



Digital Equity Capacity Grant Planning

Board Meeting

May 13, 2024

Vision For Digital Equity

The State of Vermont seeks to ensure every individual in Vermont—regardless of identity, community, or economic challenges—has high-quality, accessible, affordable technology resources

Digital Equity Act Programs

State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program

- For states, territories and tribal governments to develop digital equity plans
- \$60M total-Vermont received \$518,100



Digital Equity Capacity Building Grant Program

- For states, territories, and tribal governments to implement their Digital Equity Plans
- \$1.44B total – Vermont to receive \$5,299,150

Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program

- Annual grant programs for five years to implement digital equity projects
- \$1.25B total

Capacity Grant Program Purpose

Create the conditions where individuals and communities have the information technology capacity that is needed for full participation in the society and economy of the United States

Capacity Grant Program Requirements

- Update or maintain the state or territory's digital equity plan
- Implementation of the state or territory's digital equity plan
- Provide subgrants to eligible entities located within the state
- Evaluate the efficacy of the subgrantee activities that the grant has funded
- Cover administrative costs

Vermont Programs and Activities Ensure:

- Focus on covered populations
- Ensure long-lasting and meaningful change
- Have measurable implementation strategies and
- Regular engagement with stakeholders impacted by the digital equity plan to improve the effectiveness of the plan

Capacity Grant Programs and Activities

- Research to determine baselines and set benchmarks
- Subgrants to Build Capacity of Organizations Representing Targeted Covered Populations
- Regional Program to Support Access to Appropriate Devices
- Development of a State-wide Digital Navigator Program
- Expanded Workforce Development Program Addressing Digital Skills

Vermont's Goals

Goal 1

Mobilize resources for end-to-end broadband infrastructure deployment to all unserved and underserved locations and Community Anchor Institutions in Vermont.

Goal 2

Ensure sustainable community-driven solutions across the entire state

Goal 3

Ensure High speed broadband services and devices are affordable

Goal 4

Empower Vermont residents, agencies, organizations and businesses with the ability to use technology to study, work, communicate, and access health and other social services

Goal 5

Enhance Workforce Development for Broadband industry and the digital economy

Program 1 Research to determine baselines and set benchmarks

Objectives:

- Improve quantitative data to understand the baseline of digital inequities at the state level for all covered populations
- Identify and implement a centralized function to collect and analyze data on digital inclusion for different subsets of Vermont's demographics.
- Identify key partnerships to increase capacity for data collection, tracking, and analysis
- Increase learning from improved data around digital equity indicators for Vermont

Highlights of core activities:

- Hire a contractor to complete research and data activities to meet Program 1 objectives
- Partner with Anaka Aiyar, Health Economist at UVM Community Development and Applied Economics
- Work with Cat Mawn, Graduate student committed to Digital Equity as graduate Research Project
- Continue stakeholder engagement and establish a public feedback mechanism about funded activities.

**Goals Addressed:
Goals 1-5**

**Covered Populations:
All**

Program 2 Statewide Digital Navigator Program

Objectives:

- Connect in-need Vermonters with available digital equity resources and help empower them to use information and communication technology productively and safely
- Ensure all Vermonters have access to accessible, multi-lingual, community-based digital skilling and technical support resources.
- Establish a coordinated effort with other state agencies to promote digital inclusion across Vermont.
- Promote the accessibility and inclusivity of digital public services.

Highlights of core activities:

- Establish a train-the-trainer model to assist other state agencies and non-governmental organizations to incorporate digital equity resources into their outreach efforts.
- Publish and disseminate to each CAI materials describing digital equity resources
- Establish a capacity building subgrant program

Goals Addressed:
Goals 2-5

Covered Populations:
All

Program 3 Capacity Building Subgrant Program

Objectives:

- Invest in organizations that serve and represent covered populations
- Promote covered population participation in digital inclusion
- Build competencies for digital inclusion in local organizations
- Build a broader capacity for growth, resilience and sustainability
- Empower covered populations to perform digital inclusion tasks effectively

Highlights of core activities:

- Create a simple, accessible and streamlined application process
- Establish supports for subgrantees
- Provide technology and resources needed to perform digital inclusion tasks
- Publish and disseminate to each CAI materials describing digital equity resources
- Co-create desired outcomes and measurement metrics

Goals Addressed:
Goals 2-5

Covered Populations:
All

Program 4 Expanded Workforce Development

Objectives:

- Increase capacity and impact of education and training programs to develop the talent pipeline for the broadband industry and digital economy.
- Support the private sector to create sustainable employment opportunities
- Encourage the recruitment of a diverse workforce of Vermonters for jobs in the broadband ecosystem and in the broader digital economy

Highlights of core activities:

- Assist with the design and implementation of job shadowing, training, and apprenticeship programs
- Support CAIs, including the Department of Corrections, to develop or expand programs and resources to increase the use of digital access for socio-economic mobility.
- Facilitate the development of digital skilling resources focused on in-demand job skills and promote them across the state.
- Work with employers and workforce development partners to define, document, publish, and disseminate career roadmaps to articulate long-term opportunities for people entering or re-entering the workforce.
- Engage employers in a variety of industries in the state to understand what employment opportunities may be created in the digital economy with wider availability and adoption of broadband, and work with employers to develop Vermont-specific recruitment strategies for attracting Vermont-based talent.

Goals Addressed:
Goals 2-5

Covered Populations:
All

Program 5 Regional Program: Device Support, Refurbishment, and Deployment

Objectives:

- Ensure every Vermont household has a connected device and assistive technology as needed. Priority given to households with a high school student living in them.
- Ensure all households with an income level at or below 150% of the poverty line have access to devices

Highlights of core activities:

- Develop and disseminate materials explaining resources for assistive technology for people with disabilities, including on-device and third-party devices.
- Engage with state policy makers to develop device donation program
- Establish a device loaning program to allow Vermonters to check out/in a computer, tablet, or assistive technology.
- Identify sustainable cybersecurity options and resources
- Identify adequate technology support for devices and assistive technology

Barriers Addressed:
Goals 2-5

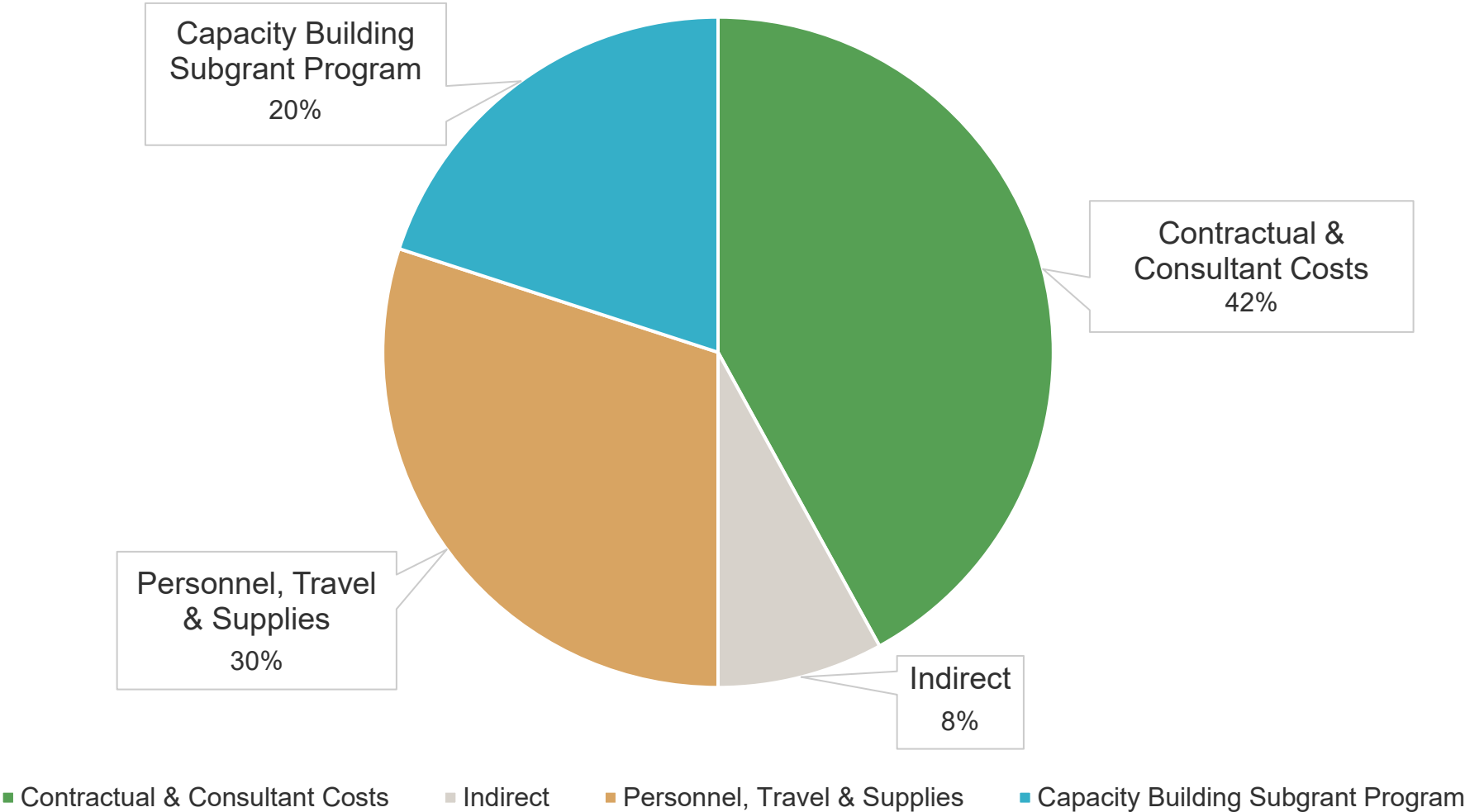
Covered Populations:
All

Estimated Budget Breakdown

Budget Category	Percent	Amount
Capacity Building Subgrant Program	20%	\$1,059,830
Contractual & Consultant Costs	42%	\$2,223,425
Personnel, Travel & Supplies	30%	\$1,589,745
Indirect	8%	\$426,150
Total	100%	\$5,299,150

Potential Contracts: Research, Digital Navigator Program, Workforce Development, Device Deployment

Budget Chart



Questions?