

AUGUST 2023

# NEXT CENTURY CITIES



Baltimore, MD

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Wisdom to Achieve  
Digital Equity in  
East Baltimore

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at Congressional  
Briefing on the ACP

TLC is Building a  
Digital Equity  
Coalition in  
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Local Officials and  
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Communications  
Summer Camp

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Local officials, advocates, and tech policy scholars refined personal communications strategies and learned new organizational advocacy tools at NCC's first Broadband Communicators Summer Camp.

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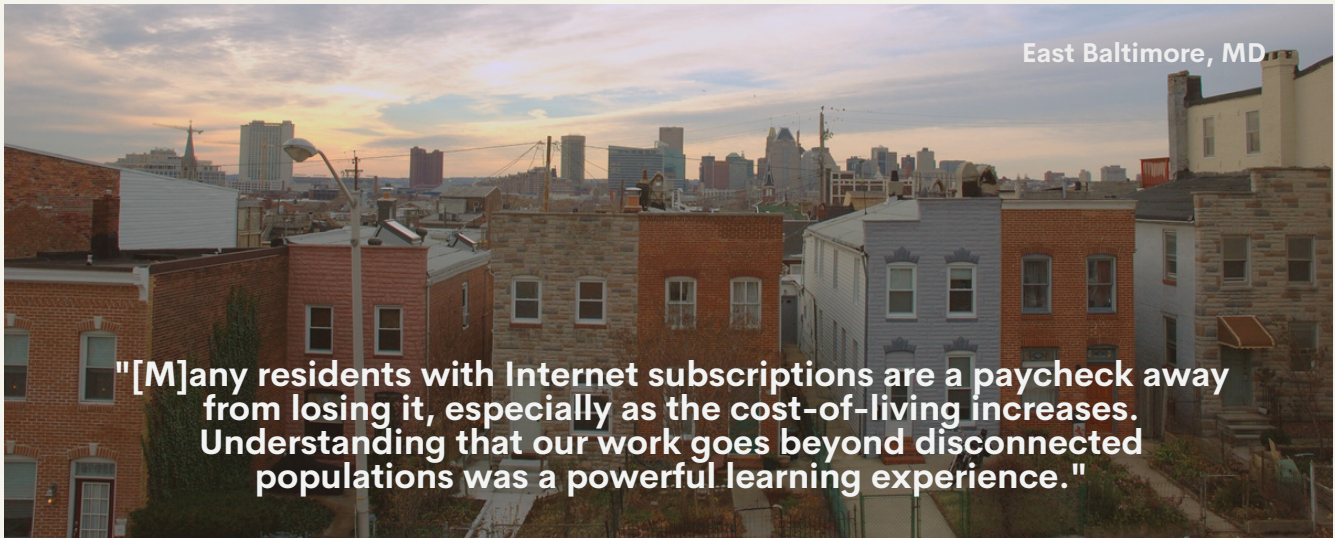
Benton's report outlines digital equity principles that are foundational components for state broadband dollars to reach populations in the greatest need.

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# Connecting East Baltimore

WITH EAST BALTIMORE DEVELOPMENT INC.'S CHERYL WASHINGTON



**"[M]any residents with Internet subscriptions are a paycheck away from losing it, especially as the cost-of-living increases. Understanding that our work goes beyond disconnected populations was a powerful learning experience."**

The **East Baltimore Development, Inc.** (EBDI), a 501(c)(3) organization, was established to revitalize, re-energize, and rebuild an 88-acre area adjacent to the Johns Hopkins medical campus in East Baltimore. It partnered with Microsoft Airband to explore the digital equity needs of residents in and around EBDI's footprint, which includes five zip codes. The partnership supported the development of a blueprint for achieving digital equity in an urban revitalization project area as it relates to affordable housing, local retail and small business capacity building, workforce development, education, and healthcare.

The first phase of this project included an analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data, which contrasted home broadband subscription and device ownership in the service area with wealthier parts of Baltimore City. The results underscored the racialized impact of the digital divide. Additionally, EBDI facilitated a community-led survey of East Baltimore residents to document their views on the internet, their access needs, and their priorities for government spending on solutions to close the digital divide. Cheryl Washington, President and CEO of EBDI, shared highlights from the project and its preliminary findings, which will be followed by a more detailed report

[Access the blog post here.](#)

## 1. Why was it important to conduct research on digital equity gaps within the Eager Park area?

A one-size fits all approach would not be as impactful for addressing the unique needs of our community. We understand that the zip codes in our service area may have different challenges, barriers, and needs than other neighborhoods in Baltimore so it was important for us to connect directly with those living and working in Eager Park. To attract and retain residents and businesses – to create a thriving community – we must ensure everyone has the information and resources they need to access and utilize technology.

Also, EBDI prides itself on engaging the community on every level of the planning and execution of our human capital initiatives like digital equity. We need our initiatives to be informed by the community so we can best address their needs.

## 2. Your team surveyed residents about their lived experiences. What did the qualitative information reveal that may not have been captured with traditional quantitative data collections?



# Connecting East Baltimore *(continued)*

WITH EAST BALTIMORE DEVELOPMENT INC.'S CHERYL WASHINGTON

Qualitative information gleaned from the surveys revealed perceptions of technology which are themselves barriers to use and access. We discovered a desire to have public Wi-Fi, specifically in our public park. Additionally, digital training requests vary from how to access telehealth to accessing reliable news. Data security – trust in what they are accessing and who is providing them with the devices or could be selling their personal data– was another key area of concern revealed.

**The survey also revealed that many residents with Internet subscriptions are a paycheck away from losing it, especially as the cost-of-living increases. Understanding that our work goes beyond disconnected populations was a powerful learning experience.**

### 3. How did you arrive at the conclusion that there is no one size fits all solution to closing digital divides? What were some of the highlights of the analysis?

Traditional, one-size fits all approaches to narrowing the digital divide at the local level usually include ensuring households have devices and Wi-Fi. We understand that, in many cases, households need faster, more reliable Wi-Fi along with multiple devices to meet the demand of multiple students or people working from home.

Additionally, our surveys show that it is most important to our community that the [digital skills] training and curriculum are designed and delivered with an understanding of the community's unique needs and concerns. We heard from many respondents that training sessions—which can take up a significant amount of time—are not conducive to their lives. Instead, **they are looking to learn new skills that help them meet immediate needs, like creating and submitting a resume or scheduling a telehealth appointment.**

### 4. What does this report mean for the future of digital equity work in Baltimore as a whole? How could it inform research in other digitally disadvantaged communities?

It is important for those seeking digital equity solutions to understand how communities across Baltimore might be impacted differently and may have varying needs. Baltimore and other cities across the country have a multitude of organizations addressing the digital divide. We hope that our report helps them to consider more customized solutions. It reiterates the importance of listening to a community to gain buy-in and trust to implement programs and initiatives. Community development organizations have an important role to play and have been underutilized as digital equity champions.

### 5. What advice would you give to other communities seeking to pursue digital equity work?

Even today, there is a common perception that technology is too difficult to understand and should be left to business and technology experts. Our survey, like work across the country, proves that wrong. Residents are quite clear about what they need and what needs to be done to improve their broadband access and experiences online. **We urge everyone to use a process that centers community wisdom and experience.**

A collaborative, inclusive approach will be more successful because you will gain trust and buy-in from the community. If the scope of your digital equity work is appropriately informed by the community you serve, you will achieve a greater impact.

# Next Century Cities Hosts a Congressional Briefing for Local Leaders to Share Community-Based Insights on the Affordable Connectivity Program

By Stacey Baxter

*Pictured (Right): Drew Garner, Kenya Asli, Khotan Harmon, Kathryn de Wit, Ryan Collins, and Mike Lynch pictured in front of the U.S. Capitol building.  
Photo credit: Jessica Burchins.*



Congressional briefings are used to communicate information to policymakers in Washington, D.C. Oftentimes, they highlight stakeholder views on government programs and proposals. However, they rarely include local officials who can provide community-based insights.

On July 19, 2023, Next Century Cities invited broadband leaders from Texas, Ohio, Maryland, and Massachusetts to Washington, DC. Speakers shared community impact stories and administrative needs for the [Affordable Connectivity Program \(ACP\)](#). The ACP offsets broadband subscription costs for low-income households, discounting services up to \$30 per month toward high-speed Internet service for Pell Grant, SNAP, Medicaid, SSI, and Federal Housing Assistance recipients, as well as those living within 200% of the federal poverty line. Residents living on Tribal lands may see benefits up to \$75 per month.

Thanks to the [National Lifeline Association](#), NCC hosted the Congressional briefing at the offices of Nelson Mullins. Briefing attendees ranged from included congressional staffers to community advocates, municipal officials – with FCC, NTIA, NASA, and other agency officials among them.

## **BROADBAND EXPERTS SHARE THEIR INSIGHTS.**

[Dublin, Ohio's](#) Chief Innovation Officer Doug McCollough shared an insightful opening keynote. McCollough highlighted the critical importance of "digital wellness," which includes four vital components: (1) access to broadband Internet; (2) access to devices and knowledge of digital skills; (3) ability to obtain online accounts and services; and (4) making these aspects available in a secure way for individuals. McCollough explained that building digital wellness starts and ends with trust. Local leaders must build credibility with community members.

Kathryn de Wit, who directs the [Pew Charitable Trusts'](#) broadband internet access initiative, moderated a discussion with Panel broadband experts, including:

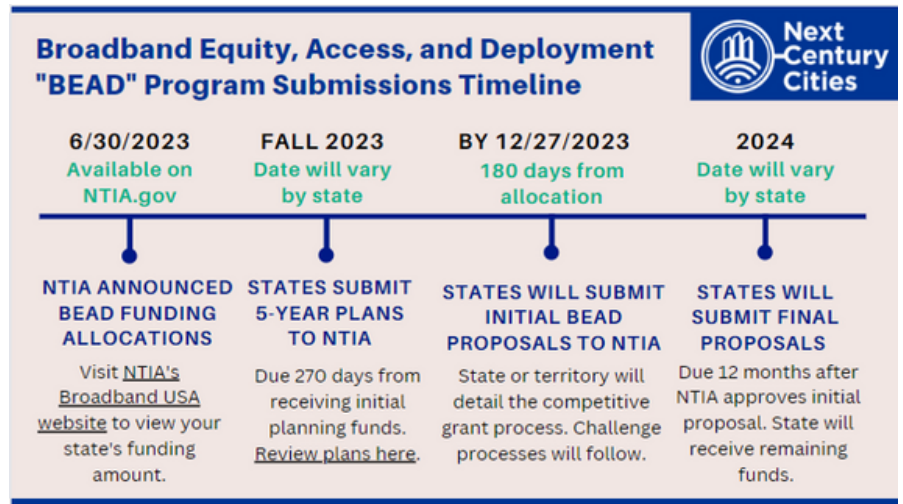
- Kenya Asli from the [City of Baltimore](#),
- Ryan Collins from the [Buckeye Hills Regional Council](#),
- Drew Garner from [Common Sense Media](#), and
- Khotan Harmon from the [City of Austin](#).

Panelists paired local stories with startling statistics that hit home for attendees. Speakers agreed that the ACP significantly improved broadband in their communities. Importantly, panelists highlighted barriers to enrollment and concerns around diminished funding.

[Continue Reading About the Day Here](#)



# When are BEAD Proposals Due?



## 5-YEAR ACTION PLAN

The [5-year action plan](#) is intended to provide a foundation for the work states outline in their initial and final proposals. 5-year action plans must be submitted to NTIA within 270 days of the receipt of initial planning funds by a state. In effect, many states will have 5-year action plans due in **August 2023**.

## INITIAL PROPOSALS

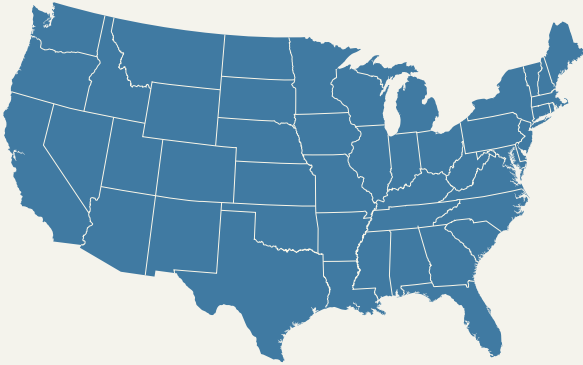
The NTIA requires that all initial proposals be submitted within 180 days of the date BEAD funding allocations were announced. It made this announcement on June 30, 2023, which means states have until **December 27, 2023**, to submit their initial proposals. To date, only two states have submitted volume 1 of their initial proposals, [Louisiana](#) and [Virginia](#).

## FINAL PROPOSALS

Once initial proposals have been approved by the NTIA the states will have **one year** to submit their final proposals to the NTIA. As each state's initial proposal will be approved at a different time, there is no uniform date for final proposal submissions. As of July 2023, no state has had an initial proposal approved or submitted a final proposal. NTIA is [releasing](#) 5-year action plans, digital equity plans, and initial proposals as it receives them. Local officials, community-based organizations, and concerned citizens should use these documents to learn about commitments their state has made to obtain BEAD funding and ways to get involved in the deliberation process.

# ARE YOU WONDERING WHEN YOUR STATE HAS TO SUBMIT ITS BEAD PROPOSAL?

By Ryan Johnston



States are required to submit a series of documents throughout the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (“BEAD”) program process, which includes a 5-Year Action plan, the state’s initial proposal, and a final proposal. Each comes with its own deadline. While some dates are set by actions taken by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (“NTIA”), others are contingent on when states received initial planning grant funds. This article highlights major filing due dates and insights on state timelines.

**5-YEAR ACTION PLANS** | So far, Hawaii, Delaware, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Montana, North Carolina, Ohio, and Utah have submitted 5-year action plans. Even though 5-year action plans are not required to be circulated for public comment, many states have done so. As a result, those states have a better understanding of which municipalities have broadband deployment and digital equity plans underway and which do not. Public input also enables states to address specific community concerns that would otherwise be left out of proposal documents submitted to the NTIA.

The BEAD notice of funding opportunity details the 13 requirements that states must address. The 5-year action plan is intended to provide a foundation for the work states outline in their initial and final proposals. 5-year action plans must be submitted to NTIA within 270 days of the receipt of initial planning funds by a state. In effect, many states will have 5-year action plans due in August 2023.

**INITIAL PROPOSALS** | The initial proposal, also known as a state’s “first draft,” explains how the state plans to use BEAD funding to provide reliable, affordable, high-speed broadband connections to all of its residents. Section IV.B.5.b of the BEAD Notice outlines the 19 requirements that include a responsibility to identify existing state funding streams and disclose the process for choosing subgrantees.

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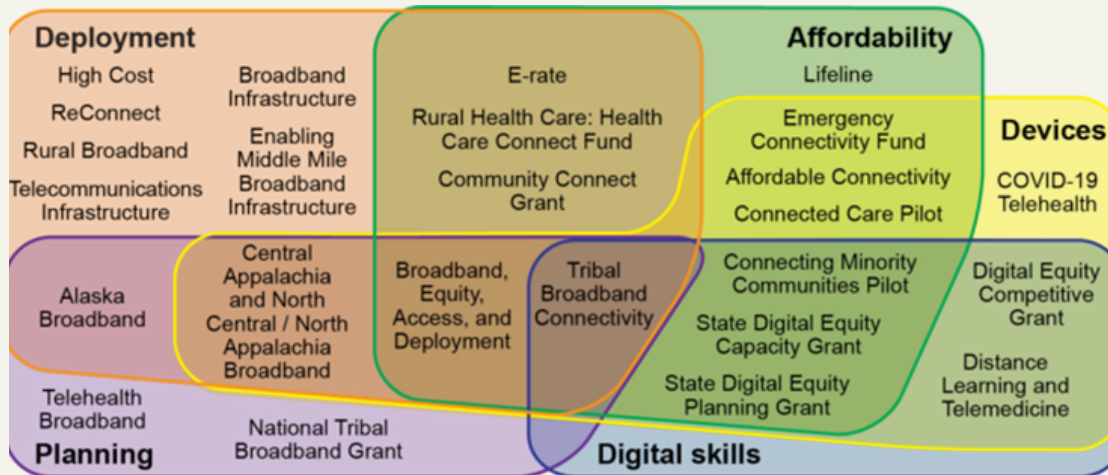
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[Continue Reading Here](#)



# Absent Comprehensive Federal Broadband Policy, States Fill Important Gaps

By Corian Zacher



Source: GAO analysis. | GAO-22-104611

In May 2022, the [Government Accountability Office \(GAO\)](#) revealed that the federal government has over 100 broadband programs spanning deployment, planning, affordability, device access, digital skills, and more, administered by 15 agencies. Despite robust federal funding aimed at bridging the digital divide, including [\\$42.45 billion through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment \(BEAD\)](#) Program administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), the United States needs a coordinated broadband strategy.

With a fragmented federal policy, state governments are tasked with understanding how various programs impact their state. In addition to the myriad of federal broadband grants that fund projects directly, many state and local governments have used funding from the [Capital Projects Fund](#), [American Rescue Plan Act](#), and [CARES Act](#) for broadband access and adoption programs. Several states [have their own broadband funding programs](#). As they begin releasing their draft five-year and Digital Equity Plans, understanding where funding already supports broadband programs is essential.

NTIA [released an ongoing list of states](#) with publicly available draft Five-Year Action and Digital Equity Plans, due in Fall 2023, as well as Initial Proposals, due by December 27, 2023. For example, [Hawaii's plan](#) includes a goal of "Achiev[ing] objectives while orchestrating the maximum benefits from the range of other federal broadband programs." As a first step, this requires the State to identify which federal broadband programs offer support for Hawaii residents. The plan notes ten programs where funding could support broadband connectivity across the islands.

[Continue Reading Here](#)



# States Miss Critical Community Engagement Opportunities When Core Service Agencies Are Excluded from Broadband Planning

By Stacey Baxter

It is widely known that community anchor institutions, including schools and libraries, provide essential broadband services for residents who lack reliable access at home. They are indispensable resources for providing Internet access in the same way that Core Service Agencies (CSA) connect residents to resources for health and wellness. Although both target the unserved and underserved populations that Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) and Digital Equity grant programs were designed to support, CSAs are frequently left out of local outreach strategies.

As states develop their community engagement plans, they should develop partnerships with CSAs much like they request input from – and work alongside – anchor institutions. Doing so would ensure that historic one-time investments in broadband have a far-reaching impact on communities with the greatest need.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is allocating \$42.5 billion in broadband funding for the 50 states and U.S. territories. Funds coming from the long-awaited BEAD program will allow states to make significant inroads in closing the digital divide. State-level BEAD and Digital Equity plans will outline initiatives that range from expanding broadband access to improving device access for disadvantaged populations. Each state must meet minimum community engagement requirements with detailed plans that address how community-level anchor institutions can support broadband efforts.

**Learn more about the role that CSAs could play in connecting your neighbors.**



# NCC Invites Local Officials to Articulate What Broadband Data Communities Need from Government, Industry, and Academic Partners

By Francella Ochillo

Invisible lines between advocates and scholars often prevent academic research from informing broadband policymaking. Likewise, public interest advocates are eager to share research inquiries but lack academic partners. On June 20th and 21st, professors, nonprofits, government, and industry helped eliminate those barriers in a workshop called **“Bridging the Divide: Answering Internet Policy Questions with Cutting-Edge Network Measurement Algorithms, Datasets, and Platforms.”**

Considering our shared goals to understand what data and research policymakers need to make upcoming broadband funding opportunities more effective, Next Century Cities was honored to serve on the planning committee. Thanks to funding from the National Broadband Hub and National Science Foundation, we ensured that local officials could center community-based input throughout the conference.

**Former FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn** provided keynote remarks. **Zach Friend, Second District Supervisor, Santa Cruz County**, and **Miguel Sangalang, Executive Director and General Manager, Bureau of Street Lighting for the City of Los Angeles**, shared compelling insights on bridging the gap between what broadband data is available versus what is required. Their comments forced participants to examine whether current infrastructure builds meet future broadband needs.

Check out the [photos from Day One and Day Two](#) of the conference. Organizers from the University of California Berkeley and Santa Barbara and M-Lab are preparing a report of key learnings. Participants can submit workshop feedback [here](#) through August 7, 2023.

## broadbandhub.org

The National Broadband Resource Hub is a free online community for government leaders and nonprofits working to expand broadband access and affordability. It includes a Resource Library, Community Conversation Forum, and a Help Desk to support various stages of the broadband planning process.

Photos by Natasha Polyakova



# Internet for All: Connecting the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

## A Spotlight on Digital Equity and Infrastructure Development

By Brian Donoghue and Ryan Johnston



In an era defined by technological advancements and the relentless push toward digitization, Pennsylvania, known for its rich history, landscapes, and dynamic industries, took a critical step forward. On July 13, 2023, the state hosted an event titled "Internet for All: Connecting the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania." This convening was a "kick-off" for coordinated federal, state, and local efforts to bridge Pennsylvania's digital divide through the use of Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program ("BEAD") funds. The event emphasized the urgency of universal internet access, especially in rural, unserved, and underserved communities.

Organized by an impressive array of stakeholders, including the National Telecommunications and Information Administration ("NTIA"), Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority ("PBDA"), and a variety of state and county associations, the event boasted expert speakers, interactive panel discussions, and an engaging keynote address by Secretary Rick Siger of the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development.

The conference began with a warm welcome by Brandon Carson, Executive Director of the PBDA, followed by an informative update on the implementation of federal programs by Evan Feinman, BEAD Director, NTIA. Their shared commitment set the tone for a day dedicated to infrastructure, digital equity, local coordination, and the ongoing need for data collection and mapping.

The first panel discussion, "Infrastructure Best Practices in Pennsylvania," saw the state's infrastructure specialists sharing lessons learned, innovative approaches, and best practices for infrastructure development. The panel highlighted the importance of government-industry collaborations and the necessity of nuanced strategies to address the distinct challenges of expanding in unserved and underserved areas.

[\*\*Continue Reading About the Day Here.\*\*](#)

# Technology Learning Collaborative (TLC) Is Creating Pathways for Practitioners and Community Members to Shape Pennsylvania's Digital Equity Plans

By Kate Rivera, executive director of the Technology Learning Collaborative  
and principal consultant of Kate Rivera Solutions



Photo Credit: Joseph V. Labolito, Temple University

The Technology Learning Collaborative (TLC) drives the digital literacy, access, and inclusion conversations in Philadelphia by promoting professional collaboration, training, and networking among organizations and individuals. TLC has operated as a community-based digital equity coalition since its founding in 2012, an outgrowth of the city-wide collaboration that established a network of 77 free public computer labs. The organization provides professional development for digital inclusion practitioners and direct service providers by hosting workshops, an annual conference, and information sharing.

Philadelphia has the unfortunate distinction of being the poorest of the United States' 10 largest cities. About 16% of Philadelphia households lack home internet access, meaning that approximately 96,000 households face barriers to broadband access and adoption. We are also one of the most disconnected large cities in the US.

Achieving digital equity in Philadelphia requires a well-coordinated, resource-intensive, and multi-pronged effort between local and community leadership. In a moment when the City and communities are developing ways to ensure that all residents have reliable and affordable ways to get online, TLC is uniquely positioned as a connector, convenor, and advocate for Philadelphia's digital equity ecosystem.

“  
**Achieving digital equity in Philadelphia requires a well-coordinated, resource-intensive, and multi-pronged effort between local and community leadership.**



## TLC Is Creating Pathways for Practitioners and Community Members to Shape Pennsylvania's Digital Equity Plans by Kate Rivera *(continued)*

### TLC's Annual Conference

Save the Date for TLC's 9th Annual Conference, [Building Connections: Strengthening Our Digital Equity Community](#), on October 5th, 2023, at Temple University in Philadelphia. A live stream option will be available for limited parts of the conference. Although the conference is tailored to Philadelphia's digital equity community, many of the topics will be applicable and of interest to others across the state.

Timed to coincide with [National Digital Inclusion Week](#), TLC's conference will feature guest speakers, breakout sessions, and more. As we plan and prepare for a historic infusion of federal funding for digital equity work, this year's theme focuses on expanding and strengthening our community—now and for the long term. Registration will be going live on our [website](#) in the coming weeks.



### Pennsylvania Statewide Digital Equity Coalition

TLC has partnered with the Greater Pittsburgh Digital Inclusion Alliance to co-convene the [Pennsylvania Statewide Digital Equity Coalition](#), a group of organizations working to advance a statewide strategy for community-informed broadband and digital equity work. As practitioners and advocates, our priorities include promoting meaningful community engagement in the state planning processes and true partnership and substantial dialogue with digital inclusion practitioners. Ultimately, we share goals for Pennsylvania's broadband and digital equity funding to be invested in the organizations doing effective work in communities with the greatest need.

We are thankful to count the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (PBDA) as a partner in this endeavor. PBDA staff have worked hard to create pathways for practitioners and community members to infuse input and insights into the state planning processes, despite short timelines and administrative hurdles. States who are underutilizing these important assets are missing key insights and run the risk of implementing strategies that fall short of real community needs and lasting solutions.

Currently, there are two surveys designed to collect key input for the state's planning and implementation process:

1. All Pennsylvania residents should complete the [Broadband Connectivity and Digital Access Survey](#). The survey is available in multiple languages, via phone, or on paper. For more information visit the [PBDA's Internet for All](#) site.
2. Digital inclusion practitioners and advocates statewide should provide insights on your organization's mission and target populations on the [PA Digital Equity Stakeholder Questionnaire](#).

# Local Leaders Gather in Washington, DC for NCC's Inaugural Broadband Communicators Summer Camp

BY BRITTANY-RAE GREGORY

Next Century Cities' first Broadband Communicators Summer Camp was held on July 18, 2023, in Washington, DC. The event brought together elected and appointed officials, as well as public servants, broadband advocates, and academics from Indiana, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, and others. Each joined in hopes of upskilling their communications skills and left with new advocacy tools.

The three-part workshop was facilitated by Kate Black, of K. Black Strategies, and included guest presentations. Kate helped participants identify ways to (a) build press relationships, (b) navigate difficult interview questions, (c) strengthen organizational communications on broadband issues, and (d) improve oral presentations.



Campers kicked off the day by examining their respective organizations' communications strengths and resources. Underutilized assets, such as including broadband issues on internal talking memos or practicing media interviews with team members, can be leveraged to engage stakeholders. The reflection exercise also encouraged participants to establish specific goals for their personal and organizational communications plans.

For some, meeting Politico's John Hendel was their first experience with a reporter. Through a fireside style chat with Kate Black, he provided insight into his work as a technology and telecommunications journalist. Campers learned about fostering reciprocal relationships with journalists, tailoring their content to writers' subject matter expertise, and ways to bring attention to emerging issues in the tech and telecom landscape.

Paloma Perez, the Federal Communications Commission's ("FCC") Press Secretary sat down with Kate for a lunchtime conversation reflecting on her work at the agency. She had brilliant insights on communicating with press and encouraged campers to get a strong handle on articulating their areas of expertise. Both are critical for conveying their communities' stories. Additionally, she discussed how to best use social media to meet audiences where they are with a sense of purpose and urgency.







The day concluded with "Color Wars." During this section, campers broke out into color-coded groups and they were assigned topics around broadband current events such as extending the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program or improving community-level broadband data. Each group was tasked with building out detailed communications plans and presented their ideas in a panel discussion moderated by Black. Campers received immediate feedback on their strategic plans and interview question responses.

There were so many nuggets dropped throughout the day that helped campers at various stages of their respective communications outreach journeys. Three points that resonated heavily with participants were:

- **Relationships with Journalists:** When working to build authentic relationships with journalists and publications, be clear about your areas of expertise and organizational priorities. Consider setting up an informational call to discuss current and emerging issues.
- **Making Your Pitch:** When pitching a story to a journalist or an editor, they will evaluate your story or subject from various angles. First, think carefully about the hook, which will make the journalist want to delve deeper into the information that you are sharing. Second, ask yourself why your story matters to people writ large. Third, establish how the subject ties back into specific policy debates and promotes greater understanding.
- **Writing a Press Release:** When issuing a press release, include actionable information. Use data whenever possible, and keep your language concise. As Paloma Perez noted, "If a journalist has to scroll on their phone to read through your press release, it's too long."

Broadband Communicators Summer Camp is just the beginning. NCC's Communications Director, Brittany-Rae Gregory, plans to continue curating a space where broadband communicators and advocates can come together to discuss and work through what matters when it comes to telling the stories of their communities. Stay tuned for more information on our next gathering. If you would like to host a similar event in your city, please reach out to Brittany-Rae via [email](#).

BLOG POST

PHOTO GALLERY





# In Case You MISSED IT

Kansas City, MO



## ***REPORT: Visions of Digital Equity***

Benton's report outlines digital equity principles that should be central to broadband planning at all levels of government. Researchers used surveys, community meetings, interviews, conversations, and a collaborative writing process with community contributors to generate [Visions of Digital Equity](#).

*"Devising digital equity visions must be an inclusive, collaborative, and ongoing process led by those most impacted by the digital divide..."*

—Adrienne Furniss, Executive Director  
Benton Institute for Broadband & Society

## ***Broadband Subsidy Programs Help Deliver Affordable Internet Access***

Research indicates that simplifying enrollment, working closely with community partners, and implementing a single, national policy focused on increasing access all can help boost participation. To better understand the potential strengths and shortcomings of specific policies, The Pew Charitable Trusts partnered with the [University of Southern California's Annenberg Research Network on International Communication](#) and the [California Emerging Technology Fund](#) to research the subject.

## ***WEBINAR: Next Steps in the BEAD Planning Process***

The National Broadband Resource Hub held an Ask Me Anything webinar on July 25, 2023 to help local leaders understand where states are in the BEAD process, trends in state plans and challenge processes, and what communities need to be paying attention to in their states moving forward. Watch the full session [here](#).

THE NATIONAL BROADBAND RESOURCE HUB PRESENTS

### Next Steps in the BEAD Planning Process

Join us for an AMA (ask me anything) to learn about where states are in the process of deploying \$42.5 in Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funding, what trends we're seeing so far in state plans and challenge processes, and what communities need to be paying attention to in their states moving forward.

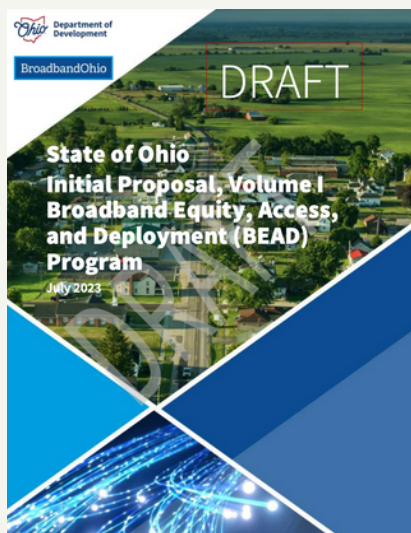
July 25, 2023    2:00 pm - 3:00 pm ET    Virtual

[www.broadbandhub.org](http://www.broadbandhub.org)



# Opportunities FOR MEMBERS

Columbus, OH



## *Speak Up for Your Community*

- The Kansas Office of Broadband Development [Public Comment portal](#) for updating the BEAD-IP, Volume 1. closes on **8/30/23**.
- Broadband Ohio's public comment period for Volume I of the BEAD Initial Proposal is open and will end on **8/22/2023**. Comments should be shared via [email](#).
- Pennsylvania residents and professionals have until **8/8/2023** to send feedback to the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority on a five-year action plan. Feedback can be submitted in-person or [online](#).

## *Work to Bring Residents at the Local Level Online*

Greater Boston's Metropolitan Area Map Council is hiring for their first [Digital Equity Planner](#). The individual would lead MAPC's municipal digital equity planning practice and support digital equity procurement work.

The Marjorie & Charles Benton Opportunity Fund Fellowship application is [live](#). The Fund supports projects that can better inform their current or emerging policy debates in broadband access, adoption, and application. The application closes **on August 15, 2023**. Questions should be directed to [fellowships@benton.org](mailto:fellowships@benton.org).

## *Attend Digital Inclusion 101*

The National Digital Inclusion Alliance will host their next Digital Inclusion 101 workshop on **August 16, 2023**. Register for the webinar [here](#).



Jamestown • Rochester  
Saratoga Springs • Schenectady • Syracuse

# Are You Building Smart, Equitable, and Sustainable 21st Century Cities?

Smart City Expo USA invites national and global leaders, innovators, and visionaries to showcase their transformative technologies and moonshot ideas to New York City from October 4-5, 2023.

Local leaders in Albany, Jamestown, Rochester, Saratoga Springs, Schenectady, and Syracuse, should contact NCC for member registration.

**REGISTER TODAY**

Visit [smartcityexpousa.com](https://smartcityexpousa.com)  
Use code **NCC20**  
20% off discount code

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