

DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT KANSANS

PUBLIC PROPOSALS- SECOND ROUND



Application Title: Abilene Public Library - Digital Literacy and Learning

Organization Name: Abilene Public Library

Project Executive Summary

Goals of the proposed project:

The Abilene Public Library's Digital Literacy and Learning project will bring much needed digital learning to the Abilene and Dickinson County Community. Our goal is to meet our community's needs for technology training in different ways by having a online repository for training resources that can be viewed on demand as well as the opportunity to attend hand on in-person training. The proposed project will focus on:

- 1) Digital Skills & Basics: Beginner and Basics classes online through DigitalLearn and in-person with a technology instructor
- 2) Online Safety: Classes online through DigitalLearn and in-person with a technology instructor
- 3) AI and Social Media for Business: Specialty courses aimed at local business needs
- 4) Online Resources and Access: Support for DigitalLearn online course platform, resource website, and availability of mobile computer lab, video conferencing, and telehealth appointments.

Needs addressed by the proposed project:

The purpose of the Digital Literacy and Learning project is to help bridge the digital divide and bring equitable access to the Dickinson County community. The Abilene Public Library has been a hub for free computer and internet access. In 2023, the library's wireless was accessed 16,892 times and our public computers were used for 2,302 sessions. When surveying the community and collection community comments we have had many request for computer classes and training. According the the National Center for Education Statistics 19% of households in our school district do not have broadband internet at home. Residents have less broadband access than the state and national average. 11.3% of families live below the poverty level and only 32.7% have a Bachelor's degree or higher. Dickinson County is defined as an economically distressed county. We believe the classes offered will provide necessary training to help bridge the gap in our community to make a more marketable workforce, promote local business, and provide access to local resources. Many jobs and government programs are only accessible if you have basic computer knowledge. According to census.gov Abilene also has an older population with 22.9% of residents age 65 or older. Having the mobile computer lab will allow the library to take training to other accessible locations for seniors.

Service partners involved in the proposed project:

The North Central Kansas Library System provides us with technology support which will be vital for selecting hardware and setting up the mobile computer lab and smart board. We are partnering with the Public Library Association and [Digitallearn.org](https://www.digitallearn.org) for our online training platform.

Community and/or stakeholders involved in the proposed project:

We will partner with the Dickinson County Economic Development Corporation to advertise and solicit business people in our area for specialty training. The library will work with the CARES Coalition of Dickinson County to promote events and showcase resources on caresresources.org

Intended impact of the proposed project:

Our goal is to increase digital literacy and online safety in the Dickinson County area. We will create a sustainable set of classes teaching core computer skills that will increase our residents ability to access job applications, government programs, healthcare, and social support. We will increase the library's ability to be mobile in serving the community. The program will help increase awareness for local businesses and services.

Total amount requested in DOCK 2.0 funding:

\$50,034.89 USD