

Virginia Affordability and Adoption Planning Grant: Best Practices Guide

This document will serve as a “best practices” guide for VAAPG grantees to refer to while developing their own digital opportunity plans. This guide compiles third-party resources that demonstrate existing practices and tools to aid in the completion of local/regional digital opportunity plans. Users of the document should consult the [Virginia Affordability and Adoption Application Handbook](#) and the [Virginia Affordability and Adoption Crosswalk Template](#) to write their plans in accordance with program requirements.

Example Digital Opportunity Plans

[Virginia Digital Opportunity Plan](#)

Digital Equity Plans: Toolkits and Guidance Resources

[NDIA State Digital Equity Plan Toolkit](#)

[NTIA Digital Equity Plan: Guidance](#)

[NTIA Digital Equity Plan: External Best Practices](#)

| | Final Plan Section | Best Practices and Examples |
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| NON-REQUIRED PLAN COMPONENTS | <p><u>Executive Summary</u> <i>Collects and synthesizes the entirety of the locality’s Digital Opportunity Plan by restating the purpose and identified solutions to addressing digital needs.</i></p> | <p>Consider the following when developing your executive summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct writing the summary at the end of the planning process. Waiting to write at the end helps to summarize important information. - Identify the target audience. Tailor the summary to the people expected to read the plan and how it will be socialized. - Keep it brief and outline the high-level goals and objectives. - Use positive language to create excitement about the Plan. |
| | <p><u>Mission and Vision for Digital Equity</u> <i>Paints a clear and specific picture of the locality’s vision for digital equity.</i></p> | <p>Ask the following to develop your mission and vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How does the digital divide impact your local communities? Consider the impact on the locality/region as a whole in addition to individual residents. - Imagine it’s five years from now and your locality/region has fully achieved digital equity. What does that look like? How is your locality/region different than it was before? How does this digitally equitable future impact your residents - in particular, your covered populations? Your businesses? Your workforce? Your healthcare system? Your own government operations? - Why does your locality/state care about digital inclusion and digital equity? Why is digital inclusion important to your local communities? - Where is the unique value proposition for state involvement in digital inclusion and digital equity? |
| | <p><u>Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement</u> <i>Lists and identifies potential partners, present resources, and/or anchoring institutions in the community with whom the locality can partner with to complete their local/regional digital opportunity plans.</i></p> | <p>Consider the following when collaborating and engaging with stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broadband industry stakeholders - Community Action Agencies (CAAs) - Civil rights organizations - Education and Employment Services Departments - Health and Human Services Departments - Organizations that specifically serve covered populations - Public housing authorities in the State - Tribal governments |

| | Final Plan Section | Required Plan Component and Best Practice Examples | | |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| REQUIRED PLAN COMPONENTS | <p>Asset Inventory <i>Catalogues the resources, key stakeholders, and community organizations who presently do or have the capacity in the future to partner in efforts to develop and/or carry out the locality's Plan.</i></p> | <p>Catalogue of existing broadband-related services and resources within the locality (Handbook Req #1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital device lending or loaning services - Digital device refurbishers - Digital navigation programs or training courses - Internet subsidy programs - Digital literacy courses - Public computer labs/hotspot lending services | <p>Identification of key stakeholders who can help execute the implementation of the Plan (Handbook Req #2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community anchor institutions (CAIs) - Internet service providers - Workforce development organizations | <p>Assessment of present community resources who can promote and support digital opportunity efforts (Handbook Req #3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Banks - Faith-based organizations - Local and small businesses - Non-profit organizations - Federally qualified health centers |
| | <p>Digital Divide Assessment <i>Identifies baselines from which the locality/region is working from to bridge the digital divide through data collection and analysis.</i></p> | <p>Description of the existing digital divide within the locality (Handbook Req #1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Testimonials - Baseline metrics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Hotspot availability and demand o Rate of device ownership o Broadband availability per household - Identification of underserved demographic groups | <p>Quantification of disparities in broadband access and adoption rates (Handbook Req#2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number and types of digital devices in a household - Number of residents able to use basic technology (e.g. basic, intermediate, advanced knowledge) - Number of devices provided to individuals/families without stable housing - Lack of reliable, disaggregated data to guide investments in targeted communications and support | <p>Identification of barriers to broadband access and digital opportunity (Handbook Req#3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High cost of digital devices and/or internet access - Shame and embarrassment regarding lack of knowledge on how to navigate the Internet and/or digital devices - Lack of large-scale broadband infrastructure - Distrust between communities and government and/or private companies - Lack of community buy-in or broadband awareness in communities most impacted by the digital divide |
| | <p>Implementation Strategy <i>Details short-term and long-term implementation strategies that emphasize the planning process does not end with the creation of the plan. Planning is just the beginning!</i></p> | <p>Define your goals and measurable objectives (Handbook Req #1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Narrative detailing your goals and measurable objectives. Describe how they align with identified digital needs from the needs assessment. | <p>What is your strategy? Strategies are comprised of approaches and tactics related to the completion of objectives. They indicate how you plan to achieve an objective. (Handbook Req #2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compile a list of potential projects that align with your selected goal and measurable objectives. *There can be multiple strategies per objective* | <p>Action plan. How will you get this done and make it sustainable? (Handbook Req #3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compile a list of local and regional partners. Where applicable, describe how your proposed projects can be incorporated into existing programs. - Compile list of state and federal funding sources that align with your proposed project idea(s). - List out short-term (1 year) and long-term (5 years) action items. |