

1. An executive summary of the project:

Project Overview: Kansas WorkforceONE aims to enhance digital accessibility and literacy across central and western Kansas by purchasing and strategically placing 150 laptops equipped with essential resources. Additionally, Accessibility Stations will be established in all 14 Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) locations. The project includes training DCF staff on Accessibility Station use, allocating funds for resources catering to customers with disabilities, and leveraging partnerships for expertise and device accessibility.

Key Components:

1. Laptop Deployment:

- Acquisition of 150 laptops, wired mice, and backpacks.
- Placement across 62 counties in central and western Kansas.
- Loading security software, digital literacy training links, and resource materials on each laptop.

2. Accessibility Stations:

- Establishment in all 14 Kansas DCF locations.
- Development of training for DCF staff on Accessibility Station usage.

3. Resource Allocation:

- Budget allocation for additional resources and accessories catering to customers with disabilities.
- Leverage disability resource partnerships, including the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), for expertise and accessibility resources.

4. Staff Training:

- Identification and training of project staff within 30 days.
- Collaboration with workforce system partners, economic development entities, employer organizations, community service providers, and county officials.

5. Distribution Strategy:

- Strategic placement of laptops aligned with community needs and barriers.
- Adaptation of check-in/check-out system for effective asset management.
- Training of partners on policies, procedures, and tools loaded on the laptops.

6. Digital Literacy Training Sessions:

- Each laptop loaded with links to digital literacy training sessions.

- Referrals to partners, including Adult Education, to address enhanced individual digital literacy as appropriate.
- Sessions include Computer Basics, Basic Computer Skills, Mouse Tutorial, Typing Tutorial, Tech Savvy Tips and Tricks, Internet Basics, Internet Tips, Search Better, Tutorials for various browsers, and Teams and Zoom Basics.

Timeline:

- Within 30 days: Identification and training of project staff. Procurement and purchase of laptops, backpacks, and wired mice.
- Ongoing: Collaboration with counties, communities, economic development, and additional One-Stop System partners for strategic placement. Asset management, software support, security installation and updates, and appropriate referrals to address existing or developing barriers.
- Continuous: Monitoring of inventory control system, asset control, distribution, demographics of participants, grant reporting, development of success stories, guidance from Accessibility Task Force, and leveraged partnerships with resource providers.
- Throughout: Training of DCF staff on Accessibility Stations.

Outcome: The project aims to empower communities and their citizens by providing accessible digital resources and technology, as well as opportunities for digital literacy training. By leveraging partnerships and strategic distribution, the initiative seeks to bridge the digital divide, fostering inclusivity and technological proficiency among diverse populations in central and western Kansas.

2. A description of partners involved, and how this will make devices available to individuals who do not subscribe to broadband connectivity due to lack of devices and equipment.

Partners Involved in Expanding Device Accessibility and Connectivity:

1. One-Stop Partners:

- Kansas Department of Commerce Workforce Services/Wagner-Peyser: Collaborating to facilitate outreach and awareness campaigns, ensuring the strategic placement of laptops to address connectivity gaps.
- Kansas Department for Children and Families – Vocational Rehabilitation: Hosting Accessibility Stations in LAI centers, dedicating staff to learn and support customers in utilizing technology. Providing assessment, accessibility expertise, and leveraged supports to address individual needs of program participants.

2. Adult Education Centers:

- Kansas Board of Regents Adult Education: Providing essential digital literacy training to customers in need, enhancing their ability to effectively use laptops and digital devices.

3. Economic Development Networks:

- Western Kansas Regional Economic Development Alliance: Leveraging their network to strategize on optimal laptop housing locations, contributing to outreach, and increasing public awareness of the initiative.
- Local Workforce Development Board Members: Collaborating to identify key areas for laptop placement and supporting outreach efforts.

4. Chief Elected Officials Board:

- Working with elected officials to strategize and make informed decisions on laptop housing locations, ensuring alignment with community needs and barriers.

Collaborative Strategies:

- Strategic Placement: Utilizing the collective knowledge of partners to strategically place laptops where they are most needed.
- Outreach and Awareness: Leveraging the extensive network of partners for outreach activities and public awareness campaigns to reach individuals without broadband connectivity and devices.
- Social Media and Website Promotion: All partners committing to utilizing their social media platforms and websites to promote the Laptop Library initiative, increasing visibility and accessibility information.

Dedicated Support:

- Accessibility Stations (DCF-VR): Housing Accessibility Stations in DCF centers and dedicating staff to learn and assist customers, ensuring maximum utilization of technology.
- Training Support (Adult Education Centers): Providing digital literacy training to empower individuals with the skills needed to effectively use laptops.

Support Letters:

- Support letters from key entities such as DCF-VR, Kansas Board of Regents Adult Education, and Western Kansas Economic Development Alliance demonstrate a collective commitment to the initiative and highlight the importance of bridging the digital divide.

Overall Impact: By leveraging the expertise and resources of these partners, the Kansas WorkforceONE initiative aims to overcome barriers to broadband connectivity by making devices available and providing necessary training. The collaborative efforts will ensure that individuals without broadband subscriptions gain access to the digital tools and skills necessary for active participation in the digital economy.

3. Goals of the project and community benefit including whether a compelling need is served.

Goals for the Kansas WorkforceONE ADOPT Program:

Objective: To optimize the impact of the Kansas WorkforceONE ADOPT Program by achieving the following key performance indicators:

1. Laptop Utilization:

- Target: Achieve an average utilization rate of 75% or higher for distributed laptops by program participants.
- Measurement: Regularly monitor and assess the percentage of laptops actively in use through a robust asset management system.

2. Digital Literacy Enhancement:

- Target: Significantly increase the digital literacy skills of program participants through tailored training sessions.
- Measurement: Conduct periodic assessments to track the improvement in participants' digital literacy skills, covering aspects such as basic computer skills, internet usage, and software proficiency.

3. Accessibility Station Utilization:

- Target: Promote and enhance the usage of Accessibility Stations, specifically aiming for increased engagement by individuals with disabilities.
- Measurement: Monitor the frequency and effectiveness of Accessibility Station usage, with a focus on improving access to technology and services for participants with disabilities.

4. Customer Satisfaction:

- Target: Maintain a high level of customer satisfaction among program participants.
- Measurement: Gather success stories from participants highlighting positive experiences and track customer satisfaction through post-usage surveys distributed to participants.

4. How the project will enable eligible entities to distribute no-cost devices and equipment to critical need individuals who lack devices and equipment.

Strategies to Achieve Goals:

1. Tailored Digital Literacy Training:

- Develop and implement targeted digital literacy training sessions, ensuring participants acquire essential skills for effective laptop usage.

2. Accessibility Station Awareness Campaigns:

- Conduct awareness campaigns highlighting the benefits of Accessibility Stations, with a specific focus on improving accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

3. Regular Monitoring and Reporting:

- Implement a comprehensive monitoring system to regularly track laptop utilization, digital literacy progress, and Accessibility Station engagement.

4. Continuous Program Improvement:

- Regularly review program strategies based on feedback and performance data to enhance effectiveness continually.

5. Success Story Collection:

- Actively seek and document success stories from program participants to showcase positive outcomes and impact within the community.

6. Customer Survey Implementation:

- Administer surveys to participants post-usage to gather feedback on their experience, satisfaction levels, and areas for improvement.

Expected Outcomes:

1. High Laptop Utilization:

- Increased engagement and usage of laptops, ensuring that a significant majority of distributed devices actively contribute to the digital empowerment of participants.

2. Enhanced Digital Literacy Skills:

- Demonstrable improvement in participants' digital literacy skills, equipping them with the knowledge needed to navigate the digital landscape effectively.

3. Increased Accessibility Station Usage:

- Improved engagement with Accessibility Stations, particularly benefiting individuals with disabilities and promoting equal access to technology.

4. Positive Customer Satisfaction:

- Maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction through positive experiences, as evidenced by success stories and survey responses.

Through these strategic objectives and measurements, the Kansas WorkforceONE ADOPT Program aims to create a meaningful and sustained impact on the digital accessibility, literacy, and satisfaction of participants in central and western Kansas.

5. The short and long-term benefit to the community.

Community Benefit:

- The Kansas WorkforceONE ADOPT Program directly benefits communities by providing access to digital resources, fostering digital literacy, promoting inclusivity, and direct linkages to resource providers and programs. Through the strategic placement of laptops and the establishment of Accessibility Stations, the initiative addresses a compelling need for individuals without broadband connectivity and enhances opportunities for participation in the digital economy, communities, employment, and education. Kansas WorkforceONE's ADOPT program, bolstered by collaboration with diverse partners ensures a comprehensive and community-centered approach, creating a positive and lasting impact on the lives of citizens in central and western Kansas.

Enabling Distribution of No-Cost Devices to Critical-Need Individuals:

The Kansas WorkforceONE ADOPT Program strategically addresses the lack of digital devices and connectivity among critical-need individuals in central and western Kansas. The following components outline how the project will enable eligible entities to distribute no-cost devices and equipment to individuals who lack resources:

1. Laptop Deployment:

- Acquisition of 150 laptops, wired mice, and backpacks.
- Loading security software, digital literacy training links, and resource materials on each laptop.
- Targeted placement across 62 counties in central and western Kansas, utilizing guidance from counties, communities, and partners to identify device distribution points.

2. Accessibility Stations:

- Establishment in all 14 Kansas DCF locations.
- Training of DCF staff on Accessibility Station usage.

3. Resource Allocation:

- Budget allocation for additional resources and accessories catering to customers with disabilities.
- Leverage disability resource partnerships, including the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), DCF-Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, and the Kansas WorkforceONE Accessibility Task Force, for assessment, expertise, and accessibility resources.

4. Distribution Strategy:

- Strategic placement of laptops aligned with community needs and barriers.

- Adaptation of check-in/check-out system for effective asset management.
- Training of partners on policies, procedures, and tools loaded on the laptops, as well as how to access additional needs through direct linkages to partners and programs.

5. Digital Literacy Training Sessions:

- Each laptop will be loaded with links to digital literacy training sessions, anti-virus protection, information on accessing community resources and programs, and guidance to contact technical support.
- Referrals to partners, including Adult Education, to address enhanced individual digital literacy as appropriate.
- Links to training and tutorials covering various digital literacy aspects, ensuring users can maximize the benefits of the provided devices.

Collaborative Strategies:

- Strategic Placement: Utilizing the collective knowledge of partners to strategically place laptops where they are most needed, targeting economically distressed communities.
- Outreach and Awareness: Leveraging partners for outreach activities and public awareness campaigns to identify individuals lacking devices and connectivity.
- Social Media, Print, Radio, and Website Promotion: All partners committing to promoting the initiative through their platforms, increasing visibility and accessibility information.

Dedicated Support:

- Accessibility Stations (DCF-VR): Housing Accessibility Stations in DCF centers, dedicating staff to learn and assist customers, ensuring maximum utilization of assistive technology.
- Training Support (Adult Education Centers): Providing individualized enhanced digital literacy training to empower individuals with the skills needed to effectively use the laptops.

Overall Impact and Community Benefit: The Kansas WorkforceONE ADOPT Program, with its comprehensive approach and collaboration with diverse partners, aims to distribute no-cost devices and equipment to individuals in critical need. By strategically placing laptops and establishing Accessibility Stations, the project directly addresses the lack of devices and connectivity in economically distressed communities. The digital literacy training sessions further empower individuals to harness the full potential of the provided resources, ensuring a lasting and positive impact on the communities and citizens in central and western Kansas.