

State Digital Equity Plan & NTIA State Digital Equity Capacity Grant NOFO Briefing
May 23, 2024
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Meeting Recap and Transcript

The State Digital Equity Plan and NTIA State Digital Equity Capacity Grant NOFO Briefing met virtually on Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. Assistant Deputy Director Cole Przybyla welcomed attendees and instructed them to introduce themselves in the Zoom Chat box with their name, job title, and affiliated organization.

Housekeeping

Engagement and Operations Manager Anh Nguyen reviewed a few housekeeping items for attendees to participate in the conversation and have the best viewing experience throughout the duration of the meeting. ASL Interpreters were spotlighted throughout the meeting.

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome

Deputy Director Scott Adams of the California Department of Technology (CDT) Office of Broadband & Digital Literacy welcomed attendees. He shared that the purpose of this meeting is to provide SDEP updates and next steps of the NTIA State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program to critical stakeholders and partners who contributed to the development of the State Digital Equity Plan (SDEP). Deputy Director Scott Adams thanked the attendees who provided questions during the registration process as it shaped the information shared in this meeting to address those questions.

Agenda

Deputy Director Scott Adams briefly provided an overview of the State Digital Equity Plan & NTIA State Digital Equity Capacity Grant NOFO Briefing agenda for the day.

Agenda Item 2 – State Digital Equity Plan

Deputy Director Scott Adams presented on the general themes from public comments on the State Digital Equity Plan. He then shared key dates for the SDEP notice of approval, NTIA Digital Equity Capacity Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), and when the Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program

application is due to the NTIA. Deputy Director Adams reviewed the eight covered populations and seven key activities reflected in the SDEP. Lastly, Deputy Director Adams highlighted Goals 1-3 as it was reflected in the SDEP and allowable uses of the Digital Equity Capacity Grant according to the NOFO.

Q&A

Assistant Deputy Director Cole Przybyla moderated the Q&A sessions, starting with those with their hands raised on Zoom, and then those received via the Q&A chat box. Presenters proceeded to address questions.

The following meeting attendees raised their hands and came off mute to ask questions:

- Hector Ramirez
- Rebecca Kauma
- Wally Siembab

Agenda Item 3 – NTIA State Digital Equity Capacity Grant NOFO

Ms. Shawn Daugherty, Director of Broadband Equity Partnership, shared an overview of the NTIA State Digital Equity Capacity Grant NOFO, highlighted the allocation timeline and explained how the State could expect allocation in three tranches. She also reviewed the NTIA statutory award formula for states, a pie chart demonstrating the maximum percentage of allowable uses of the first allocation of the NTIA State Digital Equity Capacity Grant fund. At a high level, she presented on the CDT Capacity Grant program structure, which include Centralized Services, State Agency Digital Inclusion Efforts, and Digital Equity Capacity Sub-Grants. Referencing the NTIA NOFO, Ms. Daugherty then covered the performance and evaluation measurements used to evaluate grant applications, the eligible entities for sub-grants, and the focus of programs and permitted activities.

Q&A

Assistant Deputy Director Cole Przybyla moderated the Q&A sessions, starting with those with their hands raised on Zoom, and then those received via the Q&A chat box. Presenters proceeded to address questions.

The following meeting attendees raised their hands and came off mute to ask questions:

- WeCanConnect.US
- Rebecca Kauma

Agenda Item 4 – Engagement & Collaboration

Ms. Anh Nguyen, Engagement & Operations Manager at CDT Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy, shared recent stakeholder engagement efforts since the SDEP was approved. She also communicated all ongoing engagement and collaboration opportunities in which attendees can become involved in the SDEP implementation process. Scott Adams then reported the tentative timeline on the approximation of important milestones for Capacity Grant planning. He also highlighted a few key dates for the NTIA Competitive Grant NOFO and NTIA Native Entity Capacity Grant.

Q&A

Assistant Deputy Director Cole Przybyla moderated the Q&A sessions, starting with those with their hands raised on Zoom, and then those received via the Q&A chat box. Presenters proceeded to address questions.

The following meeting attendees raised their hands and came off mute to ask questions:

- Hector Ramirez
- Maiten Mowreader
- Xandi Wright
- Kevin Miller
- Rebecca Kauma
- Eileen Harris
- Patrick Messac

Agenda Item 6 – Closing

Deputy Director Scott Adams thanked attendees and presenters for joining the briefing meeting. The meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

(The recording and presentation slides from the meeting will be posted on the Broadband for All portal.)

Transcript

Good afternoon and welcome to the California State Digital Equity Plan and the National Telecommunication and Information Administration State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity Briefing. On behalf of the State of California and the Department of Technology, we thank you for being here. We'll begin the meeting shortly. Please as participants join, use the chat box to share your name, job title and affiliated organization.

Okay, if the Zoom admin can please start recording? Thank you. Good afternoon and again, welcome to the California State Digital Equity Plan and National Telecommunications and Information Administration State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity Briefing. On behalf of the State of California and the Department of Technology, we thank you for being here. Please use the chat box to share your name, job title and affiliated organization.

Anh, can you please review the housekeeping items?

Of course, thank you. My name is Anh Nguyen and I will be reviewing the housekeeping items. This meeting is being recorded. We will be posting the recording of this meeting, slides, and transcripts to the Broadband for All portal. Presenters, please queue Amanda to advance your slides. Please follow along on the screen. Please select side by side speaker mode for the best viewing experience when slides are shared like it is now and to visibly see our ASL interpreters. Close captions are available. At the bottom of your toolbar, please select show subtitle. Q&A, there will be time for questions and answer after each agenda item. Please add your questions in the Q&A box so that our team will be able to elevate it. Please make sure to use Q&A throughout the presentations as your questions may be lost in the chat. Additionally, at the end of each presentation, when prompted, please feel free to raise your hand, using the raise hand feature at the bottom of the toolbar. You can also dial star 9 if you're calling in by phone. Next, I would like to introduce our Deputy Director Scott Adams of the Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy to provide a brief welcome and overview of the agenda. Scott?

Thank you, and, good afternoon, everybody. My name is Scott Adams. I'm the Deputy Director of the Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy, in the California Department of Technology. The purpose of this briefing today is to provide you, critical stakeholders and partners, throughout the state who contributed to the development of the State Digital Equity Plan over the last year through many different planning activities. Whether, you know, attending planning group meetings, working group meetings, workshops promoting and responding to surveys or other planning efforts, we wanted to brief you on where we're at right now and engage you in a further conversation on our joint efforts to foster digital equity throughout the state through the implementation of the Digital Equity Plan and our steps we're taking to secure funding from the NTIA to support the implementation of the plan. We thank those of you who provided questions during the registration process. We've done our best to shape the information that we will share today to answer those questions. There may be some we can't answer now that will require further thought, but we'll get back to you on those. I do want to note we have a full agenda this afternoon as Anh

mentioned there's an opportunity for, question and answer in between each of the agenda items for question and engagement. In a moment, I'm going to provide an update on the status of the final Digital Equity Plan and its various components and what we're working towards. We'll then hear from Shawn Daugherty, the Director of Broadband Equity Partnership, who's working with CDT as a program manager on our digital equity efforts. She's going to provide an update on the NTIA State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity and kind of underscore the work that the department is doing right now is we're applying for that grant which will provide time for the plan. Lastly Anh Nguyen, who you heard from earlier is going to talk about or share information about future opportunities for engagement and collaboration and also helping to further shape the overall state capacity grant program and the sub-grant program design. Okay, we can move on to the next slide, Amanda. Thank you. So, in I think what we wanted to do to shape this briefing with you all is to recap that we're very thankful for all of the folks who provided public comment in total there were 141 public comments. What you see here are some of the general themes that, that you know, people commented on and many of these led to further modifications of the draft digital equity plan to get to the final plan returning to NTIA. Much of it was about covered populations, measurable objectives, barriers for covered populations, approach to adoption and ACP, state managed versus local efforts, digital literacy training, digital navigation and grant framework and as well as ongoing collaboration. Next slide, please. What we wanted to share with you is that, as a result of the modifications from the public comment process, we did submit a final plan to the NTIA which was approved on March 28th so congratulations to everyone and thank you for your efforts to shape that plan and seek its approval. The good news is that the plan being approved now qualified this state to apply for its statutory allocation of the federal digital equity capacity grants. That notice the funding opportunity was released the day after our plan was approved on March 29th and California's allocation was announced at 70.2 million dollars. The next key date we wanted to share with you is that we are now preparing a primary application to submit to the NTA by, next Tuesday, May 28th and for those of you, I know some folks, ask the question, the digital equity plan, the vital digital equity plan can be found by using the QR code and going to the Broadband for All portal. Within the final plan is a section that actually outlines the general themes and the public comments and we provide reference to where the plan was modified in that section. Next slide, please. So, the one thing we wanted to just stress moving forward is that as we form the plan and as we know, implement the plan, and look forward to utilizing federal capacity grant dollars that the state is going to follow the federal guidelines. And really focus

our efforts on the covered populations that you see on this screen. For most of you these are not new it's individuals in covered households, aging individuals, incarcerated individual, veterans, individuals with disabilities, folks with language barriers, members of racial and ethnic minority groups and individuals who resided primarily in rural areas. We also, because of the close coordination with the Public Utilities Commission and the BEAD program, will be focusing on women and those who identified as female and, members of the LGBTQI+, next slide. Thank you. So we wanted to highlight again that with the planning and kind of a result of the workshops that the digital equity plan outlines 7 key activities that we are going to be following in funding to support implementation of the plan and its goals. And those are complete broadband control infrastructure investments and state and federal timelines to convene digital equity stakeholders, refined digital equity data and maps, develop digital equity capacity sub program, fund state managed digital, inclusion programs and develop digital inclusion tools and best practices and you know more importantly it needs to continue to promote low-cost service offers and it's subsidy programs that can support affordability and adoption. Next slide, please. So, the way that the plan is shaped is there's the key activities consistent with broadband for 3 main goals. There are specific measurable objectives for each of the goals. So, for instance, goal one is all Californians have high performance broadband available at home schools, libraries and businesses. These are the 4 measurable objectives that we will work towards and track as we implement. You know, towards this goal. Amanda, can you please, move to the next page? So, on goal 2, which is that all Californians have access to affordable broadband and necessary devices. There's another set of 4 measurable objectives that we will work to. In the interest of time, I'm not going to read them all but we will post this presentation along with the reporting of this briefing on the Broadband for All portal after sometime next week. Next slide, please. And so lastly, again, the way the plan was designed, the 3rd goal is all Californians can access training and support to enable digital inclusion. There are 6 measurable objectives that we will be tracking and measuring against and our work, particularly that which is funded by the federal capacity grants. Next slide, please and then really, just underscore that the digital equity plan is tracking all of the Broadband for All work the parts that of the plan that can be funded with capacity grants are really the non infrastructure pieces. So developing and refining local digital equity plans, conducting broadband adoption campaigns, providing digital navigation or digital literacy and skills training, having it funding targeted device distribution. And then targeted workforce development training and apprenticeships. And so I believe that is

the last piece that I have on the digital equity plan. Anh or Cole, can we now open it up to questions or comments from folks?

Yeah. The one question, Scott, that we've gotten so far in Q&A that would be of interest just to share with the larger group is just where to find the State Digital Equity Plan?

Yes, absolutely Cole. So it's on the QR code that we had in the previous slide but our team here will drop the link in the chat and the plan can be found. There's a separate digital equity plan setup pages on the California Broadband for All portal.

Great. Thank you, Scott, and we do have 2 questions. I'm going to ask Hector. You now can unmute.

Thank you. Can you hear me?

Yes, we can.

Thank you. I'm using. I'm looking at the sign language interpreter. I have one on my end, and I'm using cart as well. I'm a person with a disability. Thank you. My name is Hector Ramirez. I'm in Los Angeles County, and I really want to thank you for this particular space. This particular issue right now is of significant importance to people with disabilities in the state of California and a lot of California residents and a lot of California residents for many of us the access to internet is both a necessity and a general-purpose service at this point. However, because of the changes and lots of funding, supporting both the availability of access, materials and training really is risking a lot of our community not having access to those particular. Not having access, to those particular bottle cares that allow us to stay healthy, to work, to now with the changes in AI being introduced and the significant costs, additionally to it, I fear that this is another opportunity in which we have both the opportunity to be left behind or to really be engaged as community stakeholders. We, one of the reasons that I think a lot of the folks that have been able to sign out for health coverage here in California was because they were able to really access a lot of their services remotely as well of information and availability to network the limitation in this particular arena has it potential to significantly impact their well-being, not only have all Californians with disabilities, but our younger ones who are struggling to go to school and catch up and are dealing with...[Inaudible] or family members that are working remotely with isolation and looking for support and definitely for our older community who are still dealing or like many of us we have generation of knowledge and sometimes we get left behind you know and so really taking in consideration the significant shilling impact that the economic and policy change is having and important who's really have people

with disabilities and older adults or seniors as a driving stakeholder community in these particular decisions both in the funding for internet but also in the conversations around AI that this state is taking. Thank you very much.

Thank you so much for your comments Hector and we agree and that we're proud of the process that led to the development of the final digital equity plan that really an input from over 50,000 California residents and stakeholders and you know, many within the disabled and aging community were, participated in that, but we get that this is not, You know, the end of a process. This is really the beginning of the next phase and it's critical that, you know, all stakeholders that all impacted groups and residents, continue to participate and have input and but the implementation of the Digital Equity Plan and the design of the overall grant program and sub-grant programs. So just really appreciate your comments and underscoring the importance of why we're all here.

Okay, you may have questions Scott. Rebecca, you should be able to unmute them.

Awesome, thank you very much. Rebecca Kauma, Director of Digital Equity for the County of Los Angeles. Thank you very much for the update, Scott and team. I do have a couple of follow-up questions and let me know if you guys are not able to answer it at this time. So, I would like clarification if you guys are able to state what digital equity activities from the state plan do you anticipate will be subcontracted, meaning that you will likely partner with other state agencies within your partnerships to implement and then what activities will be sub-granted out to eligible entities and the reason why I asked that is here in Los Angeles County, we're working closely with various cities, our community partners to prepare for these grant funding opportunities, and many of our partners have expressed interest in working closely with the state to be able to support activities such as online accessibility, you know, the digital equity mapping components, key stuff that was outlined as part of the notice of funding opportunities from NTIA. So we want to be able to understand, like what we can anticipate, that they'll be able to apply for, or what you guys will perhaps most likely handle in-house or with a state agency to subcontract.

Got it. Thanks for the question, Rebecca and if I may, what I would suggest is we hold off until Shawn Daugherty goes over the next phase, which is the, you know, kind of talk through the guidelines of the NTIA Digital Equity Plan NOFO and also share a little bit about the program design. The one thing that I would note is that there's a lot of the program that we would still like input on. And we want to make it clear that no decisions have been made on, you know, any procurements or sub-grant distribution that we fully intend to put a lot of these

things out. Anh will talk about a survey we're going to be sending out in June and then she'll also talk about the formal public comment process we'll be doing on the program itself. Okay.

Alright awesome. Thank you, and one other quick question, and let me know if it's best appropriate to be answered as part of the Notice of Funding Opportunity portion of the agenda. Again, I know that the plan did highlight an emphasis on broadband subsidies, and ACP is obviously sun setting officially at the end of this month. So I'm just curious to see if there will be some type of success or program as part of implementation of the plan, or will there be a strong focus on promoting low cost offers at this time?

Yeah, thank you for the question, Rebecca. I'll that part of that was going to be covered in Shawn's topic, but I will say that during the planning process the Affordable Connectivity Program was a major tool and the, you know, the states broader Broadband for All program to help address both affordability and increase adoption rates. We, along with the CPUC, I've advocated for the extension or a continuation of funding for that program. I think, we're tracking it as others and you know, it's a fluid situation. We did revise the plan to, you know, indicate that if the ACP goes away, we do have the infrastructure and partnerships in place to support promotion of existing low cost offers and would both seek any opportunity to promote any subsidies or successor programs that can help the ecosystem. Shawn will talk a little bit about the NOFO and the allocation for subsidy programs. And then I'll happy to answer a question in the next section on that.

Thank you very much.

Yeah, thank, you.

Thank you, Rebecca. And Scott, the majority of our questions in the Q&A are similarly about the notice of funding opportunity. So I'm going unmute Wally to ask their question, and then we might want to move on to the notice of funding so that we can start to answer some of the majority of the questions that are in the Q&A. So Wally.

Thanks Cole and Scott, I wonder if you could speak for a moment to the general attitude of the State towards city and subregional digital equity plans that were funded by the CPUC's latter program.

Wally, can you go a little further on that?

Yeah sure. In other words, there is the state plan, and it has I don't want to say it's 1 size fits all, but it is a very specific sort of thing in a general way. It we have a latter grant that we developed a digital equity plan that is consistent with all the

goals but maybe takes a different configuration because we have very particular assets and in our subregion. So, the question is, what's your general attitude towards that? Is that something that you want to pursue? A lot of this would be like experimental, perhaps, a demonstration project outside of the envelope that was defined by the state plan.

Got it. Thanks for the question, for further clarifying that. I think, once Shawn's going to talk and a lot of detail where we are going to follow the federal guidelines. In terms of you know how funds have to be allocated can they have to be directed towards eliminating barriers for covered populations, you know, both common and specific barriers that were identified the funds have to support progress towards the measurable objectives and the goals of the plan. I think that, given we have a broad idea of how we'd like to structure the program that we would continue to like to understand your question. I think more broadly, we'd like to be able to have the capacity subgrant support, you know, solutions that are implemented locally. You know, whatever they may be as long as they're consistent with. You know the target populations and the and the measurable objectives outlined in the plan.

Thank you, Wally, for your question and all those that are in asking questions in the Q&A.

I think Scott best course of action is to go now into the notice of funding presentation and then return back to the majority of the questions that are in the QA, back to you.

Great. Thanks, Cole. My name is Shawn Daugherty. I am a Director with the Broadband Equity Partnership, and I'm thrilled to be here and to partner and work alongside Scott and the CDT team on their digital equity efforts. Amanda, you can go to the next slide. So I want to spend just a few minutes kind of doing an overview of the capacity grant, NOFO, and just a moment or so on. How we got here. As a reminder back in November of 2021, with the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Digital Equity Act was passed and through the Digital Equity Act, it created 3 funding programs, a 60 million dollar pot of funding for planning for capacity or for state digital equity planning, 1.4 billion in state, digital equity capacity grants and then another 1.25 billion in competitive grants. Earlier this year, with the acceptance and the approval of the California Digital Equity plan we kind of ended our planning grant and as Scott mentioned, the day after the capacity Grant notice of funding opportunity was released and that's kind of where we stand right now. We are in that process of developing the capacity grant response to the NOFO to the notice of funding which is due May 28th, which is Tuesday, and that is, set in

statute 60 days after the release of the NOFO, so we are working diligently towards that deadline. The NOFO also states that, August 28th will be the day that it will be the last day for the 1st state award to be made so not exactly the best wording, but by August, the 28th we will begin to see states awarded their capacity grants. California, as Scott mentioned, is going in for their allocation of 70 million dollars and this is out of a total funding pool of 840 million dollars. As I mentioned earlier there's a total pull of 1.44 billion for the capacity grant program, but the NTIA has broken it up into 3 funding tranches. So, the 1st funding tranche is that 800 billion of which the state of California is receiving 70 million and that's statutory formula of how we received it and I'll discuss that actually on the next slide. But that, funds will be expended over 5 years. So the anticipated End of period of performance right now is August, the 2029. Those dates are kind of subject to change based off of when the state of California actually receives its grant funding, the state of California actually receives its grant funding, the state of California actually receives its grant funding, but we're looking at a 5-year period of performance. And then there also should be or we're anticipating or hopeful for 2 additional tranches of funding one in 2025 and one in 2026 both of those funding pools should be around 300 million and if the formula remains the same it would be about another 25 million in each of those tranches coming to the state of California. Those 2 tranches, those the funding in those 2 tranches, however, are pending federal appropriations. So, we have them grayed out as, you know, they're not a hundred percent guaranteed, but again, we remain incredibly hopeful that they will come to the states to be able to use to implement our state digital equity plans. Next slide, Amanda. Great. And as I mentioned, the 70 million or if we're going to be specific, \$70,226,453.82 is the allocation that was made to the state of California. That allocation is based off of this formula right here. 50% of it was based off of the population of the state when compared to all eligible state populations. 25% was based off of the member or the number of individuals within that state who identify as a member of a covered population again in comparison to all totals members of covered populations through all eligible states and then 25% was based off of the availability and adoption of broadband. Again, that would a number was used from the ACS data and again based off of a total allocation of when compared to all eligible states. So, this is the formula that was used, it is in statute. It is in the NOFO And, and so that is how, the 70 million was allocated to the state of California. If you want to go to the next slide, Amanda. And the NOFO also clearly outlines how the states can use the funds in that is allocated to them. Up to 20% of our 72.2 million may be used to update and maintain the plan or maintain our state digital equity plan, up to 5% may be used on a value, specifically sub grant evaluation, up to 3% may be used on administrative costs, up to 10% can be used on affordability

subsidies. And the rest is remaining can be used on programmatic costs. And again, those percentages are our caps, not floors. And this is the general breakdown of how the NOFO allows states to use their grant funding. Amanda, next slide please. And this is an overview and kind of just kind of our basic structure of how the state is looking at its program, its overall capacity grant program structure. Obviously, the federal grant administrator is the NTIA, and they will distribute the 70.2 million dollars down to the California Department of Technology. They are the states administering entity and the grant recipient from the NTIA. CDT will be responsible for overall grant administration, SDEP implementation, updates to the SDEP and evaluation and those are just kind of a general, tasks, managed and handled by that administering entity. The state then, as mentioned in the, in the SDEP, intends to structure the plan as follows, looking at centralized services, is there a way for the state to procure tools that can be used across the state to increase efficiencies and make it more effective to run digital equity programs? The state's also looking at what are some other state agency digital inclusion efforts. Is there a way that those existing efforts or maybe new efforts could be funded through the capacity grants? And then the state is also looking at a digital equity capacity sub-grant program to fund allowable, some of the allowable uses as mentioned in the NOFO and in this step such as digital literacy training, digital navigation, and other and other allowable uses such as that. Amanda, next slide, please. Great. And one really important piece. That the NTIA is taking particular notice of is making sure that the states are implementing plans that are focused on meeting their measurable objectives and goals. And so a performance and evaluation measurement is very important to the NTIA and these are really some of the required, but really I think some, just some of the, some of the measurements that we will be looking at and that the NTIA will be looking at in developing sub grant programs and through the implementation of the program. So, we're going to be looking at an NTIA is going to be looking at the number of covered populations served, and how many people within each of those covered populations is served, how many individuals are being served in total. What type of programs are being implemented are these digital navigation programs, device distribution programs, digital literacy or workforce development programs. NTIA ,you know in the state is really interested in hearing personal testimony from those individuals who are engaging in programs and engaging with organizations and entities delivering those program services. And, and making sure that we're collecting quantifiable, you know, really having data driven decisions and making sure that we're creating an impact on the state's policy outcome areas, education, health care, civic engagement and participation in the 5 policy outcome areas that were identified in the In the NOFO and in the State Digital Equity Plan. So, all of these performance

measures, will be taken into consideration as we go through development. Amanda, next slide. And in one of the capacity grants, frequently asked questions an FAQ sheet, it actually goes into the detail of what are some eligible entities for sub-grants, right? We're looking at political agencies or instruments of the state, native tribes, foundations, nonprofits, community anchor institutions, you know, there's 8 listed here and we can really look at those 8 or even partnerships between a lot of these entities. So as noted or as stated in the FAQs for the capacity grant NOFO, these are just some of these are the eligible entities for the sub-grants. And final slide for me, please, Amanda. Great. And again, these are really the focus of the programs and the focus of the permitting activities as described in the notice of funding opportunity. As mentioned, a focus on covered populations. Scott reviewed the 8 covered populations earlier; you know covered households, individual with disabilities, really focusing on those covered populations will be a focus of permitted activities and of programs. Are we creating long lasting and meaningful change, are the programs being funded and are the programs serving, you know, the covered populations, being created in a sustainable way where these programs can out, you know, outlast the funding, which is really for only 5 years, really focus on sustainability. Measurable strategies, are we, are we creating strategies that are accountable that are transparent that are actually creating those data driven measurements of success? Are we continuing to engage in stakeholder collaboration and continuing to work with individuals who identify as a member of a covered population, but also the entities in the organizations that serve members of those covered populations. And I'm going to end there, and Anh is actually, is going to talk a little bit more specifically about that stakeholder engagement.

Yeah. Thank you, Shawn. Go ahead Scott.

Yeah, we just say before we move on to Anh's presentation, could we pause to address any specific questions or comments on the content that Shawn just covered?

Yeah, exactly. So, this is a question to answer portion for the digital equity grant NOFO piece. So, if you'd like to ask any question, again, there's the raise your hand feature or the Q&A feature and the chat is, enabled to have conversation as well. So, I think a lot of the questions, were answered, but maybe there's a reiteration Shawn or Scott that can be done about went to it, when does the state expect to open applications so funds can get to local governments, is one of the questions.

Yeah, and I think that, Bruce Stewart asked that question. Bruce, we're going to show a timeline at the end of the presentation that kind of sketches out the key milestones here. So, we'll share a visualization of that in a minute.

Great. Thank you, Scott. And it looks like we do have a hand raised. So, I'm going to go ahead and unmute That we can connect.

My question is about free apartment Wi-fi, I know that they're doing it in Oakland and other places in California. Can anybody speak to whether there's a notice of funding opportunity, or what are the options with other communities doing that?

I think it's a really good question, you know, because obviously a partner of Wi-fi would fall under the broad goals of Broadband for All and the Public Utilities Commission has the public housing account which they've expanded and they're you know, going to be implementing the BEAD program that could potentially allocate funds to those type of efforts. As it relates specifically to the digital equity capacity grant funds based on the NOFO, typically the preferences for broadband deployment efforts to be funded by other programs. There may be some minor permissible expenses allocated through capacity grants. But we're trying to understand those more. So we can circle back with you, if need be.

Thank you. Scott. There's a question related to, how can local jurisdictions best prepare for the Notice of Funding or the sub grant programs. And specifically, a question related to matching amounts is, is that going to be a requirement.

Okay, so local governments, I think it's a great question. We would like to hear from you on that we're gonna go out with the program design surveys I mentioned at the top in June. They really kind of further breaks out how we're looking at structuring the program. And we're seeking input from folks. Part of that would be what kind of technical assistance would, you know, folks need to apply for capacity grant programs. But I think the question was, it is a good guide to use the Digital Equity Plan. But the key activities, the measured objectives and the outcomes, is a guide to shape applications when those are due which is going to be sometimes still.

One question that was asked prior to the notice of funding kind of presentation piece but maybe Shawn or Scott, you can reiterate the question was related to digital inclusion programs and what's going to be funded by the state digital equity capacity grant program? And their question is specifically, is it their understanding is only programs managed by the State. So maybe a reiteration of those 3 buckets of programs that the capacity grant will provide funding for.

Yeah, thanks, Cole. I did see that question in the chat, too. And I if want to make sure that we're clear that there are, many entities at the State, wide level and at the regional and local level that are working on digital inclusion efforts. That capacity grant program will focus on entities that are effectively doing digital inclusion work and all of those levels. Really, to enable us to focus on the NOFO guidelines that we're really looking at how do we maximize the impact of the capacity grant funding to make the biggest impact and outcomes for the most members of California has covered populations that could be impacted here. So, we envision a combination of both digital inclusion programs offered by state entities and then a sub ramp program that funds, a broader set of digital inclusion activities by local and regional entities that could include any of the eligible entities that Shawn had mentioned in her presentation.

Great. Thank you, Scott. And I do see Rebecca has her hand raised, so now you can unmute now.

Yes, thank you for that presentation. And again, out of formality here, Rebecca Kauma, Director of Digital Equity for the County of Los Angeles. In terms of the 3 notice of funding opportunities, can you please clarify if that means that sub grantees would then need to apply 3 times with the state?

Rebecca, I would love to have the answer to that question. We've been talking with the NTA about that the guidelines on the first tranche of funding we won't know until the second and third round of funding. How those would interact with the program structure and design that we establish with the first tranche.

Okay, thank you. And then one other quick clarifying questions. And again, no worries if you're not able to answer at this time in terms of process for grant funding. Do you guys anticipate having a reimbursement process where you would reimburse, based on services provided and delivered? Or will a certain allocation of funding be provided to the subjects beforehand and then also provide reimbursement options?

Yeah, I mean, Rebecca. Thank you for asking the question. I know you've been vocal about separate programs, design, and things like that. We're looking at trying to be as flexible as possible. And actually, that's going to be kind of some of the questions that we're going to ask folks like you. For the survey that we put out like, what's the frequency of, you know, payment? Does it need to be reimbursed or paid upfront, and then, you know, taking the preference of the ecosystem and weighing against our own internal capacity, and the guidelines of the grant itself.

Okay, yeah, that's helpful. And just provide clarification, the reason why I'm asking that is, we do have a variety of small cities and also small nonprofit organizations that are excited to engage in as part of this process, but just given some their typical experiences with restraint with Federal and State grant funding, many of them have found it difficult to upfront the cost, especially if they're doing work around establishing like a public computer center or something like that so any way to help alleviate the administrative burdens for our smaller cities as well as smaller organizations, would be greatly appreciated. So, thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you Rebecca. There's a request to reiterate the eligible entities for the subgrants. Specifically, their nonprofit organization, and they're asking for a reiteration of those eligible entities.

Yeah, I'm wondering, Amanda, could you pull up the slides and just show that slide presentation? We will be sharing this and again, this is the, these are the eligible entities that are listed in the state capacity grant. NOFO Yeah. So right here and Cole was there specific question here? There's a foundation corporation, institution or association that is a not-for-profit entity. So, I think there's a wide range of potential available entities.

I think there's also and clarification on where potentially community-based organizations fit into this as well as an eligible entity.

Got it perhaps. Can we hear from the person asking the question? I would like to understand if there's a distinction which a community-based organization that wouldn't fall within one of these descriptions.

We will have to ask if the anonymous participant who asked the question is willing to raise their hand and ask that question, and maybe further.

Yeah. And perhaps they could just, you know, add further clarification in the chat. And we can try to clarify that.

In the meantime, depending on their answer. Amanda, you can lower the screen. There are 2 questions, Scott, that relate to how the notice of funding opportunity discusses Affordable Connectivity Program or subsidy program kind of replacements. So is there anything that you can share related to ACP type funding through the notice of funding?

Well, I think, we showed the pie chart up to 10% of the State digital equity capacity grant can go towards funding subsidies. And so 10% of 70 million would

be 7 million. That's not a large amount of money. When you consider that you know, currently, there's 2.9 almost 3 million California residents that are signed up for the ACP, so I don't think it would make a significant dent in that. In terms of an ACP success or program, there's a lot of folks within the State and nationally that are still seeking ways to you know, urge Congress to extend authorization for each ACP funding and folks looking at other options right now, you know, we're just monitoring those situations and advocating where we can. But I think it's going to take some time to develop a solution. If, in fact, ACP goes away.

Thank you, Scott. And I think with that, the next set of questions actually relate to engagement and collaboration. So it would be a good time to bring Anh Nguyen and bring the PowerPoint back up and have Anh present.

Thank you, Cole. Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Anh Nguyen. I'm the Engagement and Operations Manager here at the office of Broadband and Digital Literacy with CDT. First of all, thank you for the opportunity to provide you with an update on ongoing engagement. Since the final plan was approved in March and then, more recently, next slide, please. More recently, we, our team, has been in conducting market research and listening sessions with various entities listed here, including state agencies, broadband consortia, local governments, CBOs, community based organizations as well as private sector entities. But that's not all. And more work has to be done as alluded to by Scott and Shawn. Next slide, please. Implementing this step will require close collaboration across state government with local governments, community anchor institutions and organizations that represent and serve each of the covered populations and other digitally disadvantaged communities. In collaboration with CPUC, CDT will continue to be the convening entity and leverage structures established as part of the planning process, during the Plan's implementation phase. As the state transitions into the implementation phase, targeted collaboration will continue, especially with groups representing covered populations. Comparable to the outreach and engagement process that inform the planning of the SDEP, implementation will include an inclusive and accessible multi-found approach. We invite you to engage in future programs designs through listening sessions and market research as I have shared, but also program design survey, later this summer public comment period on the sub grant program design, statewide digital equity implementation group sound very similar to state planning group, outcome area working groups, community advisory committees, various webinars and public meetings. We also encourage you to stay updated on our Broadband for All. We included the link here for subscription to our monthly broadband email updates and the QR code as well. So, at this time, I want to go to the next slide

and invite Scott to share a few more details on our tentative timeline of capacity grant money engagement.

Thanks, Anh, for walking that through. So, I know folks had wanted to see a timeline of the next steps and so, you know, we'll start on the left with March 29th which is when the NTIA release the capacity grant NOFO, the next key date is May 28th when the application is due to the NTIA and we're developing a broad, application to them understanding that we need to engage with you all to further fit the program design and develop a separate program that's fair and equitable. And we can't get ahead and develop that program until the award is made. As Shawn mentioned, no later than August, the 28th there's in anticipated that the 1st state will receive a capacity grant award. I want to direct your attention to the gray box at the bottom that really, there's some concurrent activities that are going to go on over the next several months and that's continued stakeholder engagement through the design survey that Ahn referenced and additional market research to help inform any procurements or, you know, other centralized services that would be leveraged to support the ecosystem and sub guarantees. We do expect to have a formal proposal to, to the stakeholder community and do a formal public comment process sometime in the early fall and then finalizing the sub and putting a request for applications between October and November. Do you also want to state that, really 30 days after the 1st state is awarded their capacity grants, the NTIA by statute must release their competitive grant program which is going to be a program that entities within the state can apply directly to the NTIA for and you know we'll definitely do our best to make sure that folks are aware of that when it's posted and support folks in any way we can to apply for those grants. Going back to the, to above, there was a question that came in the preregistration questions about native entities or California American tribes. California tribes will be eligible for state funding, but also NTIA has set aside a portion of the national digital equity capacity brands to create a separate 46-million-dollar pool for Native entities to apply for both, sort of combo, planning capacity plans. In the NOFO it's stated that that would open on September 25th and close on February 7th of next year so that's going to be another source of funding and then sorry with the flow of the timeline what we do want to point out is that you know while we have, we expect a state award between, you know sometime between now and on or about August 28th or shortly thereafter. states will have 9 months from the time of their award to identify all projects and grantees that will be funded. Out of this tranche. And so, when you look at that, the right side of the timeline that's that May 25th, we have time collectively to further work with you all to design the overall program, design the software program and then to

institute fair repetitive processes, the procurements or grants that, you know, award these funds out to, to support implementation of the plan.

Alright. Thank you, Scott. Thank you, Anh. For that presentation we'll now move into the question-and-answer portion for the engagement collaboration. So again, if you have any questions, please use the raise your hand feature and we will unmute you and please if you want to use the Q&A feature, that is the best place to get a question and the chat is enabled. There is a question about how, an entity can partner with the Office of Broadband Digital Literacy and Department of Technology to present on the plan, specifically in their case to adult education communities. So can we share how entities can request opportunities for presentations on this material, specifically to their communities.

Yes, I think on the, we can drop our contact information into the chat. I would like to. Understand the question, are you saying folks would like us to come and present? Give this presentation to their communities.

This specific person is interested because they convene with adult education communities throughout the year and would like their educational providers to have details on what they can do with the stage's digital equity plan, the access to the funds and the grants and then regular updates on the rollout. So many of their learners are of the groups listening and listed in the plan.

Got it. Yeah, so absolutely cool. Our contact information will be on the slides and.

One of our staff members will drop it in the chat. We're happy to. Come and do briefings.

We would also just want to reiterate that a recording of this meeting, the slide presentation itself and the transcript.

Will be posted on the Broadband for All portal once they're remediated and those are.

You know can be used as well to further promote out to the community.

Great. Thank you, Scott. And now, Hector, you can unmute and ask your question.

Thank you. Can you hear me? Okay, thank you. I, Hector Ramirez, Los Angeles County. I forgot to mention I'm a member of Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities and the California Commission on Disabilities. So the comments that I make are my own and just based on the experience and here in Los Angeles County I personally have seen the deployment of one of your grants for

communities and have personally really have seen face to face, the excitement in individuals being able to benefit from this benefit getting support and definitely the hardware. It was really exciting. There was period of time that was open for a short period of time where people could go pick up devices and get training and I went with some of our some of our elders that were able to qualify and I saw first hand, the benefit and I see it to this day as I get calls of folks that are under on their devices or being able to connect. It really highlighted to me this significant importance of this benefit, but I also wanted to recommend that as you continue your obvious strategies a target area for outreach is our domestic violence shelters. This particular benefit and the various ways that it is it can be applied can really, not only function as a general-purpose service, but as an emergency response type of benefits for individuals that get this place, not necessarily from trauma and abuse, but as we have more and more climate related national disasters and we have emergency situations. There's a lot of folks that not only get this place but lose this particular ability to connect and we know that now one of the best ways to really help connect people to services and to alleviate is really having them have this particular access. So really perhaps looking for a strategy to continue to further fund this so that we don't lose the funding, or it gets interrupted because people do benefit but I definitely see so much potential like the two populations that I mentioned. Thank you.

Thank you. And now Cole I want to say I know folks are busy. We did allocate an hour and a half for this briefing knowing that there, was a lot of interest in folks, a lot of folks who registered want to make sure that, folks have an opportunity to ask questions and for us to do our best to respond to all those questions while we're here together.

Yeah, absolutely. It does there's questions that are going by in the chat if you could please put your questions in the QA that'll allow us to kind of further make sure we don't miss those questions, but there is. I've seen it a couple of times, Scott, a question on how the state budget affects the state digital equity capacity.

Yeah, got it. I know a lot of people are tracking this state budget on the subject matter that we're discussing today, which is, the federal State Capacity Grant that the state is applying for and will receive to implement the Digital Equity Plan. Since we have not yet applied for the grant and the award has not been received and it's got pretty strict requirements, I don't think it's currently. Impacted by the broader state budget considerations.

Great, thank you, Scott. This is a pretty technical question. So, will the Capacity Grant opportunities go through the CMAS process for applications. So, we might also have to explain, for those that don't know what CMAS is, how to answer that question.

Yes, CMAS is, you know, a qualified vendor program through the state. I think, you know, how funds are distributed will depend on for what purpose. So, under the auspices of centralized services that, you know, those might be procured and those might go through CMAS or another competitive procurement vehicle, you know, run by the state. The state is frequently doing the request for proposal or RFI squared process. In the discussions on funding state agencies digital inclusion efforts we're identifying you know, if you know which opportunities are out there that would fall within the budget and have the biggest skill in determining what the best vehicle would be, whether state agencies would, you know, just enter into interagency agreements with the Department of Technology and funds would be transferred on this sub or the sub-grant program itself. We don't envision that going through CMAS. We would set up different a vehicle that would enable a larger pull of applicants still apply for those.

Great. Thank you, Scott. I'm going to ask one question. Oh, actually, let's go to Maiten who has a hand raised first.

Hi everyone, my name is Maiten. I'm the program coordinator at the city of San Diego for the digital equity initiative, SD access for all. And I had just a quick question, you know, in the case of the city of San Diego, we will not be eligible for BEAD funding and likely just based on the on the FFA proposals that we've seen would probably not benefit from FFA infrastructure money either, and so I am just wondering if you're taking that into consideration, as far as like, distributing the funds for the for the Digital Equity or the Capacity Grants, I guess the fact that, urban areas might not benefit so much from the infrastructure money versus kind of more rural areas.

Got it, Maiten. Good to see you. And thank you for the question.

Yeah, it's great.

Hope the new job is working out well. Yeah so, I think here would be the question - We're going to follow the federal guidelines on eligible entities before for the sub-grants and we want to hear from folks during when we send out the program design survey and also in the public comment process, we, you know, Amanda, if you could, well, you don't have to, you could bring up the slide again, the last there were 8 boxes, the last 2 were coalitions of entities applying

for funds and given the need in the state and the amount of funding we have I do think that there is the intent of the NGA is to encourage, you know, coalitions of entities to go in together and submit applications and there's potentially a role for, you know, political subdivisions like cities or counties to, you know, going into a main applicant or a partner.

Okay, great. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you, Maiten.

Thank you, and I do want to also acknowledge I think right to learn past a similar question and would offer the floor to them to come off mute in case there's any further information they need related to their question about recommendations for partnerships. Additionally, there's a question that's being asked, Scott, to quantify potentially the pie chart that's been shared to better understand, it looks like in the chat from Patrick, about communities being able to better plan so they understand the grant pockets or the grant availability on a local basis.

Yeah. So, I would, thank you for asking the question and was that a Patrick question or was it applied to multiple questions?

It was in the chat, and it went by briefly for me, so I believe it's a Patrick question.

Sure, Amanda, could you pull up the pie chart really quick?

Okay, well, I think to answer the good question here and appreciate that people are wanting to know what we were wanted to present to you is what the NOFO said and the guidelines are the goal posts that they set for the state and so, per the NOFO, states can allocate up to 20% of the allocation to update and maintain the, you know, we can allocate up to 5% for a valuation up to 3% for administration and up to 10% for subsidies. It is our intent to do this. Develop this program with your input as fast as we can knowing that folks are really looking forward to these funds to help implement the plan, and to do it as efficiently as possible and to put as much into programmatic or the sub grant program, as we possibly can. Thanks, Amanda. You can take that down.

Great, thank you, Scott. Someone saying right to learn, you can unmute you for your question.

Yes, thank you. Can you hear me okay?

Yes.

Thanks. So hi, Xandy Wright, Wright to Learn. I, you answered this in part, I think so I understand that small, especially, you know, smaller nonprofits, would certainly be eligible for funding through the NOFO from the state? Curious about whether the sort of preferred or recommended strategy would be if you are a smaller nonprofit or if you are coming into this digital equity work more recently rather than having a lot of prior experience in this space if you would recommend, you know, working with a coalition to submit a joint project or if there's like, working with a coalition to submit a joint project or if there's likely to be sort of additional supports for those smaller organizations that may not have a grant writer on staff already able to dig deeply into this. Thank you.

Thanks, Xandy. I think, it's a great question. I think it would just depend. There's so much dimensionality as we've learned and, and folks have informed us about the dimensionality of. Yes, there are common digital equity barriers, but for each of the covered populations, they're very specific barriers that they face and there are many different trusted partners and entities that can have an impact. I think, you know, part of the process that we're, trying to work out is how do we right size this program to make sure that there's an equitable distribution of funds that have the biggest impact for the most amount of people. And I think we're really, counting on further and putting collaboration with the ecosystem to help us figure out what the right distribution and the right sizing that should be. Good, Thank you.

Thank you for coming on and further clarifying your question. I think as a follow up, Scott, there is a question that is asking will the states that accept applications from the CBO or the city that does not want to participate in the regional application.

Potentially, it would just, you know, depend on the other programs design and the quality of the application.

Great, thank you, Scott. Kevin, you can now unmute.

Kevin Miller, Fresno Coalition, Producible Inclusion. I just wanted to follow up on the question that Patrick had asked in the chat, which was - I answered in part, and I think you had a different slide on this which was more about the distribution of the 70 million between sub-grants versus programmatic activities taken on by CDT or other state entities.

Yeah.

What percentage of that is looking to be sub-grants to CBOs and local entities?

Yeah, I think, Kevin the best way that I can answer it is that there are statutory to limits that are required in the note that are included in the federal guidance for the notice of funding opportunity from the NTIA. It is our commitment to be as efficient in the use of the funds, meaning that if we can utilize funding to do those activities and smaller percentages than what is allowed it is our intention to put a much of it into program and granting as we can.

I am pausing to see, to make sure that we have a follow up and Kevin. With that, I will ask Rebecca to unmute. Rebecca, you should be able to unmute.

Alright, sorry about that. I was hitting the buttons you guys are unmuting me, that's why I was a little bit delayed. Again, Rebecca Kauma, Director of Digital Equity County of Los Angeles. Just a quick follow up question just to make sure we're understanding on things correctly from a Los Angeles County region standpoint just so that way the state is aware as well - the national recommendation that we're hearing, at least for the digital equity competitive grant program, is strongly focused on establishing partnerships, coalitions as part of that grant funding are actually considering the fact that with that funding, we're not competing with just people within our respective state but also across the country, so that has been the informal recommendation that we have received from various different spaces so I know you guys are not saying whether or not that would be favorable in an application but is it fair to say that that would hold, I know you said that like if somebody has a strong application even coming in by themselves like that would be fine, but would it be fair to also say that those types of partnerships where we're able to have like cross sector impact would be favorable in this space?

I think so, Rebecca.

Okay.

I mean, like one way that I would respond to this is that there are very few singular activities or covered populations or goals or measurable objectives that apply to only one entity and what we heard throughout the Digital Equity Planning process and including in the Digital Equity Plan was to encourage collaboration and alignment at all levels to increase efficiency. I think that It's a smart approach. Whether it's for state sub-grants or competitive grants, the folks to be working with partners and coalitions to craft solutions that can make the best use of funds to have the biggest impact in their particular focus area.

Okay, yeah, that's helpful because that's our strategy here within LA County. But again, that has been the primary recommendation that we've received for more so than national and federal grant programs, so we want to make sure

that We're setting up our region for success and also applying that strategy perhaps as part of the state Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program because many of our organizations have also expressed that perhaps they may not feel comfortable being a primary grantee, but would be open being like a sub grantee and receiving funds from whoever that fiscal agent and primary grantee would be. So that's the only question that I have I just wanted to do a quick response to the other colleague who had the question about coalitions I don't know what community you're from in California, but I did want to point out that the National Digital Inclusion Alliance is a resource, so if you are looking for a coalition that perhaps is spread out throughout the state definitely feel free to reach out to them because they're supporting communities across the country to ensure that they can get plugged in into a coalition and I'll make sure to drop the link in the chat for that colleague who had that question. Thank you again for your guys' time and I'm done asking questions for today. And I'll circle back in email if I have any more questions. But thank you guys for answering my questions today.

Thank you. Rebecca.

Thank you. Eileen, you can unmute.

Hi everyone, thank you guys for hosting this. This is really informational. And I know we're building a lot of it collectively. So excited to hear there's some public comment period coming up. The question I had was about measurements, and I know on the slide it talked about that some of the Federal requirements will be looking at, you know, number of people served, and the number of covered populations served. Do you imagine some of the sub grant reporting requirements would match those metrics? That's the types of things we'd be expected to measure through these programs.

Yeah, I think that it's a great question. I would perceive that the that's the core around which the state would build the sub grant program and actually, you know, allocate funds. You know whether it's Central Ex services state agency or some entities that that would be the evaluation criteria and the metrics are a good base to build around. And I would say, Eileen, one of the things that I think we want to hear from the ecosystem is: What might some other criteria or measurements be, to consider for the state of that program?

Thank you so much. Patrick, you can unmute.

I appreciate it. And Scott, thanks for hosting this webinar and for all the updates on timelines, those projected dates are super helpful. As you know, this is not a cheap problem to solve, but we're really lucky in California to have so many

local orgs doing work and one of the questions that I'm getting as, you know, helping to leave the coalition here in Oakland is, what's a realistic amount for us to be asking for? You know, we have an annual operating budget of a million to do exclusively digital equity activities. Could we ask for 2.5 million? So I think one of the reasons I'm trying to get some clarity on the 70 million is I want to be able to go to a local org and say: listen the state of California is getting 70 million but of that we only anticipate up to blank percentage or up to 35 million being distributed across the entire state of California so a great ask, you know, south of a million is going to give you a much more accurate chance of getting funded. And I know you can't get into specific amounts, but I'm just trying to understand the pie chart of the sub-grantee is that the section that FDP or is that the program chunk of the pie? We really appreciate any insights just so I can. Level set and make sure that the orgs in my community are coming up with realistic proposals and really great proposals with enough time. Really appreciate it. Thanks.

Yeah, thanks, Patrick. So I want to reiterate that the pie chart itself is just a visualization of what the notice of funding opportunity stipulates that administering entities can spend up to for those various functions and so, you know, your math we specifically didn't percentage on that programmatic side because like I said, it's our intention to try to be as efficient as possible and to not go up to those percentage ceilings for main incentive to digital equity plan or administration or evaluation and that to put the most of it into to actually program that drives impact for covered populations. I think. What I would refer people to is the chart that we had on how the NTA determine this state's allocation, which was the, you know, 3 different buckets 1st 50%, was the, the state's population in proportion to the total population of all other states. The second was 25% was of the formula way to the number of members have covered population in the state in proportion to the population of covered are the members of covered population in other states and then, 25% based on the, you know, relative availability. You know broadband and adoption figures that used a number of things.

Yeah, so right here that was the formula that factored in, what allocation was, you know, determine for the state of California so, you know, I think this could be a good foundation for a conversation with the ecosystem about how these funds could be distributed within the state, given the direction that the NTA is given for, you know, focusing on cover populations and outcomes, you know, that we're outlined in the digital equity plan. Does that help, Patrick?

Patrick, you can unmute.

Yeah, so definitely appreciate that like California did all that could to get as much of those federal beads as possible and I know that that was a lot of work from CDT. So just deeply appreciated of that. I think what I'm just trying to make a little sense of is (are), was that pie chart for the distribution of the 70 million? Is that kind of like going to be worked out of the process? Or at this point, do we know that there's a cap, you know, CDT, if we give out every dollar that, that we can to sub grantees to community-based boards - the most it can possibly be based on federal rules that we have nothing to do with is this many million. I just, I don't want people to go into this grant process with unrealistic expectations and I want them to be really intentional about how they design their grants and I just think if we're talking about 20 million, it's a lot different than 70 million and I just want to have a sense of that. If you're not able to provide it now, I want to stay really engage in this process. I know it' we're early on but just the sooner I can say like. You're pretty small org, you know, your impact is powerful, but it's very, very small part of California, keep it under 500 K or, you know, dream big, at 70 million. So, whatever you can offer there, I really appreciate.

Yeah, Patrick. I definitely would set the expectations when we look at, then the size of the need in state of California, 70 million an amount that the state of California will be grateful to me and it's not, as we said in the digital equity plan, going to be enough to accomplish the goal. We're going to need to seek other funding to strategically, you know, folks within the ecosystem go after competitive grand dollars to partner with private sector and philanthropy to you know help generate those outcomes and continue to look at different funds. I think, Amanda, thank you for bringing up this pie chart. The way that the way that I would look at this Patrick is that no more than 20% can be spent on maintaining and updating the Digital Equity Plan. No more than 5% on evaluation, no more than 3% on administration, no more than 10% on subsidies. So, if you add that together, that's like, 38%. And so, you know, what our job would be to do is to be as efficient as possible spend as wisely as we can on those categories so that the most amount of money can go to sub-grants.

Thank you, Scott. There is, like 2 or 3 more questions I know we've allocated an hour and a half, but I do want to kind of address couple more questions because they should be pretty easy ones for us to respond to – will infrastructure grants to be part of this program.

I'm sorry, can you repeat the question?

Yeah, sorry, will infrastructure grants be a part of this opportunity?

They will not.

Thank you. Well.

They will be a few minor exceptions, but not of the kind that the NOFO is very clear that broadband deployment and infrastructure project should, you know, be addressed by other programs like the BEAD program.

Right. Thank you, Scott. And then as part of the market research the listening sessions I mean I think the broader engagement and collaboration that's my words adding. Are there plans to engage stakeholder organizations in a defined geography or serving specific covered populations? And a collective community wide effort or to be an individual organizational basis?.. And it might be worth reiterating about outcome area working groups and statewide implementation.

Yeah, sure. Do you mind if can you or John take that answer?

Sean, why don't you go ahead.

Well, do you mind repeating it? Sorry.

Yeah, we, we can do it together and I'll repeat the question. It's a question on, are there plans to engage stakeholder organizations in defined geographies or serving specific covered populations and I see Anh also came off of mute too. So, and I think let's do this, let's defer to you and to share about outcome and working groups one more time.

Of course, I think the question came from Andrew. So, thank you for asking the question, the Q&A, Andrew. The outcome area working group if you remember originally this past planning process, we had it divided up into 6 subjects, right 6 focus area education, health workforce development. I think what we're looking at in the future engagement effort is an asking putting it back to the public to you all to help us define what works for if we were to say have 6 outcome area again, do those subjects outcome areas, the focus of this upcoming implementation process or could it be better shaped to another. thematic, if you will, that would produce more conversation and, discussion. So, I think we're very open to that and if that's kind of how you would see us organize outcome area working group, I think that's a conversation that we can continue having and then your question specifically about whether it would be regionally - I think that that could be a possibility but open to hear more about your ideas of what that could look like too.

Great, thank you, Anh. And then just wanted to share there were 2 questions and I think they should be acknowledged more as recommendations than questions but worth sharing out. There's a question about having a separate

webinar specific for tribal entities when their application window opens in September. And then also a question related to how the application process for the capacity grant program could be benefited by having a streamline process for those with disabilities. So just wanted to share those 2 questions as good suggestions.

Yeah, and Cole, thank you for that and we do want to know that, is part of the planning process. We did have a specific Tribal collaboration working group where, that convene, you know, California native tribes and travel serving entities to help inform the plan and we fully intend to reinstate that during implementation and to the extent, that, the state support is needed or requested. We fully intend to support California tribes to both take advantage of digital equity, the state digital equity capacity ground funding and the specific NTI funding that's coming up in September.

Hmm. Thank you, Scott. I want to share that I think we've addressed the majority of the questions that are asked in the Q&A and would request that there is one question that's asking for a written response to please send it to the digitalequity@state.ca.gov, and it's in the chat. Excuse me I misspoke on the actual title. So, Scott, why don't you wrap this up.

Yeah, just want to say thank you to, everyone who took time out of their day to participate in this briefing and discussion we're very grateful for your subject matter expertise for your partnership and for your efforts in both you know shaping the Digital Equity plan and now working towards implementation and we just want to acknowledge that there is more program design work to be done and that we are committed to both, designing the program and, dispersing the funds in a very, fair and open and competitive and accountable process. To drive the best outcomes for the state of California, so just thank you very much and have a wonderful 3-day weekend.
