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Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support,  
Illinois State University, College of Education

*Digital  
Infrastructure,  
Access & Skills:  
Analysis of Digital  
Divide Inequities*

September 23, 2020



## Ground rules

- Phone lines will be muted for better sound quality
- Please ‘introduce’ yourself by typing your name in the chat box
- Please use question box to ask questions



# Today's Panelists

**Amanda Bergson-Shilcock**, Senior Fellow, National Skills Coalition

**Matt Schmit**, Director, Illinois Office of Broadband, DCEO

**Becky Raymond**, Executive Director, Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition

**Molly Bashay**, Senior Policy Analyst, Center for Law and Social Policy

# **Digital Infrastructure, Access, and Skills**

**Crucial to Illinois' Economic Recovery**

**Webinar**

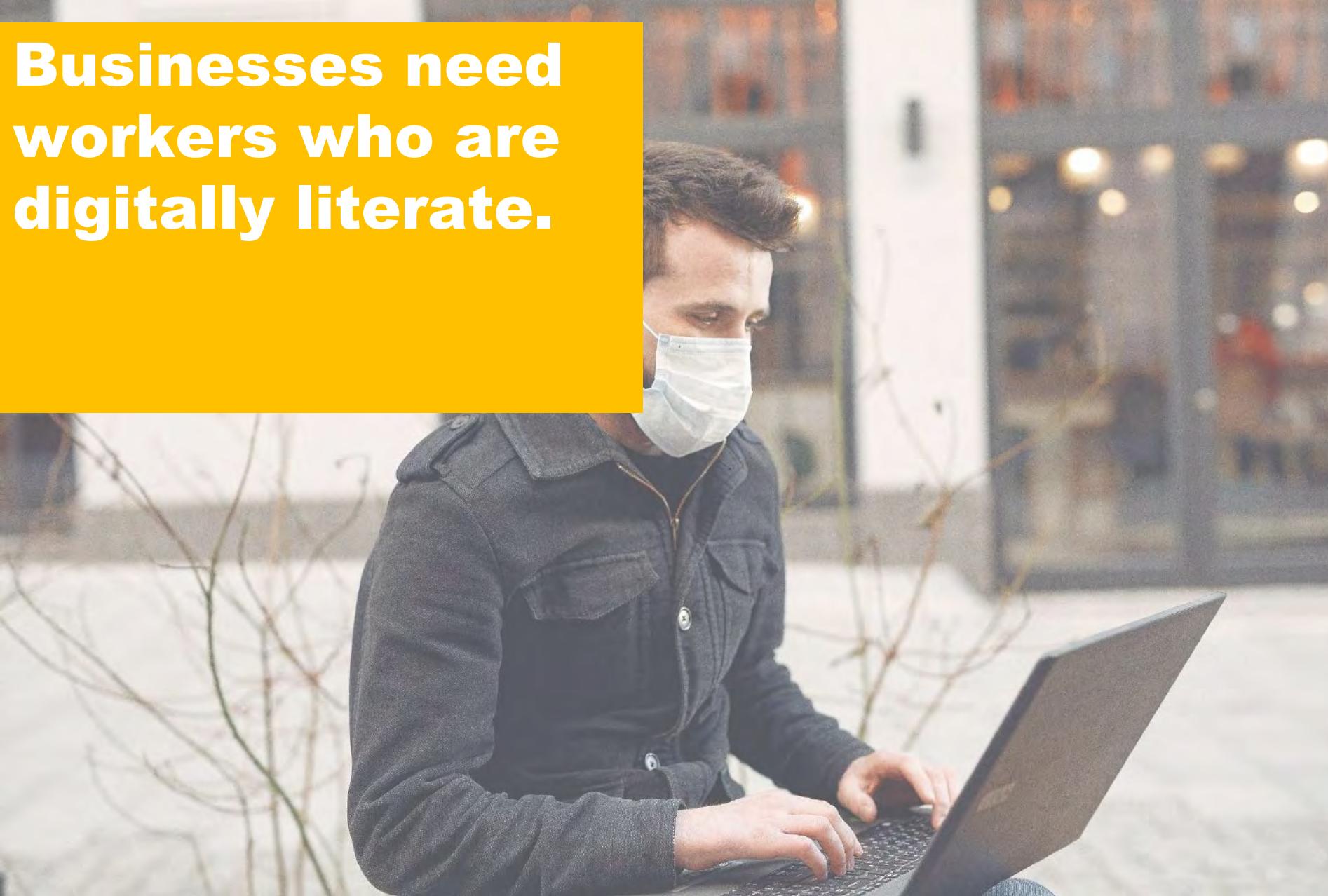
**September 23, 2020**



**The pandemic has  
brought home a new  
reality:**



**Businesses need workers who are digitally literate.**





*Photo credit: Honeygrow/Kyle Huff*



**Voice assistants are  
expanding in the elder  
care field.**

*Yvonne Meyer, Los Angeles retirement home resident.  
Photo credit: CNBC.*

# Grocery workers are completing online training.



# Safety training often requires digital skills.



SALES: 1-800-867-1713 | SUPPORT: 1-866-575-4310

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A circular logo for "AUTHORIZED OSHA COURSES". It features the word "AUTHORIZED" at the top, "OSHA" in the center, and "COURSES" at the bottom, all within a blue circle.

# Manufacturing workers are using augmented reality (AR).



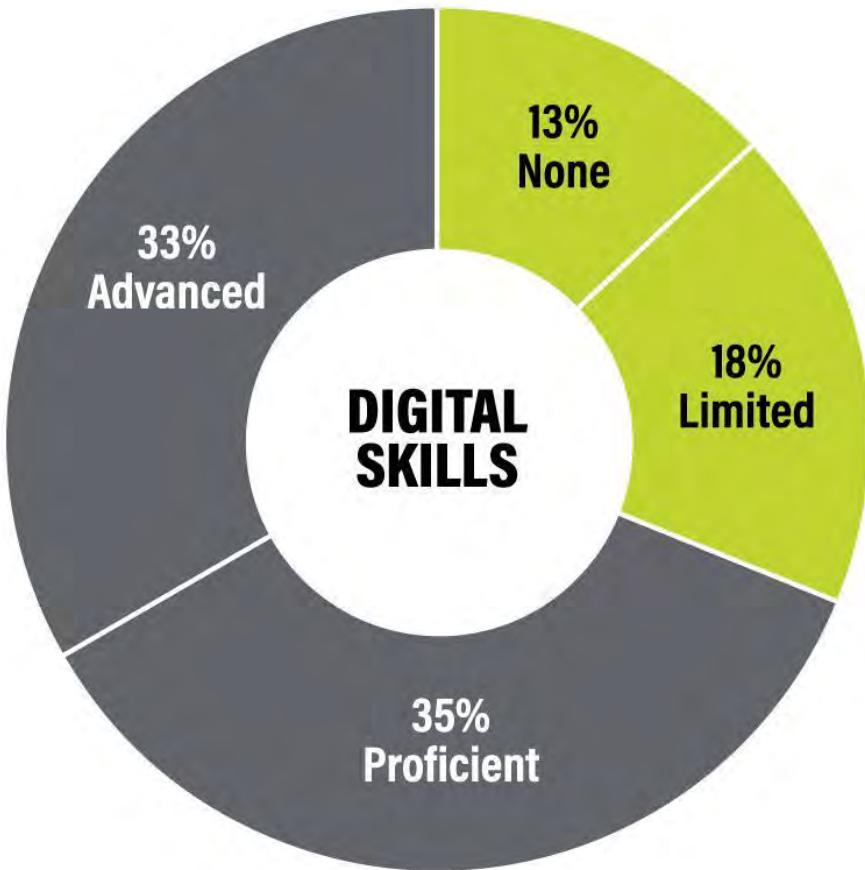
**Mobile tools are growing in the retail sector.**



# But US workers have crucial digital skill gaps.



# Nearly one-third of America's workers lack digital skills



Currently employed US workers ages 16-64. Source: *OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) 2012-14.*

<b>Selected industries</b>	<b>Percentage of workers with no digital skills</b>	<b>Percentage of workers with limited digital skills</b>	<b>Combined percentage of workers with limited or no skills*</b>
Construction, transportation and storage	22%	28%	50%
Retail, wholesale, and auto repair	14%	23%	37%
Hospitality and other services	18%	18%	36%
Manufacturing	16%	19%	35%
Administrative and support services; arts, entertainment and recreation	13%	22%	35%
Health and social work	12%	21%	33%
Finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE)	6%	14%	19%*
Education	5%	11%	15%*

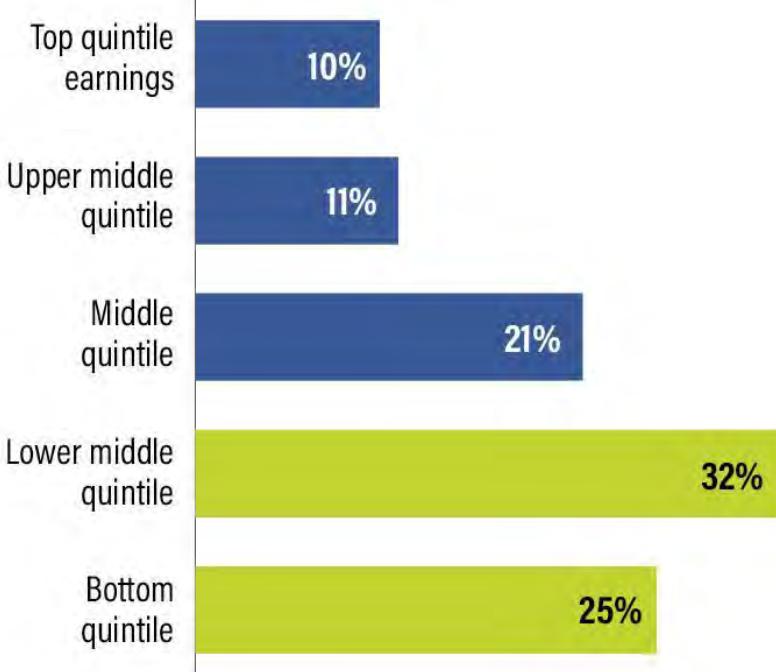
\*NOTE: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.



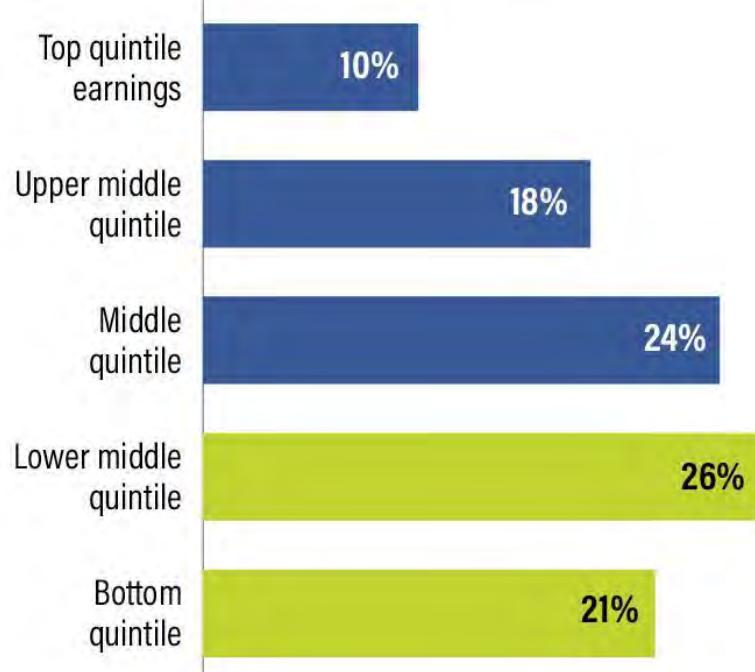
**These gaps have  
consequences for economic  
competitiveness**

# Roughly half of workers with limited or no digital skills have low earnings

**NO DIGITAL SKILLS**

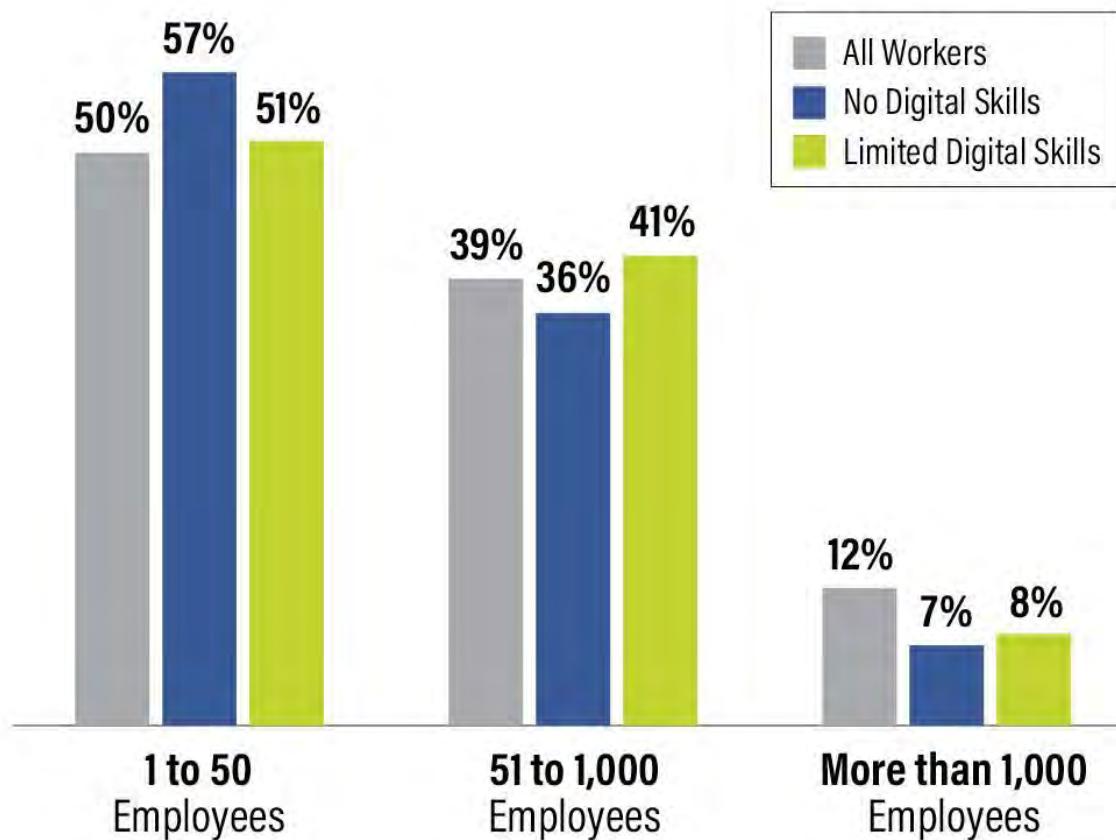


**LIMITED DIGITAL SKILLS**



Numbers may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Currently employed US workers ages 16-64. Source: *OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) 2012-14.*

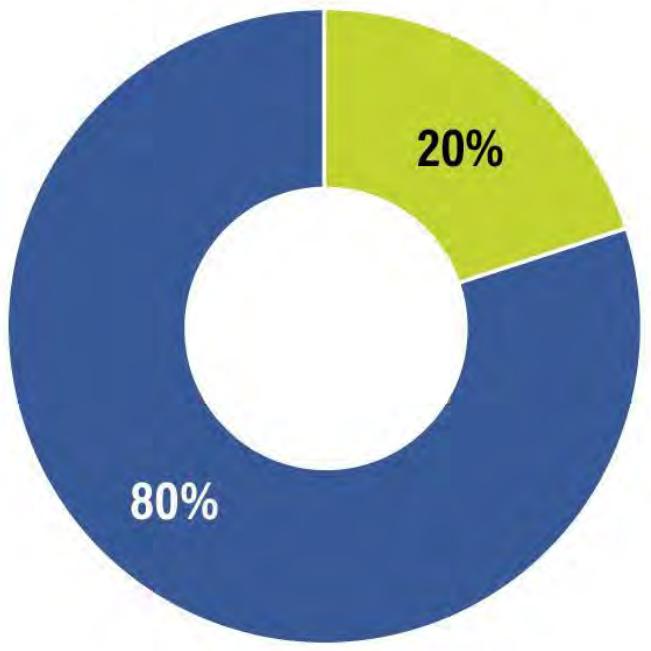
## Workers with limited or no digital skills are slightly more likely to work for small businesses



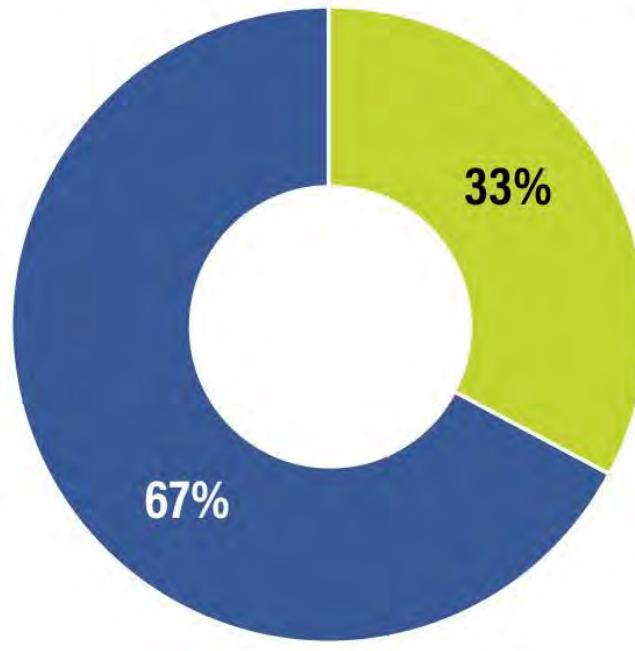
Among currently employed workers ages 16-64. Size of employer refers to location at which person works. Source: *OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) 2012-14*.

# Low digital skills aren't just a problem for workers themselves; many are also supervising others

One-Fifth of Workers with  
**No** Digital Skills are Supervisors

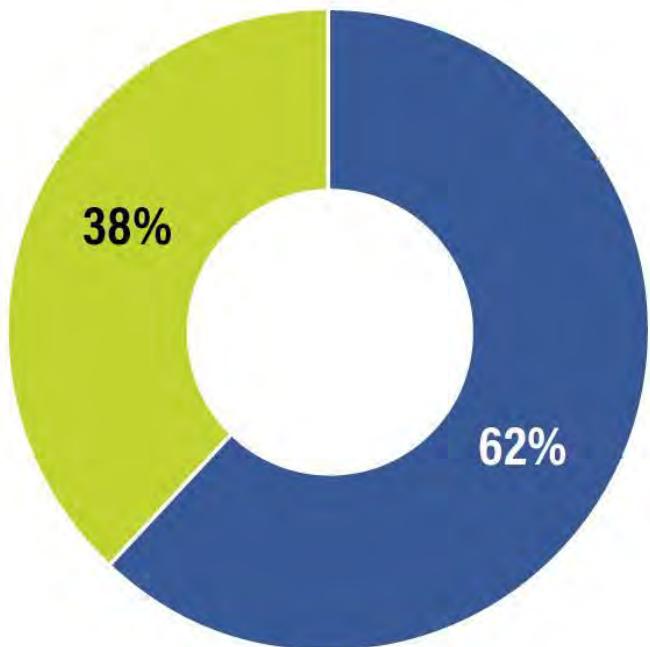


One-Third of Workers with  
**Limited** Digital Skills are Supervisors

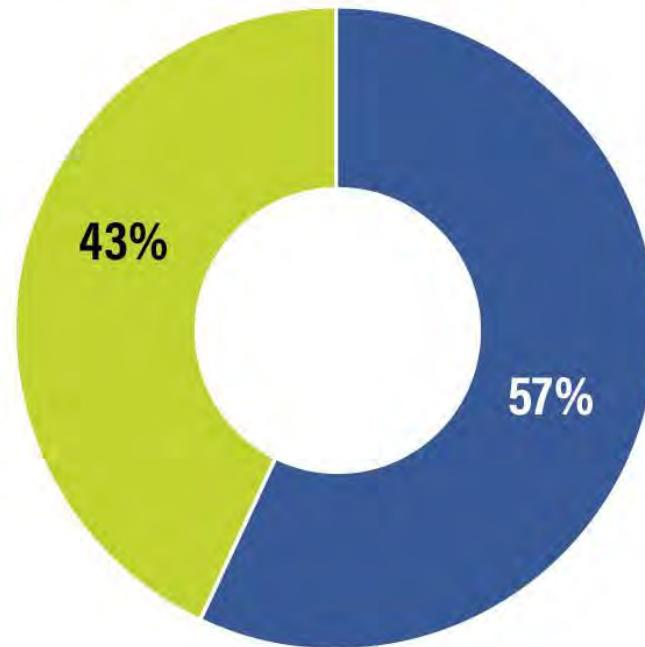


## Many workers who lack digital literacy have jobs that require substantive computer skills

Among Workers with **No** Digital Skills



Among Workers with **Limited** Digital Skills



■ Moderate or complex computer skills needed for current job

■ Straightforward computer skills needed for current job

# What can you do now?

- **Educate policymakers about existing digital skill gaps & potential remedies**
- **Advocate for expanded data collection on digital skills**
- **Support dedicated investment in digital upskilling**  
*(Learn more: [Digital Skills for an Equitable Recovery](#))*



**American workers deserve our investment in  
their digital skills.**





**Want to dig deeper?  
Slides, data & industry fact sheets:  
[www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/webinars/upcoming](http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/webinars/upcoming)**

# Acknowledgements

- Our research partners at the **American Institutes for Research**
  - Learn more about their work at [AIR.org](http://AIR.org), and access more about the OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) dataset at [PIAACgateway.com](http://PIAACgateway.com)
- **Walmart** for financial support

*We thank Walmart for their support but acknowledge that the findings, conclusions, and recommendations presented here are those of National Skills Coalition, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Walmart.*

# Contact

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Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

# Office of Broadband

## CONNECT ILLINOIS PROGRAM

Digital Equity via Access, Adoption + Utilization

September 23, 2020



# CONNECT ILLINOIS

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW



- Connect Illinois Vision
- Broadband Advisory Council + Working Groups
- Broadband Strategic Plan
- Mapping
- Broadband Access, Adoption + Utilization
  - Infrastructure
  - Community Planning + Capacity Building
  - Digital Equity: Literacy, Adoption + Inclusion
- Broadband Affordability Study



# CONNECT ILLINOIS

## VISION



- Provide ubiquitous broadband **access** that is reliable + affordable to homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions throughout Illinois
- Promote **adoption** + digital literacy
- Drive **utilization** ... economic development + expanded opportunity + innovation in such areas as education, health care, and agriculture



# CONNECT ILLINOIS

[DCEO](#) ▶ [Connect Illinois](#)

## Connect Illinois

Governor Pritzker is committed to establishing Illinois as a leader when it comes to technology and innovation. Access to broadband is a critical component of staying ahead of the curve and will improve the lives of families, entrepreneurs, farmers and other Illinoisans who rely on high-speed broadband for everything from healthcare to education.

Governor Pritzker recently launched a statewide initiative, Connect Illinois, to expand broadband access across the entire state. Connect Illinois includes a capital investment from Rebuild Illinois, the creation of a Broadband Advisory Council and Broadband Office, and a new program that will provide all Illinois public K-12 students access to high-speed broadband at no charge. The initiative also includes a \$400 million broadband grant program and a \$20 million capital program for the Illinois Century Network, a high-speed broadband network serving K-12 and higher education institutions, among others.

For more information on the Connect Illinois launch, click [here](#).

[HOME](#)

[Connect Illinois](#)

[Drive-Up Wi-Fi Map](#)

[Low-Cost Broadband](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[Federal Broadband](#)

## COMMUNITY GRANTS

[Connected  
Communities](#)

[Community Planning](#)

[Grant Instructions](#)

[Notice of Funding](#)

[Webinar Series](#)

[Digital Literacy](#)

## BROADBAND GRANTS

[Round One](#)

[Round One Map](#)

[Maps & Data](#)



# Illinois Broadband 2020



Find address or place



## About

To use this app:

Enter an address in the search bar to zoom in to the area of interest. Click on the map to view broadband provider information.

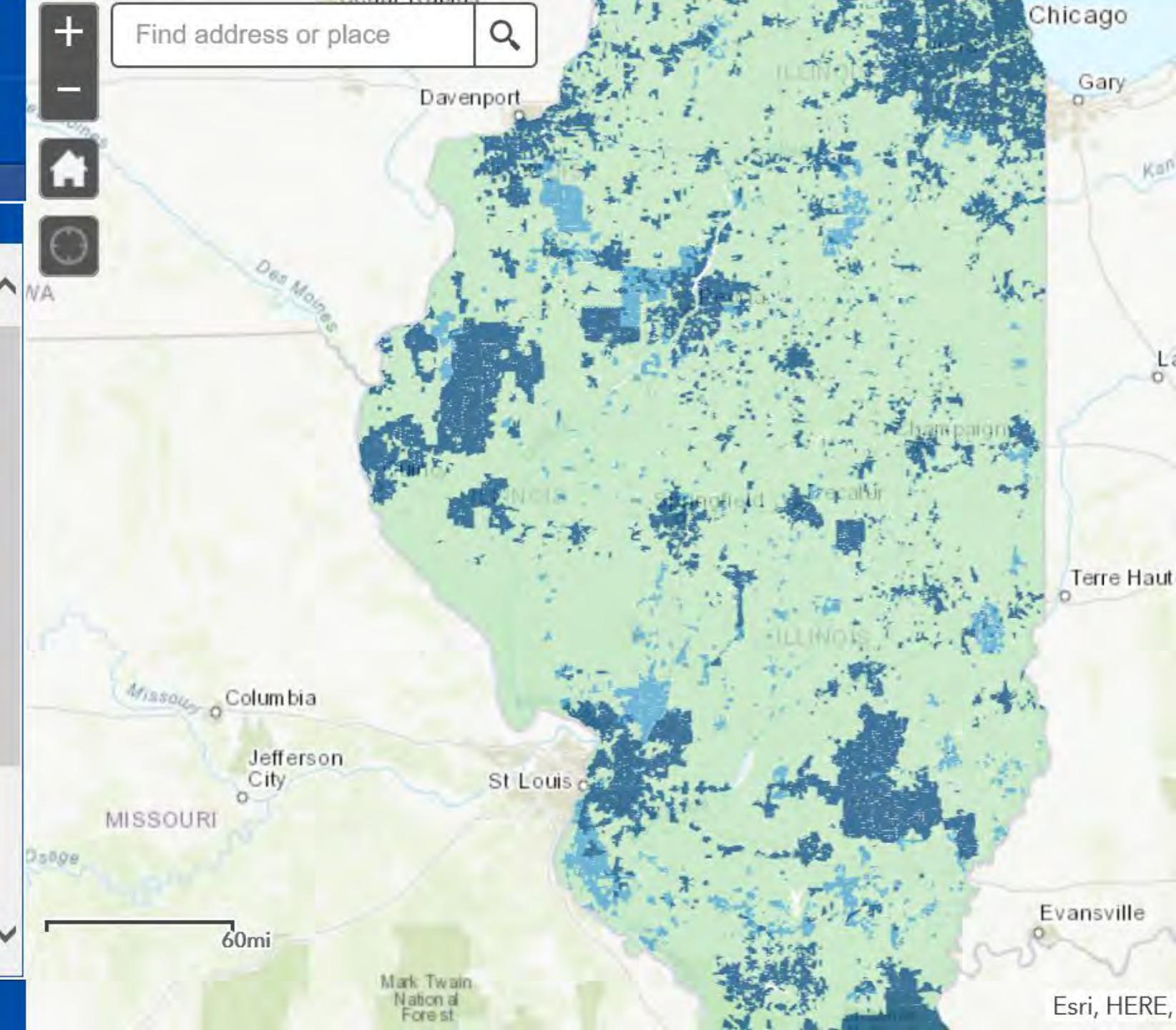
Further information on the FCC Fixed Broadband Deployment Data from Form 477 can be found here: <https://www.fcc.gov/general/broadband-deployment-data-fcc-form-477>. Data is current as of December 2018.

Three Fixed Wireline (e.g. DSL, cable) speed tiers have been calculated:

Unserved (Less than 25 Mbps downstream or 3 Mbps upstream or no service available)

Minimum 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream and less than 100 Mbps downstream and 20 Mbps upstream

Minimum 100 Mbps downstream and 20 Mbps upstream





# CONNECT ILLINOIS

## BROADBAND ADVISORY COUNCIL



- Convened in August 2019
- Meets quarterly
- Five initial working groups
  - Access
  - Economic development
  - Education
  - Telehealth
  - Technology + Innovation
- Affordability study
- Annual report

### Member

Deno Peridou  
Melia Carter  
Chris Nelson  
Rick Holzmacher  
Zak Horn  
Steven Hill  
Karen Boswell  
Josh Shallenberger  
Mike Chamberlain  
Anne Slaughter  
Deb Alfredson  
Jeff Newell  
David Antonacci  
Bill Bodine  
Ryan Gruenenfelder  
Nikki Budzinski  
Lori Sorenson  
Paula Basta  
Susan Satter  
Jim Zolnierik  
Theresa Eagleson  
Sen. Bill Cunningham-D  
Sen. Jil Tracy-R  
Rep. John Connor-D  
Rep. Keith Wheeler-R

### Organization

AT&T  
Verizon  
Comcast  
Illinois Rural Broadband Association  
Metro Communications  
Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association  
Frontier  
CEO of Shelby Electric Coop  
Illinois Municipal League/Mayor of Belvidere  
Illinois Library Association  
Illinois Association of Housing Authorities  
Illinois Community College Board  
Illinois Board of Higher Education  
Illinois Farm Bureau  
AARP  
Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity  
Department of Innovation and Technology  
Department of Aging  
Illinois Attorney General  
Illinois Commerce Commission  
Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services  
Illinois Senate  
Illinois Senate  
Illinois House of Representatives  
Illinois House of Representatives



# **CONNECT ILLINOIS**

## **BROADBAND AFFORDABILITY STUDY**



- Illinois General Assembly (SB 2135), May 2020
  - In pursuit of universal broadband access goal, study:
    - Free access to all residents through grant program expansion
    - Affordable access to all residents
  - Study must include analysis of universal access in areas of poverty and areas where existing broadband infrastructure is insufficient for high-speed access
    - Should include discussion of Broadband Strategic Plan initiatives
    - Identify new streams of state, federal, and P3 revenue
    - Recommended schedule for implementation
  - Report on findings and recommendations due Jan 1, 2021

**ARTICLE 10. BROADBAND ACCESS**

Section 10-8. The Broadband Advisory Council Act is amended by adding Section 26 as follows:

SB2135 Enrolled - 4 - LRB101 09971 HEP 55073 b

(220 ILCS 80/25 new)

Sec. 26. Universal no-cost broadband Internet access.

(a) In furtherance of the purposes of this Act to expand broadband service to unserved rural and urban areas of this State and to achieve universal broadband service and Internet access for the residents of this State, the Broadband Advisory Council shall study the goal of providing free access to all residents of this State to broadband service through the expansion of the state broadband competitive matching grant program. The Broadband Advisory Council shall also study the alternative goal of providing affordable access to all residents of this State to broadband service. The Office of Broadband within the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity shall support and assist the Council in the development of the study.

(b) The study must include establishing access to broadband service in zip codes identified as having high levels of poverty and in the areas of the State without the infrastructure necessary to meet the requirements for high-speed access to the Internet. To the extent possible, the study shall consider the incorporation and expansion of the initiatives established in the Connect Illinois Broadband Strategic Plan. The Council's study shall identify existing and new streams of State, federal and private-public partnership revenue to underwrite the creation of necessary infrastructure and purchase unlimited broadband Internet access to be

# Connect Illinois

## Broadband Strategic Plan

February 2020





# BROADBAND STRATEGIC PLAN

## PROGRAM GOALS



To guide investment and gauge progress, the Connect Illinois broadband strategy is anchored by distinct, yet interdependent goals ensuring short-term *basic access*, providing longer-term *high-speed access*, and demonstrating *broadband leadership* and *economic development* relative to other states and to countries around the globe.

**Short-term goal: basic access.** The short-term universal access goal provides that Illinois homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions around the state can access broadband at basic service levels:

*By 2024, Illinois homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions throughout the state will have access to basic service of at least 25/3 Mbps.*

**Longer-term goal: High-speed broadband access.** The longer-term universal access goal ensures that Illinois homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions have access to at least one provider with high-speed service levels necessary for advanced applications, heavy bandwidth use, or future need:

*By 2028, Illinois homes, businesses, and community anchor institutions throughout the state will have access to at least one provider offering 100/20 Mbps service.*



# BROADBAND STRATEGIC PLAN

## PROGRAM GOALS



**Legacy goal: broadband leadership.** Just as bandwidth needs change, so does the definition of “broadband.” Connect Illinois seeks to lead relative to its peers on the broadband of today – and tomorrow:

*By 2028, Illinois will place in the top three nationally, and top 12 globally, for broadband access.*

**Policy goal: economic development.** Access to high-speed internet can catalyze innovations that benefit areas such as education, telehealth, advanced manufacturing, and precision agriculture:

*Illinois will be a leader in broadband applications for agriculture, economic development, education, and telehealth while leveraging broadband infrastructure investments to support equitable growth.*



# BROADBAND STRATEGIC PLAN

## SERVICE LEVEL DEFINITIONS



**Definition:** **basic broadband.** Just as bandwidth needs change, so should the definition of what constitutes basic broadband. Connect Illinois will index its definition of broadband to track the FCC standard, currently 25/3 Mbps. However, broadband isn't just about speed; even basic broadband should match sufficient speed with adequate capacity, affordable pricing, appropriate reliability, and acceptable latency.

**Definition:** **unserved areas.** If a home, business, or community anchor institution lacks access to basic broadband, it is unserved. Connect Illinois considers those areas falling below this threshold, currently set at 25/3 Mbps, to be unserved areas.

**Definition:** **underserved areas.** Recognizing that bandwidth needs are rapidly changing, Connect Illinois considers any home, business, or community anchor institution without access to broadband of at least 100/20 Mbps as underserved. Areas falling below this threshold are underserved areas.



# CONNECT ILLINOIS ROUND 1



- **\$50M state + \$65M nonstate match = \$115M investment**
- **26,000+ new/improved connections to homes, farms, biz, community anchors**
- **28 projects, 18 different grantees (17 providers + one local government)**
- **39 applications; 37 applications were complete and/or responsive to NOFO**
- **Strong cross-section of provider types (Rural ISPs, telcos, cable, cooperatives, etc.)**



# CONNECT ILLINOIS

## GRANT SCORING CRITERIA (200 pts)



1. **Anticipated Broadband Impact:** *60 points possible*
  - a. Unserved or underserved total passings potentially served by project: 35 points possible
  - b. Economic development and community benefit of the project: 25 points possible
2. **Nonstate Matching Funds:** *20 points possible*
3. **Community Participation:** *15 points possible*
4. **Project Readiness:** *40 points possible*
5. **Project Sustainability:** *40 points possible*
6. **Broadband Adoption Assistance:** *15 points possible*
7. **Open Access and Shared Use:** *10 points possible*



# CONNECT ILLINOIS

## COMMUNITY PLANNING + CAPACITY BUILDING



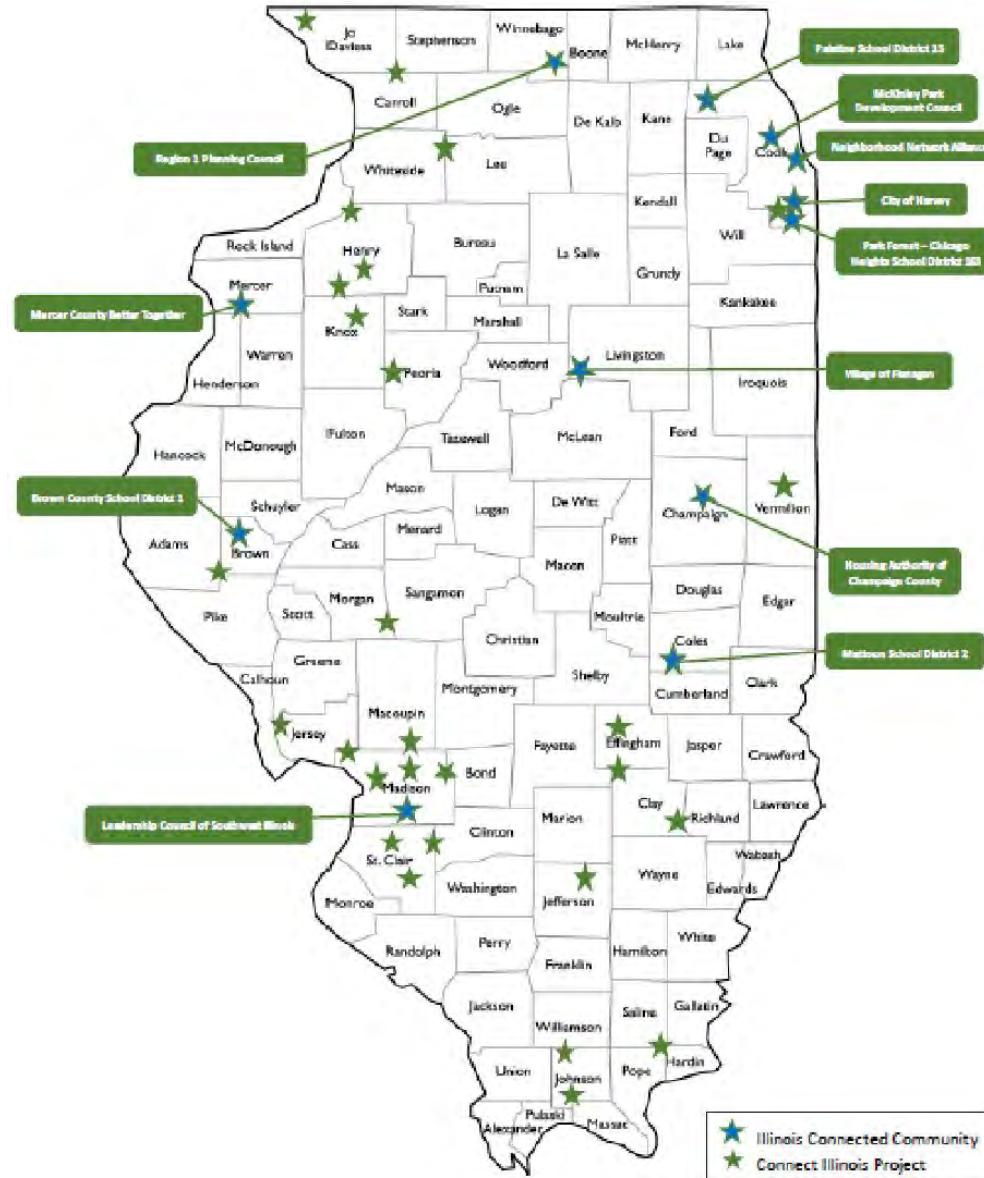
**Community planning and capacity building.** The most compelling infrastructure grant applications will be community driven, with deep connections between the application and a community's technology vision, needs, and goals. Targeted engagement and programming will be necessary to promote community involvement throughout the grant process, eventual deployment, and ongoing broadband adoption and utilization. Without meaningful community involvement, applications may tend toward minimal impact, missing key opportunities for advances in such areas as community and economic development, education, or telehealth.

To jump-start community involvement and to maximize the impact of the Connect Illinois investment, effort will be taken to engage individual communities, inspire and support community broadband planning and goal-setting, and galvanize local resources and awareness.

This effort will seek to leverage state and non-state funding to design programming, tap experts in community broadband engagement, and lay the groundwork for meaningful, community-driven infrastructure deployment and lasting approaches to broadband utilization.



# ILLINOIS CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



- Partnership among the Illinois Office of Broadband, the Benton Institute for Broadband & Society, and local philanthropy. Designed to engage a first-year cohort of communities through best practice curriculum and expert consultation.
- The initial cohort includes four school districts, two community-based organizations, two local governments, two county-level organizations, and two economic development groups:
  - Brown County School District 1
  - Mercer County Better Together
  - Neighborhood Network Alliance
  - Palatine School District 15
  - Park Forest-Chicago Heights School District 163
  - Mattoon School District 2
  - Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois
  - Village of Flanagan
- Each Illinois Connected Community will have completed a community-driven, broadband strategic plan that articulates the community's broadband vision and identifies an action plan for progress toward improved broadband access in the areas of community and economic development, education, civic engagement, healthcare, agriculture, and more.



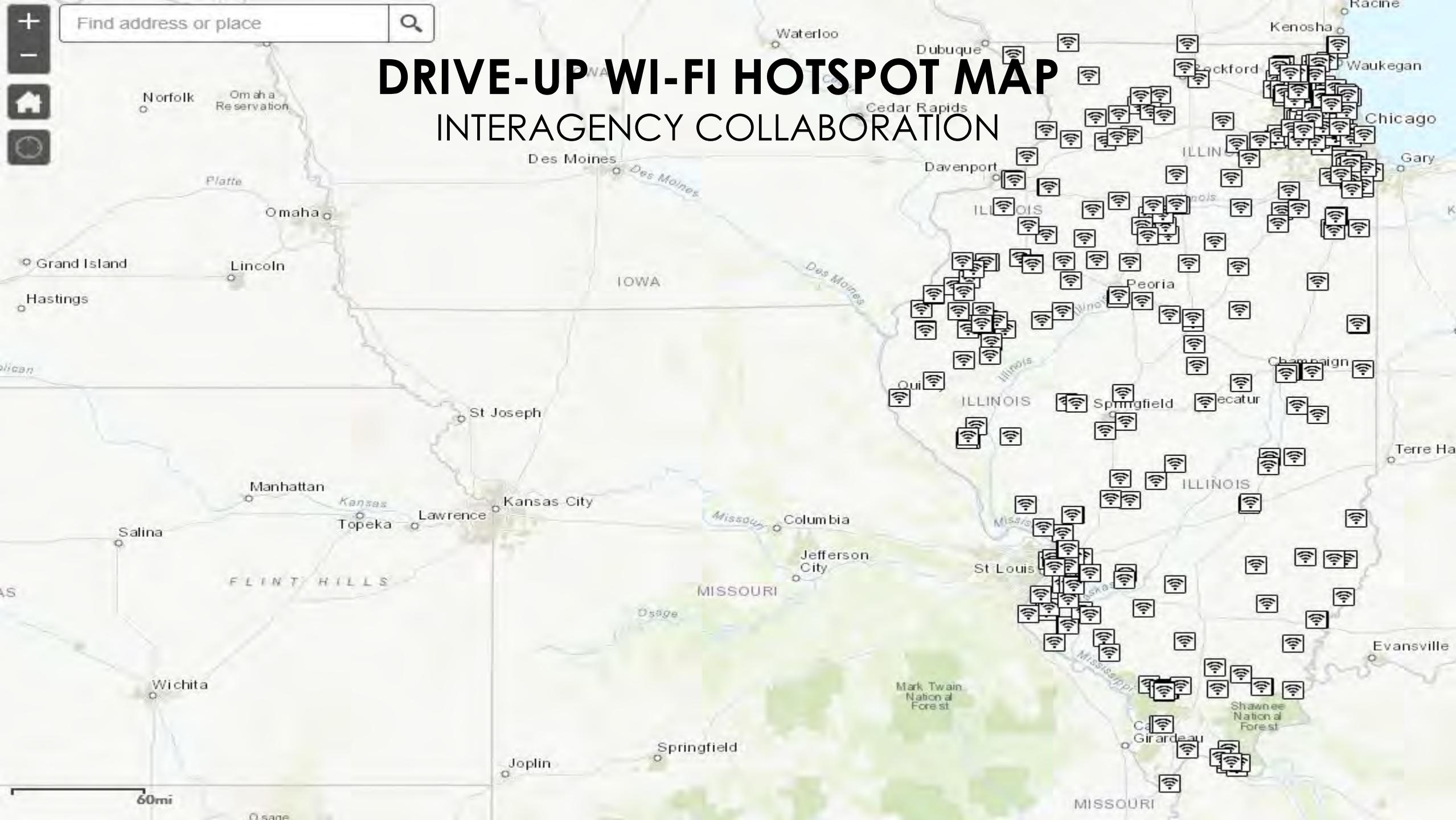
# CONNECT ILLINOIS

## DIGITAL LITERACY, ADOPTION + INCLUSION



**Digital literacy, adoption, and inclusion.** For a state, local community, or individual family to compete in the 21st century digital economy, all barriers to broadband access must be overcome. At the same time Connect Illinois invests in broadband infrastructure, the program will leverage complementary efforts to ensure that all Illinoisans have both the requisite broadband service and necessary broadband knowhow.

More or better broadband deployment alone won't close the broadband access gap, but an historic infrastructure investment matched with meaningful civic engagement will position Illinois communities and consumers alike to compete in an increasingly digital global economy – and enjoy the advances in quality of life that come with connectivity of all kinds.



# PROGRAMMING + PARTNERSHIP



- Statewide Nonprofit Partner
  - Computer Refurbishing
  - Mobile Devices/Hotspots
  - Digital Literacy Programming
- Digital Divide Elimination Fund
  - Competitive Grants
  - Community Partnerships
- IL Universal Service Fund Grants

A screenshot of the PCs for People website. The header features the logo "pcsforpeople" with a stylized 'P' icon. The navigation menu includes links for HOME, GET TECH, E-WASTE RECYCLING, BRIDGING THE GAP, ABOUT US, RENEW INTERNET, DIGITAL LEARNING CENTER, and DONATE. The main content area has a dark background image of a person's face. A large blue "ABOUT US" heading is prominently displayed. Below it, text reads: "PCs for People Recycles Business Electronics And Provides Refurbished Tech To Low-Income Households". A section titled "OUR MISSION" contains the text: "Through electronic reuse PCs for People provides the opportunity for all low-income individuals and nonprofits to benefit from the life changing impact of computers and mobile internet." A red vertical bar is visible on the far right edge of the slide.



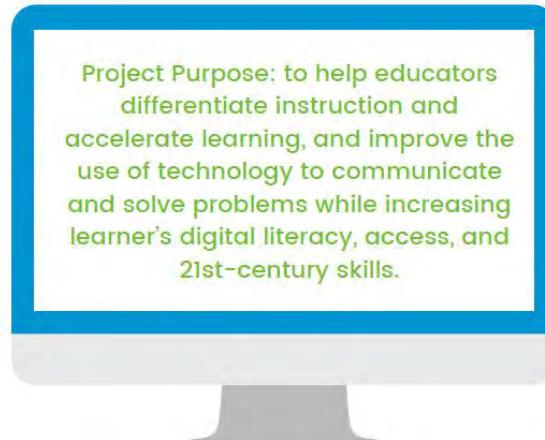
# QUESTIONS?

**Matt Schmit | Deputy Director**

Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity  
Director, Illinois Office of Broadband | [broadband@illinois.gov](mailto:broadband@illinois.gov)

## CCLC's IDLL

- Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition (CCLC) working in the digital literacy space for six years.
- Adopted the Illinois Digital Learning Lab (IDLL) with support of the Grand Victoria Foundation last year; announcing our 2nd round today!



# The need in Illinois

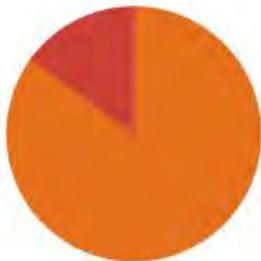
## Why Do We Need The IDLL?



10.6% of Illinois adults,  
1.3 million people, have  
less than 12 grades of  
formal education\*



2.8 million Illinois  
residents speak a  
language other than  
English at home\*



85% of learners who  
participated in IDLL  
tested below proficient  
in digital literacy skills

\*[https://www.iccb.org/iccb/wpcontent/pdfs/adulted/publications\\_reports/FY17\\_Report\\_To\\_Gov\\_and\\_GA.pdf](https://www.iccb.org/iccb/wpcontent/pdfs/adulted/publications_reports/FY17_Report_To_Gov_and_GA.pdf)

# Last year's highlights

- IDLL highlights
  - 26 Adult Educators from 22 organizations from across Illinois
  - Divided into 5 cohorts that met monthly with Subject Matter Experts
  - Reached 1,200 adult learners
  - Distributed nearly 200 devices
  - Experimented with more than 100 different software tools





# Educator Reflections....

“

"The IDLL helped our non-profit organization grow in leaps and bounds. It has helped us plan for the digital divide future and help our students plan for their future"

- Carole Walls

"As an instructor, I learned that teaching how to use technology early on in the classroom can benefit instruction throughout the year... If I had not had the opportunity to work with IDLL, I may not have jumped into teaching my students these tools for learning. I would have kept doing the same thing as before... My assignments for next school year are going to look a lot different."

- Jodi Norton

”



# Lessons Learned

## Top 3 Reflections From Educators

1

Keep it simple, use the same tools consistently, and model often. Continued modeling is essential, and most effective when instructing, "with your mouth, not your mouse."

2

Technology can and should be used at every learning level. Low language and literacy skills are not necessarily barriers to learning through tech, and using tech from the beginning helps.

3

Technology opens the door to wider networks and the ability to connect with more people in more ways. With technology, educators have the opportunity to greatly expand their impact.

# COVID-19

- COVID-19 exacerbated many persistent problems:
  - Lack of Internet access
  - Lack of devices
  - Lack of basic digital literacy skills



“I think the pandemic made it really obvious that students who had used a variety of technology in their classrooms before the shelter-in-place order were much better equipped for distance learning using technology.”

- Jennifer Brown



# Moving beyond COVID-19

- IDLL focusing on the educators, but we now really need whole programs to move to remote/virtual
- Promising efforts like Chicago Connected working to ensure greater broadband access
- Getting devices out them needs to be addressed more broadly and systematically
- Adopting Northstar would facilitate digital skill building – for workforce development and also for access community resources

# Looking ahead for IDLL

## Looking Ahead to 2020 - 2021



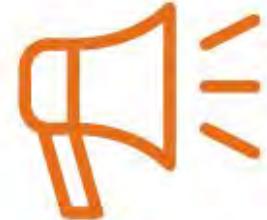
30 more  
educators will be  
invited to join  
IDLL in its 3rd  
round



The Lab will  
extend to 2 years,  
giving educators  
more time to  
experiment



12 webinars will  
allow educators  
to share their  
learnings across  
the field



IDLL will  
advocate for  
equitable access  
to broadband  
internet & tech



**Molly Bashay**  
Senior Policy Analyst | CLASP

# Digital Fluency for an Equitable Recovery

Webinar | September 2020

Digital inequities are under a spotlight since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.



A woman with dark hair and a nose piercing is smiling and laughing while looking at a laptop screen. She is wearing a light-colored t-shirt. A clear glass mug is on the table to her left. The laptop is an Apple model, with the Apple logo visible on the back panel. The background is slightly blurred.

Rapid digital  
transformation is leaving  
some behind

A black and white photograph showing a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a dark t-shirt, sitting at a desk and working on a laptop. The screen of the laptop displays several lines of code. In the background, another person wearing a cap and a light-colored shirt is also working on a computer. The overall atmosphere suggests a professional or educational setting like a computer lab or office.

Racial equity gaps  
persist in digital skills

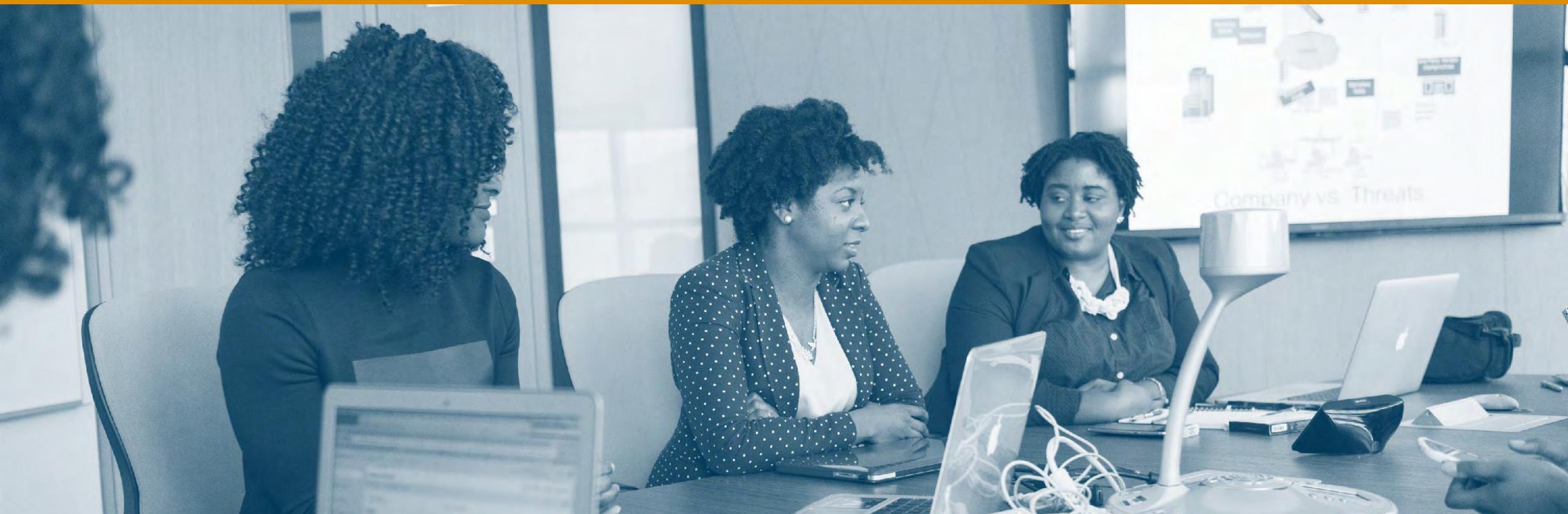


The digital divide is a huge barrier to accessing education and training and re-entering the workforce.

A woman with long hair is sitting at a desk, looking down at a laptop screen with a worried expression. Her hand is resting against her temple. The background is a bright, slightly blurred office environment.

Financial constraints, taking time off from work, and securing child care are barriers to upskilling.

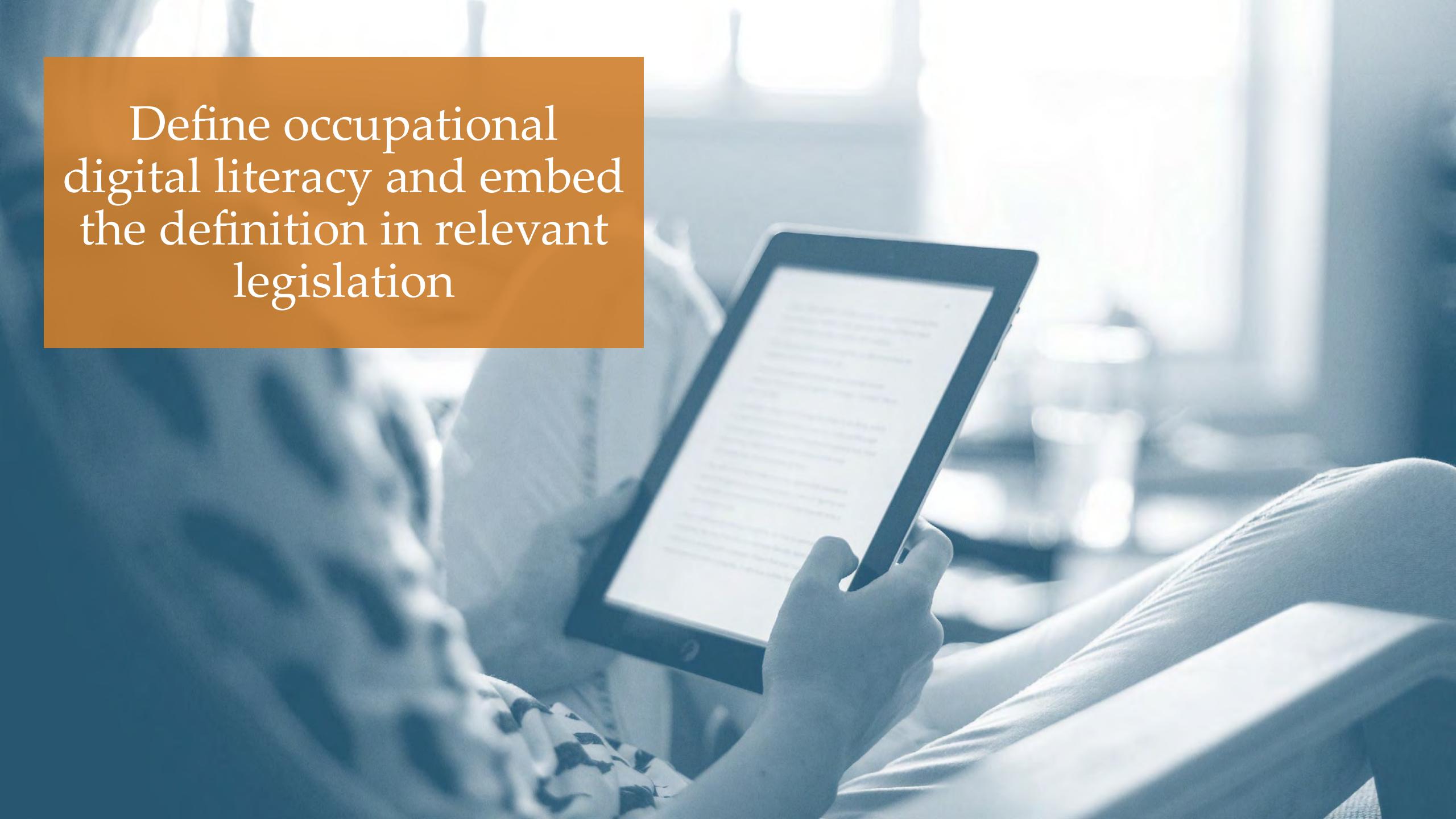
# Shifting to What Works for Workers and Learners





## Challenge:

Businesses and training providers need guidance to upskill workers to succeed in a changing economy.

A person is lying in bed, viewed from the side and back. They are holding a black e-reader device with both hands, looking at the screen which displays a document or book. The person is wearing a white t-shirt and patterned pajama bottoms. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

Define occupational  
digital literacy and embed  
the definition in relevant  
legislation

A woman with long dark hair is seen from the side, working at a light-colored wooden desk. She is looking down at a laptop keyboard. On the desk, there is also a smartphone lying next to a dark tumbler. A graphic overlay in the upper right corner features a solid orange background with white text.

Evaluate the current  
landscape and increase  
funding for digital literacy  
as a core competency



# Challenge:

States need support to develop and implement quality programs that embed digital literacy.



Build capacity with  
Digital Literacy  
Upskilling Grants



Analyze program data to determine best practices



## Challenge:

Small and mid-sized employers need support to rapidly upskill their new and incumbent workforces.

A blue-tinted photograph of four professionals in an office environment. A woman with curly hair and glasses on the left holds a stack of papers and looks towards the center. In the center, a woman in a grey sweater is looking down at a laptop screen. To her right, a man in a dark shirt leans in, also looking at the screen. Another person's face is partially visible on the far right. The background shows office walls and a window.

Incentivize private  
investment in upskilling  
incumbent workers



Allocate rapid response  
dollars to assist  
disconnected workers

- CEOs are under increased pressure to drive growth
- Accelerated product development cycles
- Keep costs down
- Reduce turnaround times
- Re-think how they manufacture goods
- Manufacturing footprint



## Challenge:

Small businesses have limited training capacity while external training may not respond to local business need.

A blue-tinted photograph of two people laughing. A man with grey hair and a beard is on the left, wearing a light-colored shirt. A woman with dark hair is on the right, wearing a striped shirt and holding a tablet. They appear to be in an office or laboratory setting.

Empower innovation  
through industry  
partnerships

# Contact

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