

# FLORIDA DIGITAL ADOPTION AND USE PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM

## Project Narrative

### OVERVIEW

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's mission and vision is to assist the Governor in advancing a connected economy in Florida by championing the state's economic development vision and by administering state and federal programs and initiatives, including broadband, to help visitors, citizens, businesses, and communities. DEO's Office of Broadband actively provides guidance and works with entities throughout the state to increase the availability and effectiveness of broadband Internet by utilizing mapping initiatives and the goals within The Florida Strategic Plan for Broadband. DEO's Local Technology Planning Team (LTPT) initiative helps communities, residents and service providers identify goals and projects for broadband expansion in last mile areas, especially in rural Florida. The Broadband Opportunity Program ensures DEO's goal of expanding the availability, adoption and use of broadband Internet to unserved/underserved communities through state grant funding. Availability, adoption and the use of broadband Internet services throughout Florida allows the state's residents to reap benefits from a connected economy that fuels advancements and allows more Floridians to fully partake in available workforce, education, health and housing opportunities.

As part of the Florida Digital Adoption and Use Planning Grant Program, DEO will create a comprehensive 5-year statewide plan, the Florida Digital Adoption and Use Plan, in lockstep with Florida Broadband Strategic Plan, that will serve as a benchmark and a roadmap for achieving digital access in the state and meet the requirements established by NTIA in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

First, DEO will hire and equip digital adoption and use staff to lead the planning process on behalf of the state. A procurement will be issued to sub-award to external entities to support community outreach and engagement, plan development, and data collection and analysis. It is estimated these sub-awards will total \$2,083,199. However, internal staff will lead and guide the overall effort through a partnership with CareerSource Florida, the LTPTs and other pertinent State Agencies.

Second, DEO will engage communities and stakeholders throughout the entire planning process deploying multiple strategies, including but not limited to conducting a series of public listening sessions throughout the state, providing multiple feedback mechanisms, and ensuring all written materials are translated into multiple languages reflecting the communities we serve. Importantly, we intend to include residents or 'lived experts' to inform the entire planning process.

Third, DEO will collect and analyze data on the impacts of the digital divide on the covered populations and state residents and collect all local digital adoption and use plans developed by communities to inform the plan's recommendations. The data and local plans will inform the plan's measurable objectives and implementation recommendations.

Finally, DEO will develop, publish and disseminate the written plan.

### TIMELINE

The plan development process will begin after funding is received by the state and will conclude within 12 months with the delivery of a 5-year Florida Digital Adoption and Use Plan. We will develop the plan in

accordance with the statute and provide a minimum of 30 days for public comment to incorporate comments and responses, prior to submission to NTIA.

## **DELIVERABLES**

Deliverables will include: (1) FDAUP printed document; (2) a digital version of the plan hosted on the DEO's website; and (3) an open access, downloadable interactive online dashboard and map displaying the data collected to inform the measurable objectives.

## **DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

### **Strategy Overview**

Community and stakeholder engagement and a robust data collection process will be the core strategies driving the plan's composition. The state will seek input and collect data from the community and stakeholders. Our strategy weaves stakeholder engagement throughout the entire planning process. We will employ a mix of strategies, communications channels and messengers to be effective.

At a minimum, we intend to engage with the key stakeholders outlined in the NOFO to provide input to the plan. Additional stakeholders we will deliberately engage include but are not limited to:

- State political subdivisions
- Members of the covered populations, which include low-income households, aging individuals, Veterans, individuals with disabilities, members of racial or ethnic minority groups, and residents in state designated Rural Areas of Opportunity
- State corrections department
- State and local chambers of commerce/industry associations
- Higher education institutions/state education department
- Public housing resident associations
- Healthcare systems/networks/state health department
- Homeless continuum of care providers
- Private and nonprofit multi-family housing developers and owners
- Faith-based institutions
- Business owners
- Local media outlets

### **Community Outreach and Engagement**

1. Form core planning team:
  - a. Representatives from CareerSource Florida, Office of Broadband, DEO Workforce Services, Enterprise Florida, and the LTPT's will make up the planning team
  - b. The Office of Broadband staff will lead and staff the core planning team meetings
  - c. The core planning team will serve in an advisory capacity, providing guidance and support throughout the planning process, particularly in supporting the development of a community stakeholder engagement plan
2. Conduct regional public listening sessions throughout the state where community members and residents may provide the state with the following:
  - a. Experiences being disconnected

- b. Digital education assets include current resources, programs and strategies that promote digital access for each covered population
  - c. Identification of barriers
  - d. Priorities for investments
  - e. Ideas for solutions
3. Leverage a diverse array of communications tools to connect and keep community members and stakeholders informed throughout the process. The communication tools we'll leverage are:
  - a. State and local websites
  - b. Social media
  - c. Information sessions
  - d. Radio and print notices
  - e. Flyers
  - f. Sharing information through partner agencies
  - g. Other mechanisms to be determined
4. Incorporate public input into the plan:
  - a. Gather and incorporate existing local Digital Adoption and Use Plans
  - b. Publish plan for a minimum of thirty days to gather and incorporate public input

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

1. Through identified state-directed teams, Florida will identify, review, and compile local digital adoption and use plans and data into the statewide plan.
2. Conduct data analysis to identify and document barriers and resources related to digital adoption and use including but not limited to the following methods:
  - a. One-on-one interviews and/or focus group interviews with key stakeholders and lived experts
  - b. Scientific surveys
  - c. Analysis of Census and other secondary data sources
  - d. Statewide digital adoption and use asset mapping

### **The Plan**

The plan will contain all the statutory and additional requirements set forth in the NOFO.

### **Delivery**

Upon completion, we will submit the plan to NTIA and distribute to our state's residents through the following mechanisms:

- A dedicated website related to the plan, with information about its background and online dashboards tracking its implementation progress
- Distribution of the plan to all stakeholders who participated in the planning process