

DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY GRANT FUNDING GUIDELINES

Track 2: Computer Ownership Capacity Building and Sustainability

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Overview

The purpose of the \$17 million Digital Opportunity Grant program is to develop new and expand existing digital skills, digital navigation and online safety programs, as well as create a structured system for the provision and deployment of computers to increase ownership, help desk and technical support to those who need it most.

Digital opportunity is economic development. It includes access to affordable high-speed internet, access to high quality large-screen computers, and the digital skills training necessary to safely navigate the internet. It ensures people have the skills and technology needed to compete for jobs. These opportunities will benefit all North Carolinians - students who rely on their smartphones to do their homework, older adults who need help connecting with their doctor and test results online, people who lost everything in Hurricane Helene and need a computer to do their job, and many others.

Program Goals

The NCDIT Digital Opportunity Grant Program will support Strategies 3-5 of the North Carolina Digital Opportunity Plan.

- Strategy 3: Ensure that North Carolinians can acquire the digital and information-gathering skills and understanding to meet their personal needs and the state's workforce needs.
- Strategy 4: Promote practices and leverage tools to ensure online privacy and security.
- Strategy 5: Ensure that North Carolinians have access to large-screen computers, help desk and technical support to meet their needs.

We are seeking to fund programs with a period of performance ending June 30, 2029. Official start dates will depend on approval from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA); however, we anticipate a Jan. 1, 2026, start date.

Program Tracks

The Digital Opportunity grant program includes two tracks, and applicants can apply for Track 1 and/or Track 2:

1. Track 1: Digital Skills, Digital Navigation and Online Safety
2. Track 2: Computer Ownership Capacity Building and Sustainability (Applicants may not apply for both tracks)
 - Track 2a: Computer Refurbisher Hubs
 - Track 2b: Computer Deployment Lead

This document outlines only the guidance for Track 2: Computer Ownership Capacity Building and Sustainability. [View the Track 1 funding guidelines.](#)

Eligible Uses and Details

Computer Ownership Capacity Building and Sustainability

This track will expand computer¹ ownership initiatives to build a foundation for a sustainable, statewide ecosystem of local refurbishers and community organizations working to increase computer ownership in local communities.

¹ Throughout this document and in the corresponding application, "computer" or "large-screen computer" will be used to refer to large-screen, internet-ready computers.

Computer ownership refers to individuals owning a personal computer, as opposed to using loaner computers or publicly accessible computer labs. Access to the internet in any form is valuable, but owning a computer provides individuals access and agency over when and how they access the internet.

Track 2 consists of two key applicant types:

- **Track 2A: Computer Refurbisher Hubs (Hubs)**

Hubs are organizations responsible for receiving, processing, and preparing used computers for redistribution through Computer Deployment Leads and Partners throughout North Carolina. Hubs ensure that donated computers are properly sanitized, refurbished, tested and prepared for deployment.

- **Track 2B: Computer Deployment Leads (Leads)**

Leads are key coordinating organizations responsible for identifying, managing and supporting local Computer Deployment Partners. They serve as the liaison between NCDIT, Hubs, and Computer Deployment Partners, ensuring seamless communication, operational efficiency, program alignment and monitoring that program outcomes are met. Leads will identify and subgrant funding to Computer Deployment Partners.

- **Computer Deployment Partners (Partners/Subgrantees)**

These are trusted organizations in local communities responsible for the direct distribution and support of computers. They work with Leads, NCDIT, and Hubs to ensure that computers are effectively delivered, properly utilized and accompanied by necessary support services.

Roles and responsibilities as well as key definitions related to the Computer Ownership track are in the [Computer Ownership Details section](#).

Computer Ownership Track Details

Roles and Responsibilities - Computer Refurbisher Hubs (Track 2A)

Hubs will supply Leads and their Partners with refurbished computers. Hubs ensure that donated computers are properly sanitized, refurbished, tested and prepared for deployment.

Hubs must be a computer refurbisher headquartered in North Carolina with existing large-screen computer preparation and deployment programs to close the computer ownership gap in the state. Hubs must demonstrate that they have established relationships with a minimum of ten community-based organizations, demonstrate that they are capable of deploying a minimum of 2,500 large-screen computers annually to program recipients within North Carolina, and have operated within North Carolina for a minimum of seven years. We expect to award two grants to Hubs.

Each Hub will:

- Acquire, process, refurbish and prepare a supply of donated computers over the grant period to NCDIT's specifications, as outlined below.
- Transport or ship computers to designated Leads and/or their Partners a minimum of 7,500 large-screen computers.
- Provide warranties on the computers delivered to Leads and Partners as outlined by NCDIT Computer Specifications.
- Engage with the North Carolina Assistive Technology Program as appropriate and directed by NCDIT.
- Process and fulfill computer requests submitted from designated Leads and/or their Partners in a timely manner.
- Provide Help Desk support (see Help Desk definition).

- Examples of Help Desk support include providing help with improving password security; improving internet speed; offering guidance on how to avoid viruses and malware; how to make text bigger on a screen; how to find files; where to find affordable internet service; and basic troubleshooting on printer, email, and network connectivity issues. Hubs will work with NCDIT to determine the number of hours of help desk support.
- Participate in NCDIT's computer deployment training (up to 20 hours annually) and project related meetings and ensure the project is aligned with those standards.
- Expand upon their experience with computer deployment programs through community-based organizations by mentoring and building relationships with two Leads and their Partners, as assigned by NCDIT. These activities should include:
 - Building productive and professional relationships with Leads and/or their Partners and mentoring them as needed
 - Communicating and collaborating with assigned Leads on an ongoing basis
 - Sharing best practices in computer refurbishment and deployment
 - Organizing site visits for Leads and Partners to Hub locations, and Hubs to Lead or Partner locations
 - Answering technical questions
 - Helping with and aligning data collection
- Collect data and provide feedback from recipients, as required by NCDIT

NCDIT Computer Specifications:

All Large Screen Computers

1. A minimum of a one-year warranty (see Warranty definition). The warranty only applies to the resident who receives their computer from a Lead or Partner (non-transferable).
2. Computers that are no older than 5 years old
3. Charger and/or power cord
4. One year of technical support (see Technical Support definition)

Laptops and Desktops

1. A widely accepted, legally licensed operating system. Preferred operating systems, based on hardware compatibility, include:
 - Windows Devices: Windows 11 with a valid license
 - Apple Devices: macOS installed per authorized methods
 - Chromebooks: ChromeOS, properly configured for full functionality
 - Linux or other open-source operating system, properly configured for full functionality and ease of use
2. Standard software that is pre-installed, fully licensed, and ready for use. It must be updated and secure, with no trial versions, subscription requirements, or expiring software.
 - Windows: Windows 11 with Microsoft Office 2019 (or equivalent)
 - macOS: An office suite (iWork, Microsoft Office for Mac, or Google Workspace apps)
 - ChromeOS: Google Workspace apps
3. A minimum of 8 gigabytes of RAM (ideally 16 when possible and required for any purchased device)
4. A minimum of 128 gigabytes of onboard storage A mouse and wireless keyboard with each desktop computer; a mouse for laptops upon request, based on the needs of the recipient
5. A webcam, speakers and microphone for laptop computers (and where possible, desktop computers)
6. Ability to connect to the internet
7. A battery and charger or power cord

Tablets:

1. A processor capable of running up to date applications via the device's native application store
2. Battery life with 7 or more hours of power

3. Wi-Fi enabled with a minimum of Wi-Fi 5
4. A minimum of a micro-USB/lightning charging port
5. A minimum of 4 gigabytes of RAM
6. A minimum of 64 gigabytes of (Storage)

Roles and Responsibilities - Computer Deployment Leads (Track 2B)

The Leads will identify and coordinate with four to six Partners, as subgrantees, of the Computer Ownership Program to support the deployment of computers to individuals. The Leads will serve as a central contact for NCDIT to oversee multiple Partners.

The Leads will:

1. Identify Partners and ensure their alignment with the grant goals and performance
2. Collect data from the Partners and report data to NCDIT in a timely manner including key learnings
3. Monitor Partners, as subgrantees, including budget monitoring, reporting, and regular meetings
4. Participate in NCDIT's computer deployment training (up to 20 hours annually) and project related meetings and ensure the project is aligned with those standards
5. Accept computers from Hubs and transfer to the Partners, if appropriate
6. Procure computers in addition to those received from the NCDIT-designated Hub. These computers can be procured from Hubs, other computer refurbishers, or suppliers, and must follow the same minimum specifications and computer requirements as listed above for Hubs. Limited acquisition of smartphones is allowed, with NCDIT approval.
7. Provide support to Partners to expand and strengthen their capacity and impact

Each Lead will be assigned by NCDIT to one of the two Hubs for their computer supply needs based on geographic and program participant needs.

The Partners must be trusted, community-based entities in the state, serving local communities. Partners will deploy computers to residents.

The Partners will:

1. Conduct outreach to potential computer recipients
2. Vet recipients to meet eligibility requirements ensuring that recipient identifying information is protected
3. Identify computer needs of recipients
4. Ensure on-site staff support for computer distribution
5. Have capabilities to provide light computer preparation duties, such as loading software and operating systems
6. Follow NCDIT's pre-deployment quality control guidelines
7. Accept computers from Leads or from Hubs directly, if appropriate
8. Utilize allocated funding to purchase additional computers to supplement those supplied by Hubs
9. Deploy computers to residents based on needs
10. Ensure adequate and secure storage space for computers
11. Offer convenient hours and access for recipients to obtain a computer
12. Clearly and proactively communicate and problem-solve with Leads and/or Hubs to provide Help Desk support (see Help Desk definition)
 - a. Examples of Help Desk support include providing help with improving password security; improving internet speed; offering guidance on how to avoid viruses and malware; how to make text bigger on a screen; how to find files; where to find affordable internet service; and basic troubleshooting on printer, email, and network connectivity issues.
13. Connect and align computer deployment with digital skills training and/or navigator services within the organization or through local partners that provide services such as: essential digital skills training curriculum, computer usage, basic troubleshooting, and internet safety

14. Participate in NCDIT’s computer deployment training (up to 20 hours annually) and project related meetings and ensure the project is aligned with those standards
15. Collect data and provide feedback from recipients, as required by NCDIT
16. Follow responsible recycling and reuse steps for end of use of computers
17. Require recipients sign an agreement that the computer will not be re-sold
18. Provide reasonable support to recipients for them to safely transport their computer home
19. Verify and check the condition and count of computers as they are received from Leads or Hubs
20. Ensure that computers that fail to meet standards are reported to and remedied with the Hub

Program Recipients and Geographic Reach

Program Recipients

Funded projects will focus on serving all digital excluded populations in North Carolina. For definitions of excluded populations, please see [NTIA’s guidance](#).

Geographic Reach

Priority will be given to organizations that are regional or state-wide. Leads will subgrant to smaller, local organizations.

Applicant Eligibility²

Applicants and Partners receiving funding will be accepted from:

1. Community service organizations
 - a. Local governments (town, city, county)
 - b. Local library systems
 - c. K-12 school systems (public, private and charter)
2. Nonprofit organizations³
3. Higher education institutions
4. Regional entities (councils of governments)
5. State government agencies and federally recognized tribal government entities

For-profit entities are not eligible to apply for this funding opportunity.

Note: A Hub (Track 2A) must be a computer refurbisher headquartered in North Carolina, with existing large-screen computer deployment programs and ongoing programmatic activities to close the computer ownership gap in the state. Hubs must demonstrate that they have established relationships with a minimum of ten community-based organizations, demonstrate that they are capable of deploying a minimum of 2,500 large-screen computers annually to program participants within North Carolina, and have operated within North Carolina for a minimum of seven years.

We anticipate funding six Track 2 applicants – two Hubs and four Leads. Within Track 2B, the Leads

² Note, the NTIA recommends the following definitions for eligible entities. We have condensed these into 5 categories to be in alignment with other Digital Opportunity Office programming. Our categories are inclusive of those below:

- A political subdivision or state agency
- A nonprofit foundation, corporation, institution, or association
- A community anchor institution
- A local education agency
- An entity that carries out a workforce development program
- A partnership between any entities described above
- An Indian Tribe, an Alaskan Native entity, or a Native Hawaiian organization

³ Nonprofit organizations described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code including charitable organizations are eligible to apply. Note, a nonprofit based in North Carolina must also have Articles of Incorporation filed with the N.C. Secretary of State’s office in compliance with the North Carolina Nonprofit Corporations Act and, if applicable, a license to solicit donations in North Carolina.

must designate and subgrant to four to six Partners. Leads are eligible to be one of the designated Partners and receive the associated funding to also serve in this role.

Eligible Expenses, Project Elements and Funding Ranges

Each Hub (Track 2A) will be funded \$1,970,000 and will be responsible for supplying a minimum of 2,500 computers per year to Leads (and their Partners) for a total of 7,500 over the grant period.

Each of the four Leads (Track 2B) will receive \$977,500 to support both Lead and Partner activities.

Distribution of the funding is flexible.

- Leads can utilize a maximum of \$160,000 for their role in program activities.
- Leads should distribute a minimum of \$640,000 to Partners for programming and staff (the amount per Partner may differ, based on the needs of the Partner organization and those they are serving).
- Leads (and their Partners) should utilize a minimum of \$177,500 in supplemental funding for additional computers to meet the specific needs of individuals served.

Over the course of the grant period, each Lead and their Partners will:

- Deploy 3,750 computers received from the Hubs
- Procure and deploy additional computers with their supplemental funding to meet the specific needs of individuals served.

Eligible Expenses

The grant is designed to support organizational and program offerings to increase access to technology. Eligible expenses include:

Administrative & Staffing

- Personnel related expenses: Cost of personnel and associated benefits to deliver the program, which includes direct salaries, employer paid taxes and fringe benefits
- Travel related expenses: Travel expenses and reasonable accommodation or expenses for staff travel required for program delivery, events, and partnership activities
- Indirect costs/rate: General operating expenses or overhead and direct administrative expenses related to proposed activities for the applicant are allowed. These expenses should not exceed 15% of the total request.
 - Exception: If the applicant has a federally approved negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA), the applicant may apply this rate.

Note: Subrecipients/subgrantees that receive funding from an applicant must include only direct administrative expenses or an administrative/indirect rate of 15% or less.

Program Expenses

Program expenses for both tracks include:

Capital Expenses & Equipment*

- To enable program delivery, inclusions are Wi-Fi equipment on or in buildings providing internet access to people served by programs, additional internal wiring to enable fiber access, or Wi-Fi or updating routers or boosters to ensure high-quality connectivity that enables program delivery
 - No equipment installation should be proposed in historic buildings that appear on the National Register of Historic Places
- Digital devices and technical equipment to enable program delivery and device access; See the

Roles and Responsibilities - Computer Refurbisher Hubs (Track 2A) Section for a full list of eligible large-screen computers for Track 2. Note: Limited acquisition of smartphones is allowed for Leads and Partners (Track 2b), with NCDIT approval.

- Minor capital expenses such as furnishing a classroom or office for program delivery. Only essential, program-specific capital expenses will be considered. Requests for larger-scale renovations, construction, or significant infrastructure investments are not eligible under this program. Subgrantees should clearly justify how these minor capital expenses are critical to program success while adhering to grant cost restrictions. For example, Wi-Fi technology (e.g., routers or access points) to enable internet access within a specific program space where activities will be conducted is an eligible expense. Purchasing and installing routers, antennas or other network equipment as part of a larger project to expand broadband coverage in a neighborhood, building a public Wi-Fi network or connecting multiple locations (e.g., creating a municipal broadband network) is not an eligible expense.

*Note: A Buy America preference applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project component awarded under the Digital Opportunity grant program. It does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to a construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference apply to purchases of equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within a finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project.

All subrecipients, however, are strongly encouraged to apply the Build America, Buy America Act (BABA) standards for all infrastructure-related procurement, to the greatest extent practicable in alignment with the goals of supporting domestic manufacturing and promoting economic growth. If you believe your proposal will include an infrastructure project component, please contact digitalopportunity@nc.gov prior to submission to discuss Buy America implications.

Professional Services

- Professional services or staff costs necessary to enable the project itself, such as legal, financial support and interpretation services
- Reasonable project management costs to the applicant organization related to management and support of the network partners
- Costs associated with monitoring of and reporting on project in compliance with requirements, including award closeout costs
- Costs associated with collecting and measuring performance data and conducting activities needed to establish and maintain a performance management and evaluation of the project

Allocation Limits & Other Conditions (per NTIA guidelines)

- Applicants must adhere to the following caps on expense categories:
 - 5% evaluation or impact measurement
- Funding must complement and not replace other federal funding sources.

Other Program Expenses

- Wrap-around services such as transportation for program participants (no more than 5% of budget).
- Food for program participants

Expenses Specific to Track 2A (Hubs): Computer Ownership Capacity Building and Sustainability

Required project elements and associated expenses for Hubs are limited to:

- Computer refurbishment expenses, including technical staff personnel costs; purchasing necessary refurbishment equipment, tools, and software; improving and expanding storage

and workspace facilities; implementing compliance processes (e.g., certified data sanitization); increasing skills and knowledge through staff certifications (e.g., CompTIA); and organizational certifications (e.g., National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) or R2 Certification, Sustainable Electronics Recycling International (SERI))

- Computer deployment program expenses, including personnel costs, costs related to transporting and shipping computers to Leads and Partners and warehousing
- Expenses related to required software, warranty costs (including replacement parts), technical support and help desk services are eligible within this grant program
- If necessary, Hubs can procure new and refurbished large-screen computers; however, reuse is the priority. Track 2A does not include smartphones
- Expenses for purchasing peripherals to meet the needs of recipients if needed
- Travel expenses and reasonable expenses for staff visits to Leads, Partners and Hubs
- Costs associated with collecting and measuring performance data, and conducting activities needed to establish and maintain performance management and evaluation of the project

Expenses Specific to Track 2B (Leads): Computer Ownership Capacity Building and Sustainability

Required project elements and associated expenses for Leads are limited to:

- Computers in this program primarily include laptops, desktops, and tablets that adequately meet the needs of the intended user. With NCDIT approval, limited acquisition of smartphones is allowed to meet the unique needs of specific communities.
- Leads can procure additional refurbished and/or new, large-screen computers from Hubs, other computer refurbishers and suppliers to supplement their Hub-provided computers; however, reuse is the priority
- Computer deployment program expenses, including personnel costs and costs related to transporting and shipping non-Hub supplied computers to Partners
- Travel expenses and reasonable expenses for staff visits to Partners or Hubs
- Expenses related to program delivery, events and partnership activities, including outreach and marketing activities
- Costs associated with collecting and measuring performance data and conducting activities needed to establish and maintain performance management and evaluation of the project

Required project elements and associated expenses for Partners (via the Leads) are limited to:

- Costs associated with ensuring adequate and secure storage space for computers
- Costs associated with collecting data
- Travel expenses and reasonable expenses for staff visits to Hubs and Leads
- Expenses related to program delivery and events, including outreach and marketing activities to
- Expenses for purchasing peripherals to meet the needs of recipients, if needed

Ineligible Expenses

This grant does not support lending programs or public computer labs. All funded programs must distribute large-screen computers (laptops, desktops, tablets) or smartphones (with state approval), at no cost, to individuals.

The following expense types are ineligible for funding:

- No infrastructure deployment costs are eligible under this program. Infrastructure deployment refers to activities like laying fiber optic cables or constructing broadband network building towers, conduits or other physical structures related to broadband connectivity; and equipment installation intended for broadband or telecommunications network operations.
- Costs related to the construction, installation or deployment of broadband infrastructure.

- Purchasing equipment or materials for physical infrastructure upgrades (e.g., routers, fiber cables, modems) that are part of network infrastructure
- Site preparation, ground disturbance or any activities that involve attaching to, modifying or altering a historical building or property for broadband facilities or network hardware.
- Funds cannot be used for internet subsidies or to pay internet installation or subscription costs for individuals or households.
- Grant funds cannot be used to upgrade websites for accessibility that is required by law, including support for improving state or local government website accessibility.
- There can be no duplicative activities or expenses between the funding requested through this program and any other funding source including the NTIA Digital Equity Competitive Program funding or other private or Office of Digital Opportunity funding awarded to the subgrantee or its partners. However, activities funded through this program may complement other funded efforts by addressing different aspects of the same initiative or by serving distinct populations, as long as each funding source is used for clearly defined and separate expenses.
- Existing Office of Digital Opportunity subgrantees, such as the State Government Entities or Digital Champion grant projects are eligible to apply but must avoid requesting funding for programs or activities already funded through NCDIT or others.
- Grants may not be used for costs that will be reimbursed under other federal or state funding stream(s).

Reimbursement and Advance Payment Policies

1. Reimbursement

Awarded applicants will be able to request reimbursements on a monthly basis for costs to carry out the project. Costs for which reimbursement is requested must meet certain requirements to be eligible for reimbursement including 2 CFR 200- cost principles. To be eligible for reimbursement, the cost must be reasonable and necessary to carry out the project and have been incurred directly or indirectly in the performance of the project. The cost must also be considered an allowable expenditure as identified by the grant guidelines. A successful applicant may not cumulatively request more than what was awarded and identified in the grant agreement.

2. Advance Payment

The Office of Digital Opportunity may consider approving requests for advance payment of initial project costs or for ongoing advance payments in appropriate circumstances. Advanced payment requests from an Applicant in no case should exceed the amount of cash required for a 30-day period to implement project deliverables. Applicants that are requesting advanced payments to begin project deliverables must explicitly provide justification in the budget narrative. Applicants must submit a detailed justification for why advance payment of expenses is needed, explaining how the project will benefit from an advance rather than a reimbursement. They must also provide a payment schedule and outline deliverables for each 30-day payment period. The Office of Digital Opportunity will evaluate requests on a case-by-case basis and may grant advances to projects that demonstrate organizational resilience and trust to carry out programmatic activities; provide evidence of increased need for initial funding to begin programmatic work; and have provided thorough and complete documentation. Applicants should consider contingency in fulfilling proposed project activities in the event that advanced payment requests are not approved. Advanced payments shall not cover pre-award expenditures.

Application Process and Deadline

All applications must be submitted online via the Qualtrics grant application system by 11:59 p.m. on June 9, 2025. The application can be found at ncbroadband.gov/Digital-Opportunity-Grant. Applications will only be accepted through this online portal. A list of application questions for each track as well as other grant other resources are also available on this webpage.

Application Window Opens	April 10
Information Session Webinars	April 16, 2 – 3 p.m. (Click to Register) April 22, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. (Click to Register)
Track Specific Webinars	Date TBD
Drop-In Office Hours	Date TBD Date TBD
Funding Invitation/Application Window Closes	June 9 at 11:59 p.m.
Contingent Awards Announced (all recommended grantees must be approved by the NTIA before award is considered final)	September
Contingent Grantee Trainings and Risk Assessments	September-November
Award Approvals from NTIA (anticipated)	November
Anticipated Grant Start Date	January 2026 ²

Upon receipt of a full application and consideration of it relative to criteria set forth in this document, we will determine whether the proposed project should receive funding under this program.

Applicants will be notified in writing if their project has been awarded and will receive a contingent award agreement. All award recommendations must be approved by the NTIA before they become official.

The Digital Opportunity grant awards are contingent on federal approval and applicable law. We will keep applicants apprised of any additional updates and responses from the NTIA or changes in law that may impact funding, program guidelines or criteria.

Application Review

Applications will be reviewed by a committee of digital opportunity, community partners and state agency officials. The Office of Digital Opportunity will review recommendations from external reviewers and make final selection decisions. Scoring is one important factor considered for final recommendation. The Office of Digital Opportunity ultimately selects grantees to ensure that awarded applications are filling known gaps in programming, considering costs in program budget, and are meeting geographic and community needs across the state.

Awarded Project Compliance and Monitoring

Awarded projects are subject to project monitoring to ensure the grantee fulfills the terms and conditions of their grant. Grantees will be required to adhere to, at minimum, the following requirements outlined

below:

- Risk Assessment
- Monthly Expenditure Reports
- Monthly Check-ins
- Quarterly Accountability Reports

Monitoring and Compliance training and materials will be provided once projects are selected. Other requirements may be included to ensure compliance with NTIA policies.

- Risk Assessment: The risk assessment is a foundational tool for developing monitoring plans tailored to each grantee. It generates a risk summary profile that identifies potential risks specific to the grantee. Upon award execution, all grantees are initially categorized as “high-risk” until their assessment scores are finalized. Grantees classified as medium or low risk will have reduced reporting frequency and detail requirements.
- Monthly Expenditure Report: Grantees must submit a monthly expenditure report detailing all expenses charged to the grant. Each grantee is assigned a finance officer who provides support with reporting and ensures compliance.
- Monthly Check-In: Grantees must participate in a monthly check-in meeting for 30 minutes with their assigned program officer to review project progress, provide status updates and address any questions related to the grant.
- Quarterly Accountability Report: Grantees must submit a quarterly accountability report outlining the project's progress, including updates on outcomes and outputs achieved to date.

NOTE: Cybersecurity

NTIA states that subrecipients must ensure that the planning, design, and project oversight phases of the programs and activities funded are consistent with current industry best practices for cybersecurity, such as the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Cybersecurity Performance Goals (CPGs). These performance goals provide a baseline set of cybersecurity practices that are broadly applicable, with known risk-reduction value. NTIA reserves the right to review a recipient's cybersecurity framework and recipients must review the cybersecurity framework of its subrecipients per the Capacity Grant NOFO Section IV. D.7.

Subgrantee Monitoring

If a grantee selects subgrantees, they will be required to monitor subgrantees.

Grantees should have monitoring plans in place to outline how and the frequency in which subgrantees will be monitored. If grantees do not have, at the least, best practices for monitoring subgrantees, then monitoring should be conducted in the same way they are monitored by the Office of Digital Opportunity.

Definitions Related to Computers and Support

- **Computer Deployment**: The multi-step process through which trusted community organizations strategically provide donated or low-cost computers to individuals and families in need. These organizations serve as critical intermediaries in creating a sustainable computer ecosystem by leveraging their community relationships, formalized connections with computer supply sources, and established processes to identify recipients, distribute appropriate devices, and connect them to essential support services (technical support, help desk resources, and digital skills training) to ensure a successful transition to computer ownership.
- **Help Desk**: These are services that provide general support and troubleshooting for end-users, addressing common software, hardware, and basic account issues. Help desk services focus on

quick resolution and user satisfaction.

- **Large-Screen, Internet-Ready Computers (“Computers”):** Computing devices, such as laptops, desktops, and tablets, that are capable of connecting directly to the internet and often include a keyboard. These devices feature screens large enough to enable productive work, education, and complex computing tasks. While smartphones provide internet access, large-screen computers are essential for full and equitable digital participation through activities like document creation, detailed research, and online learning.
- **Peripherals:** Peripherals are defined as software and hardware that helps equip a large-screen computer for enhanced use. This can include items such as an external mouse, a webcam, and/or a headset with a microphone. An Uninterruptible Power Supply protects against power surges, while cybersecurity software and a Virtual Private Network ensure data security and privacy.
- **Preparation:** The preparation of large-screen computers is a critical process that ensures they are properly configured, customized, and equipped with the necessary components to serve their intended purpose effectively, and is applicable to both new and refurbished systems. For new computers this process typically involves configuring the hardware and loading software tailored to the intended user population, such as specialized software programs designed for older adults or unique configuration for users with disabilities. For previously used computers, preparation includes a comprehensive set of activities such as screening for disposition, data wiping to ensure data privacy, diagnostic testing, repair, refurbishment, configuration, and software loading.
- **Refurbished Computer:** A used computer that has been wiped of previous data, rebuilt, tested, loaded with an operating system, and warrantied by the refurbisher.
- **Tablet:** A tablet is a portable computing device with a large screen display that runs either a mobile/app-based operating system or a browser-based operating system. These devices support productivity tasks and content creation through touch interfaces and/or traditional input methods like mouse and keyboard.
- **Technical Support:** Technical support includes services that handle advanced technical issues beyond standard help desk support. It plays a crucial role in troubleshooting technical problems, addressing hardware failures, software bugs, system crashes, or network problems; performing hardware repairs; and providing warranty support. Technical support professionals are skilled experts with deep knowledge in a variety of technical domains, ensuring users receive advanced troubleshooting and resolution. Their primary responsibility is to help users navigate complex technical challenges and maintain the smooth operation of their devices.
- **Warranty:** A computer warranty is a guarantee provided by the seller (or Hub for this grant program) that addresses repair, replacements, or servicing for a specified period if the device experiences defects or malfunctions due to manufacturing issues or hardware failures. Warranties typically include coverage for hardware components such as the processor, motherboard, hard drive, and screen, but exclude accidental damage, software issues, and unauthorized modifications.

Grant Technical Assistance and Questions

Please email all questions to the Office of Digital Opportunity at digitalopportunity@nc.gov.