

Request for Proposals

Advancing Digital Inclusion in the Greater Capital Region

About the Grant program

The Digital Equity Coalition of the Capital Region (hereafter “DECCR”) is working towards a future where technology and digital access are treated as a public good—affordable, accessible, adaptable, and designed for all. We believe that everyone deserves meaningful connections: to people, skills, jobs, and government. We honor diverse needs and ensure that digital tools support safety, privacy, equity, and thriving communities.

This grant program will advance digital inclusion efforts in the Capital Region. DECCR defines digital inclusion as the activities and strategies necessary for our communities to ensure that all people have access to and use of information and communication technologies¹:

- Access to internet-enabled devices: laptops, tablets, or computers that meet the user’s needs
- Digital Literacy and Skills: enabling users to navigate technology safely and effectively so that they may participate fully in society, access healthcare, education, workforce development, government services, and social connections for their wellbeing.
- Quality Technical Support: Access to a computing device (beyond just a smart phone) is important and so too is access to support for troubleshooting and maintaining those devices.
- Accessible content: Online services and applications designed to be usable by everyone, including those with disabilities.

We are looking for organizations who equitably and effectively support Capital Region residents and households to fully participate in our digital society. A secondary goal of this grant program is to support and build the capacity with community-based organizations (CBOs) that struggle to access and manage state grants.

¹ Access to affordable and robust broadband is another key component of digital inclusion; however, work under this area is not a focus of this grant program.

United Way of the Greater Capital Region (UWGCR), a founding member of DECCR, has been awarded a grant to support DECCR's digital inclusion work through [ConnectALL](#). In total we have \$400,000 dollars to re-grant to organizations working in the Capital Region.

This grant has been co-designed with DECCR members who have decades of experience working to advance digital equity regionally, statewide, and nationally. The review of submitted proposals will be done by a Community Selection Committee, comprised of digital equity champions, individuals working in the nonprofit sector, and philanthropic partners. This Committee will determine which proposals hold the most promise and recommend for award. UWGCR will then make contractual agreements with awardees.

During the design of our grant making process, we were guided by the following principles:

- Equity: We prioritize strategies that will result in greater digital equity and inclusion for individuals and communities
- Collaboration: We support approaches that bring together partners for greater impact.
- Systems-change: We seek to demonstrate innovative solutions that make institutional practices and policies more effective, efficient and just.
- Data-driven and evidence-informed: We use evaluation to inform our learning and deepen our approach and strategy. We are looking for organizations who do the same.
- Learning, evaluation, and communication: We are committed to learning with and from our grantees in a way that leads to transparent and meaningful change.

General Eligibility

All non-profit agencies or public agencies (such as public libraries, housing authorities, etc.) that include a focus on digital inclusion in the 8 county area of the Capital Region as defined by the [Regional Economic Development Council \(REDC\)](#): Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren and Washington counties. By submitting an application, the applicant certifies that their organization can provide the following documentation at any time during the course of the selection process: proof of nonprofit status; audited, reviewed or unaudited financial statements for its prior fiscal year as required by New York State Charities Bureau regulations; and, list of current Board of Directors and their affiliations.

Priority will go to organizations based in the Capital Region.

Programs Eligible for Funding

The focus of this grant is to advance digital inclusion in the Capital Region. Our grant along with many [partners across the state](#) will support the key objectives as laid out in the [NYS Digital Equity Plan](#). These measurable objectives are how New York State will be evaluating their progress towards digital equity. Our program is one of many that supports the implementation of key aspects in the Digital Equity Plan.

The relevant measurable objectives that fall under the scope of this grant program are:

1. Expand online accessibility and inclusiveness of public resources and services across the Capital Region
2. Increase digital literacy across the Capital Region
3. Build capacity with individuals, organizations, and communities to protect their online privacy and cyber security across the Capital Region
4. Equitable access to devices and tech support for that device in Capital Region communities

Proposals will describe how their programs are advancing at least one of these measurable objectives. Applicants will be asked to provide baseline data and anticipated year 1 data in support of these objectives.

The measurable objectives provide for a broad scope of work. Under this grant program, DECCR will focus on the following priority areas:

1. Employment and Job Readiness
2. Education
3. Health
4. Civic Engagement
5. Access to Essential Government Services

Applicants must demonstrate how their program addresses at least one of the above-mentioned priority areas in the Capital Region. Applicants should carefully describe how they are serving Capital Region residents in these priority areas.

What is Not Eligible for Funding

DECCR is prioritizing digital inclusion programs that are specifically serving Capital Region residents. These grants are not intended to support the development of digital inclusion strategies or plans for organizations, fund research, commission studies or solely conduct asset mapping activities.

Grant Size, Duration and Deliverables

DECCR has created three parallel grant tracks to accommodate a variety of program models for digital inclusion. Applicants may only apply to one grant track. Applicants can be named as a partner in other applications but not as a subgrantee in other applications. Please read through carefully and see where your work best corresponds.

The Community Selection Committee will have the ability to recommend you for a different grant track from which you applied. If this is the case, they will communicate with you in advance before any award is made.

Building Digital Inclusion \$10,000

Possible activities may include, but are not limited to, purchasing digital devices for use during programs and/or lending to community members, incorporating digital skills and literacy into core programs (in health, education, workforce development, etc.), and redeveloping digital skills building content and/or curriculum with program participants to be more accessible and inclusive.

Launching Digital Inclusion \$25,000

Launching a new digital inclusion program and/or expanding current programs with a digital inclusion component. Applicants demonstrate the evidence base for this work (either for new or expanding programs) and what they expect to achieve over twelve months.

Accelerating Digital Inclusion \$75,000

Scale and accelerate existing/ current digital inclusion interventions with the goal of creating systemic and/or population level change. Applicants will have the capacity to measure not just the outputs (i.e., number of people served), but also the outcomes of participants. Selected applicants (awardees) will become part of a cohort with DECCR to demonstrate the opportunities for impact when we scale digital inclusion programs.

All grants will be for a period of twelve months. Fundings will be disbursed through a draw down method meaning, upon signing of the award agreement with UWGCR, grantees will receive 60% of the award amount. Once those funds have been expended (upon receipt of detailed financial expenditures and approval by UWGCR) the grantee may request (draw down) the final 40% of funds. A final financial report reconciling grant expenditures will be required.

Deliverables

Grantees funded under this grant program will be expected to engage in the following activities and provide the specific deliverables below:

1. Become an active member of DECCR
2. Attend DECCR Community Meetings
3. Consistent communication with UWGCR
4. Collection and reporting of data as per the Collaborative Learning Results Framework (detailed in the application below)
5. Quarterly and Annual reports that include program updates, reflections, data, and accounts for financial expenditures that capture a clear assessment of the impact of the work. Reporting guidelines and templates will be shared post award. Reporting expectations will be commensurate with the grant track.

More detailed instructions for reporting will be provided to successful recipients.

Evaluation Process

Funding decisions will be based on the criteria referenced above with heavy emphasis on documented program performance in digital inclusion work and the ability to assist DECCR in achieving the measurable objectives of the State's Digital Equity Plan. DECCR has made available the weighting of each question in the Request for Proposal (RFP). Applicants should allocate their time answering accordingly. If applications clearly do not fit the identified need and performance outcomes desired, UWGCR staff reserves the right to declare the application not in alignment and will not forward for review to the Community Selection Committee. Applications are scored out of 100 total points.

A community evaluation model is central to how DECCR will allocate funds. Our Community Selection Committee is comprised of digital equity champions, individuals working in the nonprofit sector, and philanthropic partners. They bring with them lived experience and expertise.

KEY DATES

July 20, 2026	Request for Proposals
August 13, 2026 11:00-12:30 PM	RFP Zoom Open Office Hours Visit our website for the link

September 18, 2026	Deadline for Applications
October 2026	Review of applications
October 31 st	Communication of all results
November 2026	Virtual Onboarding for partners
November 1, 2026	Start of Award Period (12 months)
February 2026	Quarterly Report
May 2027	Quarterly Report
August 2027	Quarterly Report
November 2027	Final Report

Application Questions

Information on the Applicant

1. Organization name
2. Organization location (address) ** *Organizations must be based in New York State.*
3. Contact Information (for grant management and for program management – can be separate individuals)
4. Is your organization incorporated as a 501 c 3 organization with tax exempt status?
 - a. Yes, EIN #
 - b. NO, fiscal sponsor information
 - c. Local Government agency (library, senior center or housing authority)
5. How long has your organization been in operation?
6. Organization's total budget (your current or most recent fiscal year)
 - a. More than \$10 million annually
 - b. Between \$5-10 million annually
 - c. Between \$1-5 million annually
 - d. Less than \$1million annually
 - e. Less than \$500,000 annually

- f. Less than \$100,000 annually

Proposed Program

Grant Type

Which grant track are you applying for (drop down)

- a) Building Digital Inclusion (\$10,000)
- b) Launching Digital Inclusion (\$25,000)
- c) Accelerating Digital Inclusion (\$75,000)

Measurable Objectives

The scope of our grant program is limited to the following four measurable objectives as outlined in [NYS Digital Equity Plan](#). Please select which *one* of these measurable objectives your proposal will be addressing:

- 1. Expand online accessibility and inclusiveness of public resources and services across the Capital Region
- 2. Increase digital literacy among covered populations
- 3. Build capacity with individuals, organizations, and communities to protect their online privacy and cyber security across the Capital Region
- 4. Equitable access to devices and tech support for that device in Capital Region communities

Populations and Communities DECCR is Serving Through This Grant

Please indicate which of the following populations and communities you anticipate serving through this proposal. *Select all that apply and please note, for those you select, you must report data specific to that population.*

- a) Low-income households
- b) Older Adults (Aging Populations)
- c) Individuals with disabilities
- d) English Language Learners
- e) Rural Residents
- f) Unhoused individuals/households
- g) Veterans
- h) Formerly Incarcerated who are returning to communities
- i) OTHER: (they will need to list)

NYS Digital Equity Plan Priority Areas

Within the scope of the grant's measurable objectives, there are five (5) priority areas. Please select the priority area that most closely aligns with the program you are applying for. *(select one)*

- a) Employment and Job Readiness
- b) Education
- c) Health
- d) Civic Engagement
- e) Access to Essential Government Services

Geographic Reach

The Digital Equity Coalition of the Capital Region includes the eight counties of [the REDC's Capital Region](#). All proposed programs must work in at least one county serving Capital Region residents.

1. Please check which counties you are specifically targeting in your proposal *(all that apply)*
 - a. Albany
 - b. Columbia
 - c. Greene
 - d. Rensselaer
 - e. Saratoga
 - f. Schenectady
 - g. Warren
 - h. Washington
2. Please list the zip-codes of where you will deliver this work (if there is a physical location for your program) and/or where program participants will be located
 - a. Space to list zip codes

Program Application Questions

1. Tell us about your organization's work and experience in digital inclusion. *(max 300 words, 20 points)*
 - a. How does your work contribute to a more equitable digital environment in the Capital Region?
2. Share your proposed program design including strategies, key activities and an anticipated timeline. *(max 300 words, 20 points)*

3. Provide a summary of your proposed program and the digital equity challenge you are addressing in 100 words or less. If selected, this description will be used to publicly describe your program.*[this is not scored]*
4. Why is your organization well poised to lead this work in the communities you serve? *(max 200 words, 10 points)*
 - a. Describe the external research and/or industry-specific best practices your organization has adopted to enhance your effectiveness.
5. How do you work with the populations (i.e., the communities you serve) you indicated above? *(max 100 words, 10 points)*
6. What opportunities exist in the communities you serve that make this project possible right now? *(max 200 words, 15 points)*
 - a. What are potential challenges that might slow or impede your success as you described above?
7. How do you use community feedback in the design and/or evaluation of your programs? *(max 100 words, 10 points)*

Collaborative Learning Framework

The following Collaborative Learning Framework builds on NYS Digital Equity Plan's outcomes. Applicants will be responsible for contributing data and learning to those indicators that correspond to the Measurable Objective to which their application applies.

8. For this program, what does success look like? *(max 200 words, 10 points)*
 - a. Please include your goals, anticipated outcomes, and activity milestones.
 - b. What is the timeframe you are thinking about when you define your success?
9. Select your measurable objective. The dropdown will provide indicators from our Collaborative Learning Results Framework. Next to each applicable indicator, please provide what you anticipate achieving in year one in the Year 1 target box. Targets should be of numeric value. There will be space to provide additional (non-numeric) content. *(not scored, but required section)*

Measurable Objective	Indicators	Baseline (2025)	Year 1 Target
(1) Expand online accessibility and inclusiveness of public resources and services across the Capital Region	(A) Number of online public resources that are developed with intended user input and feedback		
	(B) Percent of public online resources that meet accessibility standards		
	(C) Number of outreach campaigns targeted to covered populations with an intention to build trust in online public resources		
(2) Increase digital literacy among covered populations	(A) Number of partnerships formed (or maintained) to increase opportunities for covered populations to participate in digital literacy and skills building programs		
	(B) Number of people participating in digital literacy and/or digital skills building programs		
	(C) Number of digital literacy classes and/or digital navigator sessions		
	(D) Pre & Post Digital Literacy Skills assessments (measuring change in digital literacy skills and confidence)		
	(E) Increase in Digital skills building assets developed through grants funds		

Measurable Objective	Indicators	Baseline (2025)	Year 1 Target
(3) Build capacity with individuals, organizations, and communities to protect their online privacy and cyber security across the Capital Region	(A) Number of programs and assets providing privacy & cybersecurity training to Capital Region residents		
	(B) Number of cyber security and privacy sessions or classes offered under this grant		
	(C) Number of cyber security and privacy program participants		
	(D) Skills Assessment (measuring the change in cyber security skills development over the course of the program)		
(4) Equitable access to devices and tech support for that device in Capital Region communities	(A) Number of households that have internet enabled devices at home		
	(B) Number of devices distributed (new and refurbished)		
	(C) Number of people receiving devices and device support		
	(D) Digital Navigator support (or classes) that increase access to assistive technology that meets the needs of people with disabilities		
	(E) Number of digital navigators trained and available throughout the Capital Region		
	(F) Number of digital navigator sessions focused on device use		
	(G) Options for proper device disposal, recycling, and refurbishment		

10. In addition to our Collaborative Learning Results Framework, what other indicators/data relevant to this program do you collect? Please provide concrete examples. (5 points)
11. How would you describe your data collection capacity? (not scored, but required)

Budget

For this section please use the budget template provided to indicate how you will use the resources from this grant award. There is also a column asking about other funding sources you are drawing on to do this work. We know that this grant may not fund the entirety of your work and the information that you share here will help us better understand the resources needed to do this work in our community. *This section is not scored but please provide detailed information.*

Unless otherwise communicated, grants are for a twelve-month period.

Budget Category	Grant Funds Allocated (\$)	Other Sources of Funding (\$)	Where do other sources of funding come from?
Operational Costs			
Personnel (salaries + fringe)			
Staff Training/Professional Development			
Travel			
Contracts for service or subcontract to deliver service for the program			
Overhead costs (e.g., rent, utilities, etc.)			
Programmatic			
Equipment & Devices			
Materials and Supplies			
Assistance to Individuals (stipends, vouchers, etc)			
Other (explain below)			
Total			

Budget Notes

1. Briefly explain your budget for this request. Provide a detailed description of how you plan to spend DECCR funding, either through operational or programmatic support. How do you distinguish that in your agency?
2. If you are using funding for personnel costs, please include the number and their role(s) in this explanation. Write N/A if not applicable
3. If applicable, please describe what the contract or subcontract line item will be used for (and intended contactors or grantees).
4. If applicable, please describe what the Other Budget line item will cover.
5. Describe any expenses entered in the Assistance to Individuals Line Item on the Program Budget Form.
6. Please describe how this grant enables your organization to leverage other grants. Write N/A if not applicable.

Additional Information

In addition to the written application, applicants are invited to submit additional content that provides more details to their application. Additional content is not scored. If you are submitting additional content, please do not repeat information already included in the written application.