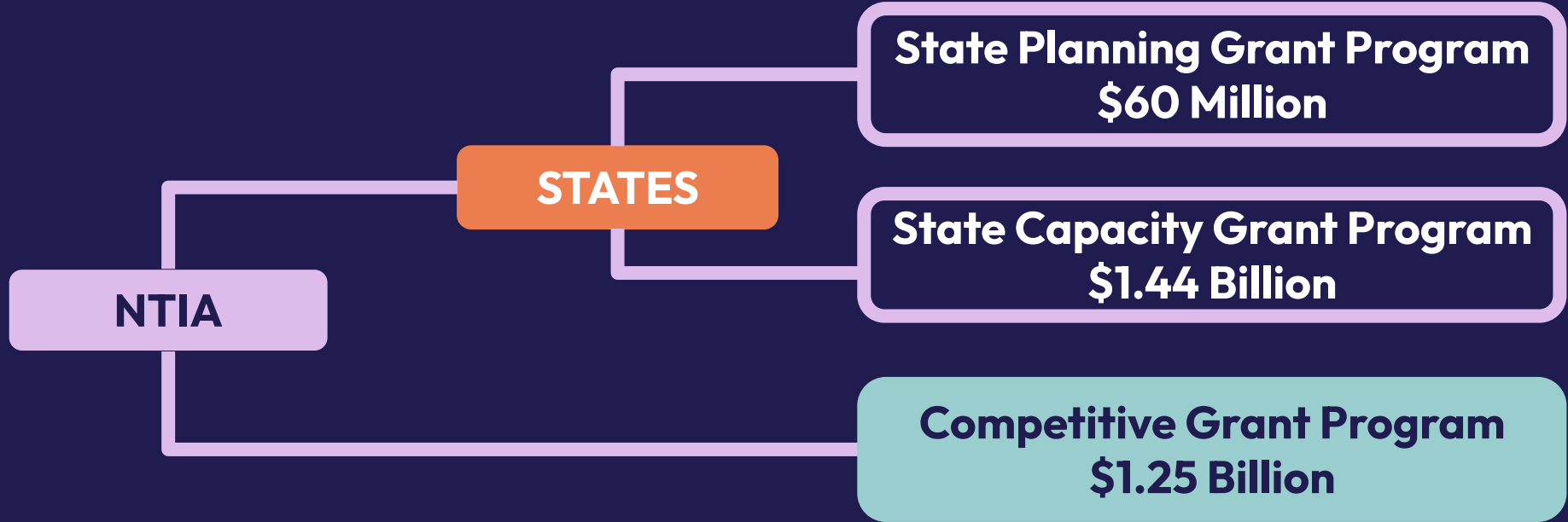
- At speeds, quality and capacity necessary to accomplish common tasks,

- With the digital skills necessary to participante online, and

- On a personal device and secure, convenient network

DEA STATUS UPDATES

AND

POTENTIAL RISKS

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

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Digital Equity Act Timeline

- **Federal Government**
- **States & Territories**
- **Organizations Eligible for DEA grants and Subgrants**
- **Native Entities**

Nov. 2021
IIJA passed with Digital Equity Act

March 2024
NTIA opens Capacity Grants for States

June 2024
First State Capacity Award (rolling basis)

July 2024
US Territories Capacity Grant applications due

Sept. 2024
Native Entities Capacity Program applications open

Oct. 2024 – April 2025
Organizations may receive Capacity sub-awards and Competitive grants

State Digital Equity Plans published
Spring 2024

State Capacity Program applications due
May 2024

NTIA opens Competitive Grants
July 2024

Eligible Entities Competitive Grant applications closed
Sept. 2024

US Territories Competitive Grant applications due
Oct. 2024

Native Entities Capacity Program applications due
Feb. 7, 2025

State Digital Equity Capacity Grant

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) opened the State Capacity Grant on March 29, 2024

- $840 million in grant funding available to states, US territories, and Native entities

- The funds will be used to implement digital equity plans

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Putting DE Plans Into Action

To help the success of these plans, states and territories must consider various factors such as:

- Focusing on covered populations

- Implementing measurable strategies

- Encouraging long-lasting and meaningful change

- Engaging stakeholders

State Subawards

States and Territories *May* Award Subgrants to Implement the State's Digital Equity Plan

- Supporting the implementation of the plan

- Digital inclusion activities that align with the plan

- Reporting the entities' digital inclusion activities to the State
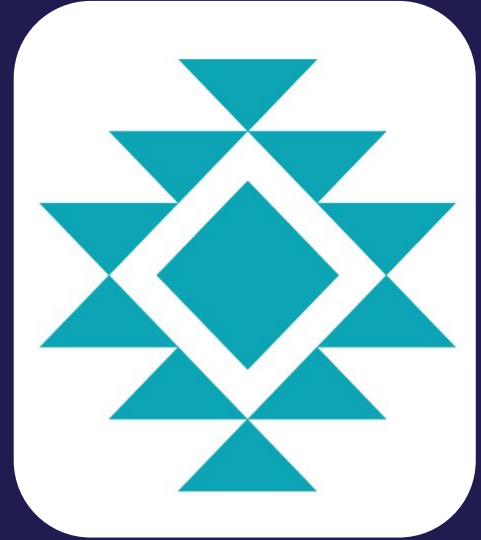
Native Entities Capacity Grant

Applications

- Applications were open September 25, 2024 and are due February 7, 2025

- $45.3 million is available for Native Entities

- Grant awards will range from $500,000 to $2,000,000

- The grants are competitive

AMERIND
Critical Infrastructure

Native Entities Capacity Grant

Awards

- NTIA expects to begin making awards to Native entities in the Summer of 2025
  - Funds may be issued on a rolling basis
- Entities that receive funding must complete the grant within 5 years

AMERIND
Critical Infrastructure

Digital Equity Competitive Grant

Competitive Grants

- Applications for States and Native Entities were due to NTIA by September 23, 2024

- $1 billion allocated funds in 1st Tranche ($250M in future NOFO)
- 65 projects recommended for award in Jan 2025

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Use Of Grant Funds

Projects Will

- Address gaps in the implementation of State Digital Equity Plans, and/or

- Supplement or further advance State Digital Equity Plans, and/or

- Address barriers to digital equity that State Digital Equity Plans failed to identify

Current Status of DEA Grants

State Digital Equity Capacity Grant: $1.44B

- **States: $760.8 M**
- **Territories: $8.4M**
- **Tribal Entities: $45.3M**
- **Future NOFOs: $600M**

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What's at Risk for the Capacity Grant:

- **State & Territory Grants**
  - Those without a signed contract
  - Pauses or changes to approved/active work
  - Veto to projects and subgrant submissions
- **Native Entity grants**
  - Not yet evaluated
  - Potential loss $45.3M
- **$600 Million expected in future NOFOs for:**
  - State, Territory, and Native Entities

Current Status of DEA Grants

Digital Equity Competitive Grant: $1.25B

- **$1B Allocated in NOFO 1**
- **65 projects Recommended for award totaling $619M**
- **4 projects with signed contracts**
- **Future NOFO with ~$250M**

What's at Risk for the Competitive Grant:

- **The entire program - $1.25B**
  - ○ **$681M - 65 projects recommended for award & 4 signed contracts could be rescinded, redirected, or reallocated**
  - ○ **$381M - unallocated funds from this NOFO**
  - ○ **$250M - future NOFO**

Digital Discrimination

FCC has finalized rules for preventing and eliminating digital discrimination.

What the rules cover: "any aspect of broadband internet access service that impedes, impairs or denies 'equal access' to that service."

- Exa: Discrimination in broadband pricing, customer service, infrastructure upgrades

- Rules project consumers even if there was no intent

- Individuals and communities will be able to file complaints with FCC

Broadband Labels

The Broadband Consumer Labels include information on:

- Pricing

- Introductory rates

- Data allowances

- Performance metrics

Resources: Digital Equity Act Advocacy Tools

DEA Advocacy Tools

NDIA has created a suite of resources and tools that can be used surrounding advocacy for and awareness of the Digital Equity Act, including:

- Template letters to members of Congress
- Resources for Finding your Federal, State, and Local Elected Officials
- State and Territory DEA Two-Pagers (about DEA & resources coming to state)
- Press Release Templates
- Digital Inclusion Funding Celebration Ideas
- Digital Inclusion Funding Celebration Agenda

Access the Digital Equity Advocacy Tools

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Resource: Manual

State Digital Equity Implementation Manual

The manual is a comprehensive guide to turning the state digital equity plans into action.

You'll learn:

- Best practices and tips for developing and refining implementation strategies
- Recommendations for structuring and executing subgrant programs
- Performance measurement, program evaluation and sustainability

Download: State Digital Equity Implementation Manual

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