

# Digital Inclusion Leadership Award Winner

## Austin, TX Most Promising New Plan

The City of Austin's Unlocking the Connection program addresses multiple barriers to getting online at home. In partnership with the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA), Google Fiber, Austin Community College and other community organizations, the city will connect Austin's 18 public housing communities, provide classes on how to use the web, and give refurbished computers to any resident who completes the digital training course. The City's Grant for Technology Opportunity Program has provided funding to upgrade onsite computer labs and offer computer courses.

### Population targeted

Public housing residents including people with disabilities, unemployed or underemployed, seniors, children, and English language learners.

### Key metrics

HACA plans to offer services to all 4,300 individual residents of Austin's 18 public housing communities. HACA is offering a free Internet connection to 1,838 residential units through a partnership with Google Fiber.

### City's role

Unlocking the Connection is led by the Austin Mayor's Office and the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA), who support the initiative through staffing, funding and facility space. The City's Grant for Technology Opportunities program funds the community computer labs where digital literacy classes are conducted.

### Advice to other cities

All three legs of the digital inclusion stool must be addressed if a program is to be successful: Access to affordable devices, a reliable home Internet connection, and digital literacy training. Any community effort seeking to promote digital inclusion should ensure that all three of these elements are incorporated into the program design.

