State Digital Equity Plan & Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program
Stakeholder Briefing
November 18, 2024
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Meeting Minutes and Transcript

The State Digital Equity Plan (SDEP) and Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program Stakeholder Briefing met virtually on Monday, November 18, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. Engagement and Operations Manager Anh Nguyen welcomed attendees and instructed them to introduce themselves in the Zoom Chatbox 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 participation experience throughout the meeting. ASL interpreters were available throughout the meeting.

Agenda

Ms. Anh Nguyen briefly provided an overview of the State Digital Equity Plan & Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program Stakeholder Briefing agenda.

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome & Recap

Deputy Director Scott Adams of the California Department of Technology (CDT) Office of Broadband & Digital Literacy welcomed attendees. He provided an announcement that the NTIA awarded the state of California it's $70.2 million State Digital Equity Capacity Grant on November 4th. He then provided a recap of past milestones in the SDEP and Digital Equity Capacity Grant (DECG) program, including dates of previous stakeholder briefings, the device program questionnaire, the DECG public comment period, and other key milestones leading up to receiving the DECG award.

Discussion

No attendees came off of mute to ask questions, and there were no questions from the Q&A Box.

Agenda Item 2 – SDEP & State Capacity Grant and Subgrant Program Design Recap

Ms. Shawn Daugherty, Director of Broadband Equity Partnership, shared a recap regarding the Focus of the SDEP and DECG program implementation. She also acknowledged that due to the size and scale of California, the $70.2 million awarded is insufficient to close the digital divide and that additional funding outside of the NTIA capacity grant award will be needed. Ms. Daugherty then gave an overview of the many funding streams in the state and nationally for broadband and digital equity-related initiatives, including CASF, NTIA Competitive Grant, and NTIA Native Entity Capacity Grant. She also provided a brief recap of the Digital Equity Capacity Subgrant Program structure and purpose as well as allowable uses of the Digital Equity Capacity Subgrant. Ms. Daugherty then explained the two funding tracks for the draft Capacity Subgrant design: Track 1 for regional/local ecosystems and Track 2 for targeted statewide ecosystems. Shawn Daugherty closed her presentation by recapping how CDT adjusted the NTIA formula based on public input throughout the first part of the year in the initial design of the Track 1 formula reflected in the current version of the draft guidelines. The recent public comments for Digital Equity Capacity Grant draft guidelines are still being reviewed and have not been incorporated in the final allocation formula.

Discussion

Access & Deployment Advisor Maria Kelly moderated the Discussion sessions, starting with those with their hands raised on Zoom, and then those received via the Q&A and Chat box. The presenters proceeded to address questions.

The following meeting attendees raised their hands and came off mute to ask questions:
- George Hechtman
- Gina Gates-Lopez
- Anthony Bailey

Agenda Item 3 – DE Capacity Subgrant Draft Guidelines Public Comment Process

Ms. Chae Kim, Senior Analyst at Broadband Equity Partnership provided an overview of the DE Capacity Subgrant Draft Guidelines Public Comment Process. She began her presentation reviewing the 12 sections of the draft guidelines. Ms. Kim provided an overview of the public comment process as well as a summary of public comments received, including 66 public comments submitted by organizations. Since some organizations responded to more than

one section, there were 192 comments if tabulated by sections. Ms. Kim concluded her presentation by going into detail regarding overall themes received from the public comments on three main topics: program design, funding and costs, and related programs and services.

Discussion

Access & Deployment Advisor Maria Kelly moderated the Discussion sessions, starting with those with their hands raised on Zoom, and then those received via the Q&A and Chat box. The presenters proceeded to address questions.

The following meeting attendees raised their hands and came off mute to ask questions:
- Danielle Sherwood
- Patrick Messac
- Kari Gray

Agenda Item 4 – DECG Subgrant Technical Assistance Program

Mr. James Spencer, Broadband Administrative Manager at CDT's Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy, introduced CDT's plan to build a technical assistance program to support the DECG Subgrant applicants by providing resources and support as necessary for organizations to submit quality applications, while also creating an open, transparent, equitable, and inclusive process. From now until the official Request for Application launch in 2025, Mr. Spencer suggested that stakeholders get organized for the DECG Subgrant Program, identify partners, and build coalitions through meeting other organizations to determine strategies, conduct market research, and assess their communities' needs. Mr. Spencer concluded his presentation by launching a Zoom poll consisting of two questions regarding which topics stakeholders would want the technical assistance program to address and stakeholders' preference on communication with CDT.

Discussion

Access & Deployment Advisor Maria Kelly moderated the Discussion sessions, starting with those with their hands raised on Zoom, and then those received via the Q&A and Chat box. The presenters proceeded to address questions.

The following meeting attendees raised their hands and came off mute to ask questions:
- Krystal Rawls
- Kari Gray

- Anthony Bailey

Agenda Item 5 – Next Steps & Closing

Deputy Director Scott Adams reported the tentative timeline on the approximate important milestones for the Capacity Grant Program. Mr. Adams shared that the official period of performance begins on December 1 and that there are 9 months to process all subgrants, procurements, and contracts. He concluded by highlighting that in early 2025 there will be a 60-day request for application period, followed by a 90-day application review process, and a 30-day reward period to finalize details. Deputy Director Scott Adams concluded the briefing presentation by sharing the next steps, including additional stakeholder briefings, centralized services, state agency digital inclusion efforts, the DE Competitive Grant Award, and the DE Native Entity Capacity Grant that closes on February 7.

Discussion

Access & Deployment Advisor Maria Kelly moderated the Discussion sessions, starting with those with their hands raised on Zoom, and then those received via the Q&A and Chat box.

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

Deputy Director Scott Adams thanked attendees and presenters for joining the briefing meeting. The meeting adjourned at 3:29 p.m.

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

Transcript

Okay, good afternoon. And welcome to the November 18th State Digital Equity Plan and Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program stakeholder briefing on behalf of the State of California and the Department of Technology. We thank you for being here. We will begin the meeting shortly. Please use the chat box to share your name, job, title, and affiliated organizations as more folks are coming in. Before we begin, a few housekeeping items. Next slide, please. Thank you. The meeting is being recorded. We will be posting the recording of this meeting,

slides, and transcripts to the Broadband for All portal. You'll find the link in the chat very shortly. Presenters, please cue Amanda to advance your slides. Select side by side, speaker mode for the best viewing experience when slides are shared; like it is right now. For best visibility of our ASL interpreters, closed captioning is available. Select CC closed caption on your toolbar at the bottom of the screen; and select show. Subtitle Q&A Box. Please note that there is time allocated at the end of each agenda item for questions. Please use the Q&A box to type your questions related to that portion of the agenda while the presenter is presenting, we will temporarily turn off the chat while the presenters are speaking so that no questions are lost in the chat. Chat will be available during the discussion. Additionally, at the end of each agenda portion. Please use the raise hand icon on Zoom or star 9 (nine). If you're calling in by phone. Our team will elevate you and request that you come off mute and or video next slide, please. We have a full agenda this afternoon with an opportunity for discussion after each agenda section. We welcome you to turn on your camera and mic to participate in a moment. CDT's Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy Deputy Director Scott Adams will begin with a welcome remark and highlight key milestones of SDEP implementation and Digital Equity Capacity Grant program development thus far. Next, Shawn Daugherty Director from broadband, equity, partnership will discuss the State Digital Equity Plan and State Capacity Grant and Subgrant program design. Chae Kim, Senior Analyst from Broadband Equity Partnership will present high level findings and themes from the draft subgrant guidelines public comment process. OBDL's Broadband Administrative Manager, James Spencer, will then share ideas on the digital equity capacity subgrant technical assistant program and ask for your additional input as the team developed the TA program. Lastly, Deputy Director Scott Adams will briefly review the next steps and close our meeting. As a reminder, at the end of each presentation, OBDL's Access and Deployment Advisor Maria Kelly will facilitate Q&A in a bi-directional discussion. Please feel free to turn on your mic and your video at that time again. So, let's begin first, I would like to introduce Deputy Director Scott Adams.

Hi, thank you, Anh, and good afternoon, everybody. It's our pleasure to welcome you to our most recent stakeholder briefing that has, you know, been a series of briefings over the last several months. I'm Scott Adams, Deputy Director of Broadband and Digital Literacy, and just going to give you a quick recap of where we're at next slide, please. So, I think first and foremost, we wanted to start out with really good news and a kudos, and that is that hopefully, you've heard by now that the NTIA has awarded the State of California, its 70 million State Digital Equity Capacity Grant. And this grant award to the State of California is really something to be celebrated, and it's the

result of the hard work and collaboration and partnership of over 50,000 residents and stakeholders who contributed to the planning and the development of the State Digital Equity Plan. So what you see here is an image of a of a video press conference with a representative from the White House, Assistant Secretary from the NTIA. And then my bosses, Liana Bailey-Crimmins and Jared Johnson, and so just wanted to kind of, you know. Start this out with a quote from you know CDT's Director Liana Bailey-Crimmins, is that digital equity really isn't just needed. It's central to all Californians and ensuring that we're committed to ensuring access to the tools and resources that everyone needs to succeed, and that this funding will strengthen communities enhance digital literacy and give Californians an equal opportunity to thrive in today's digital world. And so, the good news. This announcement was, October 25th. We received the actual award on November 4th, and we'll get into more details later on in the, in the briefing on what that means and what the timeline and next steps are. But if we can quickly move to the next step or the next slide just wanted to recap for you here that I know that we always have new members, or you know of the digital equity ecosystem coming to the table at these events. But where we are today is really the culmination of a number of different steps. If we go back to March 29th That was when the NTIA released their NOFO (or the Notice of Funding Opportunity) for the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant. On May 23rd we had the stakeholder briefing. On May 28th we submitted our application to the NTIA. There was a long carrying process from May 29th to October 24th, we did a number of digital equity plan, implementation and Capacity Grant design questionnaires. We know that many folks here applied for joined coalitions that applied for competitive grant funding. There were, you know, more stakeholder briefings, and I think what I'd want to draw your attention to is in the bottom right corner. Is that really November 4th was when we received the official notification of the award of the dollars for the Digital Equity Capacity Grant. And although we're in November now, would like to note that the official period of performance on this Capacity Grant the 70-million-dollar grant will begin on December 1st of this year and go for 5 years after that. So, and I am gonna kick it back to you. But that is my update. And really looking forward to engaging with folks for the rest of the briefing. Here.

Thank you so much, deputy Director Scott Adams. I would like to pass the mic to access and deployment advisor Maria Kelly. The same discussion.

Thanks, and thank you, Scott. We will have periods of time for question and discussion after each section, but we're going to open it up right now. If anybody has a question, you can drop it in chat, or you can raise your hand, and we'll call on you, and we're happy to answer any questions you might have.

But also, there'll be many times that you'll have chance to do that. So, if we don't have any right now catch you later. I'm Scott! I'm not seeing any questions, so I think we're going to go ahead and move on and thank you so much. Keep them in mind, and we'll open up chats. You can drop them in, and we're going to pass it over to Shawn Daugherty from Broadband Equity Partnership. Thank you.

Thanks, Maria. Thanks, Scott. It's a pleasure to see so many familiar faces, and thank you, everybody for taking the time today to connect with us again on the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program. My name is Shawn Daugherty. I'm a Director with the Broadband Equity Partnership. I'm thrilled to be doing this work with y'all. And Amanda. Do we want to go to the next slide? Scott started this, the stakeholder briefing off right and celebrating that the State now has it's in receipt of its, you know, official grant award for 70.2 million dollars, and in his recap slide he, you know, really noted that March 29th was when the notice of funding opportunity was released for the Capacity Grant funding. But really, the day before, I think it was March 28th literally, the day before is when we got approved approval on our State Digital Equity Plan. And that's really kind of, I would say the driving force behind a lot of how we are implementing the Capacity Grant at the end or included within the SDEP or the State Digital Equity Plan, are 7 key activities that we identified, that we really wanted to focus on to promote digital equity through the state. And these are the 7 that are listed here that are included in our plan that was approved earlier this year by the NTIA. And you know it's an ambitious plan. We have a lot going on. But it's all obviously directed at bridging the digital divide in our State and Amanda next slide, please. And one big piece of this is really around, you know, the role of the Capacity Grant funding. And I think we acknowledged in that plan that the Capacity Grant alone would not be enough to really address all of the needs of the State of California. So, we were really thrilled to see so many entities apply for competitive grants, as you can see here. We actually mentioned the importance of the competitive grant in the SDEP itself. And really acknowledging the need for seeking funding outside of the Capacity Grant, either through local funds, philanthropic, you know, privately funded programs which will all really be necessary to kind of, not to kind of to close the digital equity gaps that exist in our State and Amanda, next slide, please. And especially looking at the size and the scale of California. Right? We have over 9,000 eligible entities that we've identified. You know we have over, you know roughly, about 40 million people that reside in the State, and 30, you know, almost 34 million of them identify as one of the 8 covered populations. So, we, you know, have a state that has, you know, high needs. And so, we know that the 70.2 million is not going to be sufficient to meet all of our goals; next slide.

Amanda. Great. So right here, this is how we're looking at a lot of the digital equity funding and kind of the broader context. When we talk about that kind of the braided funding. How can the Capacity Grant program that you know we're designing, be supportive of the CPUC adoption account that already exists? And you know, how can it, partner with recipients of the digital equity, competitive grant and work with, you know, our tribal communities through the tribal, through the Native Entities Capacity Grant as well. So, it's really, you know, the Capacity Grant is just one of many funding streams that exist in the State. And really, how can we do something different to be supportive of all of these various efforts. And so that's kind of, you know, as just a reminder kind of the how we came to develop the Capacity Grant in its current state. So next slide, Amanda. Great. So, this is a slide that you know, if you've been on these calls before, this shouldn't be. This shouldn't be new information. Right? We, NTIA is the Federal Grant administrator. They have now issued the grant award to the State of California, specifically to the California Department of Technology, who is the administering entity and really focusing on these 3 broad areas of how to implement the program structure through centralized services. What are those items that the State can kind of produce or procure on behalf of the ecosystem? What are those State agency, digital inclusion efforts? Where are existing state programs doing excellent work and helping to support those. And then also, you know, the creation of the digital equity subgrant program grants to geographic units and or entities that are doing the digital inclusion work on the ground, in the field, with the communities of need. And so, Amanda, next slide, please. Great. And so, you know, diving a little bit deeper into the Digital Equity Capacity Subgrant Program, because I know that's of interest, of a lot of people on this call, and Chae will get into some of the public comments that we, the themes of the public comments we received. You know we designed a public the capacity subgrant program to really focus on some key issues or key deliverables, right?! Funding entities to implement, you know, the Statewide Digital Equity Plan right and service to that? How are we addressing? How are we using the program to address barriers, local, regional, state level? How can we utilize the Capacity Grant to really develop and strengthen ecosystems and really increase capacity because capacity again, was a gap that we had heard about throughout the planning process. How can we fund trusted messengers? Those entities who are working in language on the ground have already developed those relationships. And how can we, you know, encourage statewide innovation, as well as continuing to fund, ensure that funding reached all corners of our State. Great. And if you want to go to the next slide Amanda. Right? These were some of the allowable uses that we had included in the subgrant program, you know, developing local digital equity plans, developing

broadband adoption plans and campaigns providing digital navigation services, (you know) serving communities through digital literacy and skills training, maybe some targeted device distribution and of course, workforce development training and apprenticeships. These are all allowable uses for the capacity subgrant as identified in the documentation that has been released to date. And next slide, Amanda. Great. And this is kind of the you know how we broke down the subgrant design right into really 2 tracks, the 1st one looking at regional and local ecosystems with distributions of funding based off of a formula which I'll go over actually on the next slide. But this is really about, you know, creating that local capacity to serve communities on the ground. And then the Track 2 is really statewide ecosystems. What are those, you know, looking at entities that serve either target targeted outcome areas or serve covered populations, and maybe those that might be better served. But with a statewide effort, as opposed to something that is highly localized. So, this is, you know, kind of the proposed subgrant design that we had released both the Track one and the Track 2. And Amanda, do you want to go to kind of the last slide on my section? And this again was, you know, part of the grant guidelines that we released the proposed, you know, track one funding formula. We had kind of gone from an initial one to an alternate formula that once again was engaged or informed by public input. So, your feedback does matter, you know, looking at total population within a geographic boundary in this case county level, and then 25% for lack of broadband availability and adoption. But also, you know, having that minimum allocation at the county level to ensure that all counties or all geographic areas did get at least a minimum amount of funding. So that concludes the kind of overview of how we, you know, just a reminder of how we designed the Capacity Grant program and the subgrant, and how we kind of got to where we are today. And with that I think we're going to open it up for discussion before moving on.

Thank you, Shawn, and yes, we are going to move to the discussion and any questions that you might have again on the SDEP and State Capacity Grant or Subgrant program design. If you would like to ask a question, please use the raise the hand function at the bottom of your zoom, or we, and we will prompt you to unmute yourself and turn on your camera. So, we have a question. Hold on just a second. There's a question, Scott, about allocations that are not utilized if allocated. Funds for a specific county are not fully requested or utilized. Will there be a process in place for reallocating the remaining funds.

Thanks, Maria, for the question, and you know we're looking at that. Some folks had brought that up and asked that question in public comment. And that's one of the things that we're taking a look at, because the I think the top line on

all of this funding is, it's one time funding, and as you'll see later on in the program when we talk about the timeline, we'll have 9 (nine) months from you know, December first to identify every expenditure throughout. So, our intention is to create a subgrant program that's flexible enough that the county allocation, whether it's individual counties, coalitions representing multiple counties or regional go in and receive that money because we're not going to have a whole lot of time to roll that over. And we'll have more about that in our December stakeholder Briefing.

Thank you, Scott. I appreciate that question from Amy. Amy, did you want to ask this, or you want me to read it? Would you prefer? I just read it. Were there any changes made to the design of the subgrant program as a result of public comment?

That's still to be determined. We have been very thoughtfully and methodically looking at all of the public comments and analyzing those. There's a process on our end that we have to, you know, go through our administrative review with CDT. And others, so we haven't made any changes, but to the subgrant design. But it's not saying we won't we're gonna take some time, and we'll come back and report out on any of those in December.

Thank you. Scott. And yeah, these are great questions, and some of this we will touch on in our upcoming presentations. But thank you so much for including them for us today? I see a couple of questions again. We're gonna be answering these questions as we move through the process. And I do not see any hands raised and thank you for these. We will keep tracking and making sure that we are answering as many as we can, but also that we will be touching on some of these as we move forward. So go ahead, Scott.

Maria, I was gonna say, I'm I was looking. It looks like Mr. Heckman has a hand up.

I do not see a hand up on the side. Thank you for that.

Okay.

Yes. If you'd like to unmute yourself and ask your question.

Hi, thank you for considering I'm not turning on my camera appropriate. However, I'm curious as to entities such as nonprofits who are providing many of these digital skills, digital equity trainings. Already through philanthropic means, we could use some more funding to proliferate the activities, particularly in affordable housing and centralized housing developments. wondering where they might fit into this sequence of events.

Thank you, Mr. Hechtman. I believe your sound was a little bit distorted, but I think you were saying that there were a number of different organizations. CBOs, you know, housing entities that might need funding to do this work. And where would they fit into the equation. Is that correct?

That's what I heard as well. Scott. Yes.

Well, I think in an answer to that question ideally, what we're really seeking with the draft proposal. And obviously we got a lot of public comments. So, we're taking a look at that was that the idea was that where we could make the most use of this one-time funding, particularly when you weigh it against the Public Utilities Commission's California Advanced Service Fund Adoption account. the Competitive Grant Funds, the Native Entity funding in the Capacity Grant funding. Is that really ecosystem? You know, capacity building and local planning would be it. And so, you know, the 1st track that we proposed was that, you know, coalitions would align behind one lead entity. And then, you know, kind of that team would apply for the funds and disperse it to achieve the aims of the plan. So, I think that, you know, nonprofits and housing entities really would be encouraged to kind of be a part of those as like a partner in a grant application, or potentially, you know, as a second-tier grantee. Once the funds were received regionally or locally.

Thanks. Thanks, Scott, that I'm sorry my microphone is not functional at the time.

That's okay. Loud and clear.

There are entities providing social services, for instance, inside of subsidized housing developments that are doing this now and relying upon contributions from building owners as well as philanthropic organizations. And we, just. you know, saw this an opportunity to supplement something that's already been done, and expanding it and providing more depth to it. And we're wondering if this is the right place to look for funding.

Got it. Thank you. Thank you for coming. Thank you for your input.

Yeah, thank you so much. We have a question. Gina, would has her hand raised if you could unmute yourself and turn on your camera, please, and feel free to ask your question.

Hi! Can you hear me?

Yes.

Okay. Great. I think this is a more important question. The one I had been the one I had typed. The affordable housing situation where they are offering digital

some type of connection to the Internet. I'm. My experience, which you know, we are definitely boots on the ground. And we work with lots of folks is what we're finding is that the Internet that's provided is insufficient. And I really hope that we would be able to look at the efficiency of Internet getting to all of the units in a particular development, because what is available is really not what we would expect. And I'd hate to throw good money after something that we are thinking is working when in reality, if there's 50 units, maybe the unit that's furthest away from whatever the where they plug in is not getting what they're needed. That's what I'm finding. I'm also finding that people are using more than one device. So, what the affordable housing folks or companies are putting together? Yes, there is something, but it isn't sufficient. And is that going to be looked at? Or are you all just gonna say, okay, if they've offered it, we'll help make it better with the assumption that it's going to be better.

Well, I think. Miss Gates, it's good to see you again, and obviously great points, and great concerns. What I would do is kind of cool down the lens a little bit more on broadband, and so the State has used you know, billions of both Federal dollars and State dollars to invest in infrastructure both in the Middle mile and the public utilities, you know Commission through their advanced service fund, their Federal Funding Account. And now nearly 2 billion of dollars that are going to be subgranted out. I think that those investments are going to have more of an impact on potentially upgrading services in those locations, the Digital Equity Capacity Grant dollars or you know, based on the notice of funding opportunity from the NTIA, are really, you know, encouraged to focus on the non-infrastructure pieces. And so, while the points are incredibly valid, and that there's parts of the state program that are, you know, significantly working towards those. You know. the Capacity Grant funding and subgrant funding isn't necessarily (you know). There's just not enough of it to put into things like that.

Well, thank you. Thank you so much. Well, included with that is, I'm finding that. The let's say that their computer labs can be closed very early, and that is supposed to be offering the digital training. So just keeping eyes open and being smart shoppers is what I'm suggesting. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you, and Anthony has his hand raised. If you would like to unmute and turn your camera on and ask your question, please.

Hi, thank you guys for taking my question. Anthony Bailey, here on behalf of the West Fresno Family Resource Center. The question I have for you is for those that are in the health space and the community health space. What's going to be

the best entry point for those of us that already have teams on the ground that are doing community health work. What's the entry point for us to be able to tap into funding so that we can include some of the digital literacy and some of the adoption awareness and just services provided into what we're doing in the community already. I noticed you mentioned collaborating for some of the grant applications, is there a space or an ideal kind of touch point for us to be able to connect into with that. Thank you.

Yeah, it's good to see you. Thank you for the question, Mr. Bailey. And so you know. So, the State Digital Equity Plan had a couple of missions, and that was to identify both the common and specific barriers for the 8 covered populations that were mentioned. Are called out in the Digital Equity Act and you know, in collaboration with the public develop strategies to overcome those barriers that also would lead to increased outcomes and key policy priority areas. And so, 1st and foremost, the goals and mission of the kind of the larger Broadband for All program is, you know, identifying those common barrier, addressing, you know, the access or availability of infrastructure helping to address affordability. And then all of the, you know, dimensionality of the overcoming, you know, barriers to adoption. And so really, you know, I think at the 1st Level, that's what we're encouraging this funding to do, but also acknowledging that the way that we propose the draft guidelines for the subgrant program is that a lead entity could put together a coalition that included (you know), those trusted messengers, or, you know, unique entities that were specific to the covered populations in need. that there were. So, if you know digital health navigators, you know, were set up really strongly in one potential area. That they could, you know, be a part of that coalition and be a second tier subgrantee. So, I would say that that's the main piece. The other part would be to look at Track 2 of the subgrant program that Shawn was mentioning. which was looking at a statewide level where we'd like to give kind of block grants to focus on specific interventions or innovations for covered populations or in outcome areas. And so, health care, access and health outcomes are one of those. So, I think (you know), more than likely as a member of a coalition and a sub-tier grantee in the Track one, and then potentially (you know), if it's at a statewide level looking at Track 2 for funds. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Bailey. Thank you, Scott. Some of the questions again that we're I'm looking at. We will be answering them shortly. So, we'll leave them. We'll hang on to them, and if we will revisit them, and I think we are ready to. I don't see any more hands raise, so we can move on to Chae Kim, Senior Analyst with Broadband Equity Partnership. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Maria. Hi everyone! As Maria shared, my name is Chae Kim, and I am a Senior Analyst with the Broadband Equity Partnership. It's a privilege to support this work, and it's also a privilege to be in this space with you all today. Next slide, please, Amanda. Okay, so as a recap the public comment process allowed for feedback on the contents of the Digital Equity Capacity Subgrant Draft Guidelines. The draft guidelines consisted of 12 sections outlined here, as you can see from program background to a proposed schedule of activities. Next slide, please. Through a 30-day period. From September 30th to October 29th public comments were accepted for the draft guidelines via the Broadband for All portal online. As always, we strive to develop a process that was accessible and inclusive to as many people as possible; and this included accessibility features such as; text translation, and multiple languages, HTML for screen reading capabilities, and voice-to-text features to submit comments. Comments were posted publicly after submission, and you can actually take a look at all the comments posted by scanning the QR code on this slide. And next slide, please. As a high-level summary, CDT received 66 public comments, or, in other words; this also means 66 organizations submitted public comments. Many organizations provided comments on more than one section, which amounted to a total of 192 comments across sections. If you recall the 12 sections outlined in our previous slide. So, the comments received were from organizations also serving 49 counties across California, as you can see on the map here. This was determined by the organization's address, and by counties that the organization self-reported to serve within their comment. Of the 66 comments received, 79% or 52 organizations indicated being interested in applying for a capacity subgrant either as a lead or partner applicant. Next slide, please. As you can imagine we received a diversity of comments with multiple perspectives, and at a high level. The public comments received could really be categorized across these 3 themes. As you can see here, the first row is program design. The second row here is funding and costs. And lastly, related programs and services under program design comments addressed application, structure, application, timelines as well as covered populations under funding and costs, comments addressed funding allocation, allowable costs, and caps on certain allowable costs. Under related programs and services comments here really address, centralized services and data collection requirements, information on the State Digital Equity Plan, progress and the broader Capacity Grant, as well as what kind of technical assistance provisions might be made. Next slide, please. The next and final slides of this section go more into detail for each public comment, high level theme and topic as a reminder. These are generalized themes for presentation purposes and more details on the specific comments can be found online. If you remember that QR

code. The first theme we'll outline here is program design so related to application structure comments really addressed partnership structures as well as the number of subawards per county, related to timelines, comments addressed, the application, timeline reporting timelines as well as the timeline, to finalize partnerships and second tier subgrants related to covered populations, comments addressed the definition of covered populations. And we want to spend some time here because a number of commenters mentioned covered populations. And we want to really reiterate that the Federal Digital Equity Act is clear on the 8 covered populations meant to serve through the statute, and the state is bound. To those, however, we also absolutely acknowledge the intersectionality between the covered populations and other groups. So, this relates to another topic of public comments received, which was the intersectionality with other groups, including native entities, Foster Youth and the LGBTQ plus community. Next slide, please. The second theme we'll outline is funding and costs related to funding allocation, comments really addressed the funding formula, and allocations by track related to allowable costs, comments addressed, clarification on allowable versus unallowable costs. And related to cost caps, comments really addressed more clarification, or suggested changes to indirect administrative, indirect and administrative caps and cost devices and costs (excuse me), device planning and subsidies. as well as advance payments and reimbursement schedules. And next slide. The final theme will outline is related programs and services related to centralized services and data collection. We really saw comments asking for more information related to centralized services, as well as requirements that are related to data collection as it relates to the DE Survey and DEEM tool related to the State Digital Equity Plan, and Capacity Grant. We saw comments asking for more information on SDEP progress in general, as well as information on the Capacity Grant progress, and how this will relate to the opportunity we see here today. With the subgrant program related to technical assistance, we really heard from folks asking about partnership support for local entities and smaller CBOs. We saw comments around guidance around allowable projects and entities, and lastly, guidance around outputs and outcomes. So, we intentionally wanted to end our section here on technical assistance, because the next section after discussion we will be focusing on technical assistance. We'll pass it back to Maria.

Thank you, Chae. Really appreciate how you were to put that all together so clearly. Any questions, please raise your hand and we'll ask you to unmute and turn your camera on. Chat is now open, so you can drop a question in there as well, and we are tracking. And we'll move to this discussion portion on the draft. Guideline public comment process. Please, we'll just pause for just a moment if there are any questions or elaborations. All right. Thank you so much, Danielle.

Would you please unmute yourself and turn your camera on and ask your question? I think you unmuted yourself, but we don't hear you yet. There you are!

Can you hear me?

Yes.

Okay. I was just wondering if you all have any feelings or sense of is this going to? Are you expecting any changes based on the change in the administration and the claims of slashing government programs. Since, this is a federally funded grant.

Yeah, thank you for the question. I know that folks have been kind of watching the developments on the national stage. We're, gonna you know, have to kind of circle back on that. But we're under operating under the you know, understanding that the NTIA is awarded us the funding, and that funding is gonna stay in place. And we can't really, you know, speculate on what the future administration you know, may or may not do.

Yeah, okay.

Thank you for the question.

Yeah, thank you, Danielle. Any other questions? Anybody want to raise their hand? Alright. Sorry. Looking at one of the questions, is there a process. This is another process question, Scott, sort of that. And I know we're still under. These are, some of these are under development. So, wanted. Just let everybody know that some of these things are still being developed. But is there a process to prohibit a person from getting a service or device? I don't believe that's part of the draft guidelines, but.

Yeah, I think I would have to understand that a little better, and maybe.

Yeah.

Offline. but you know, in terms of this funding is gonna be, you know, distributed to regional and local, you know, entities to provide services to members of covered populations in their areas. And so would have to, again. Find out a little bit more, you know. Would love to get an email from you. That kind of scopes out the question a little more.

Yeah. And I think that just you know, if it's if it's a covered population there, there wouldn't be anything to preclude. But I think it's looking using that lens? I have. If Carolina Mendez, could you please? There you are! Hi!

Hey? Sorry about that. I think I logged in using a link. So, Patrick Messac from #OaklandUndivided here. Thanks for this informative presentation. The CDT draft guidelines explain that subgrantees are required to adopt centralized services procured by CDT. How will input or revisions from local communities be incorporated into these required services to address the needs of diverse localities? Thank you.

Thank you, Patrick, and it's good to see you appreciate you, you know, for coming in. And so yeah, we're mulling over the feedback we got on the centralized services. That you know, is. you know, in some cases counter to what we've learned in our, you know, the planning process and the stakeholder briefings and the questionnaires that we issued prior to developing the guidelines. But part of the centralized services is trying to make the most of a relatively limited amount of funds. And so, when you look at the challenge in California, the 33 million that are self-identified as members of covered populations and 70, you know, million dollars to go to that. And the fact that the NTIA is going to be expecting California to really be working to you know, overcome the common and specific barriers for each of the 8 covered populations that includes not just the access and availability and the affordability. But you know those barriers to adoption which can be, you know, sometimes, you know, access to digital literacy training, and things, you know, like that. So, the centralized services are acknowledging that the subgrantees who are funded by these dollars are part of a larger program to accomplish the goals of the State. And so, having centralized services that support the aims of the plan, is really the intention of that. And so, you know, we throughout the process. Or, you know, looking to reinstate the outcome area working groups. And I would imagine that those would be, you know, part of the ways that we could get you know, additional input and feedback on these. But we feel like the last 2 years of planning, at least at a certain basic level of centralized services. you know, has been established. That being said, I think you bring up an interesting point is that we know that these are going to be regional and local efforts, and that all counties and communities are not the same; that they have different needs. And so centralized services may not, you know, work for all members of covered populations in all areas. That's why we developed the subgrant program to have the kind of flexibility that you know, lead grantees could have second tier grantees, and if they needed to allocate funding to address. (You know) Certain members of certain covered populations that they could do that.

Thank you. I apologize. Kari. Yes, please. Could you please ask? Ask your question? Thank you.

I think we've all noticed that these briefings have been such a wonderful opportunity to surface potential partners and collaborators for the State. Grant. I think that's one of the reasons I'm here, and I know that's why a lot of people come is to meet our allies and our colleagues. And you may be answering this later. But are there any plans to for the State or say the broadband coalitions to actually generate collaborations to apply for these grants, or we all just kind of on our own.

Well.

Like now, I have like. I'm calling everybody saying, "Hey, guys" and "you want to put in a grant together?" Or are you? Are the working groups gonna like, convene with everybody working with older adults or everybody working in education? What do you think?

Well, Kari, thanks. It's good to see you, by the way. And you know. Thanks for the question. You know. We really kind of view, the last 2 to 2 and a half years of planning, as the process to help kind of, you know, build coalitions and help, you know, build those, whether you look at the 20 regional workshops that you know we conducted with the Public Utilities Commission, and you know the planning group meetings and the outcome area working group meetings and these briefings. I would say, you know, we are aware of public comment. Indicating some of the challenges with both in the great opportunities with the Competitive Grant program and you know, there's a lot of similarities between how we designed the or the draft program for Track 1, and the way that NTIA did. And so, we have said that we would be a matchmaking, you know, entity. And you know people are always welcome to reach out to us. But I think, you know, we've tried to give a really long runway over the last several months to signal. (You know) what we think the best you know, draft design is based on what we heard during the planning process, and you know, have a lot of faith and just how hardworking and committed to California Digital Equity ecosystem is, but actually no. And part of what we've heard over the last couple of months is that you know, how can we help maybe smaller, lesser, known entities and connect to the lead? So, we're (you know), building that into You know our technical assistance program. And we're always looking to help do that. And we wanna make sure that to a certain extent, local and regional entities have, you know, their own autonomy and ability to develop those partnerships. Thank you.

Thank you, Danielle. Would you like to ask your question and mute and turn on your camera? Please.

Hi, I. My question is kind of related. To the last one. I'm just wondering. So, you're wanting one application per area? And so, if you receive multiple applications, are you like helping to connect those entities? If they might not possibly know that each other is applying because we I work for the county, and I can certainly make myself aware of any other county departments that might be interested. But as far as, like all of the nonprofits and all the other organizations that exist in our area, we might not be aware that there's another person interested that we could possibly collaborate with.

No, thanks. Thanks for the question. Ideally, we would. We would hope that. And what we've been working towards is that to create a system where folks are informed enough that they can align behind one lead entity, and we're very happy to share information. Before the RFA, goes out that won't go out until the beginning of next year. And the RFA, the request for applications, but we're always willing to share information that way. And we did include in the guidelines some scoring criteria for when there are you know, multiple applications from different areas. So, I would really, you know, suggest that folks, you know, take a look at those were got some feedback on, you know how we might be able to strengthen those we're girding for that. There were a couple other suggestions about some flexibility about, you know, potentially multiple applications from larger areas. We're trying to work through is much of the input we receive to make the best subgrant program we can that stays within Federal and state guidelines, but also allows for the flexibility for folks to do the work that's needed. And this isn't, wasn't, you know. Quite the question you asked. But one thing I would like to add is that we also acknowledge that California is a big state, and while you know, we've proposed a funding allocation by county. We know, potentially all counties may not have the bandwidth, or even an entity within a county that feels like they can take on you know, being a lead applicant. So, we've also built in flexibility to do you know, regional multi-county applications where one lead entity could apply on behalf of a number of counties, and do a more integrated approach that way.

Thank you.

You're welcome. Thank you.

Thank you, Scott, and there's a question online. I think that we you answered it. It was from Judy about; Will the area be by county or region? And the short answer is both. Possibly, but if there's more that we want to speak to that thank you for. Thank you so much for everyone, for your questions. It's been really, really great. And I do not see any specific questions online, in chat. And I don't

see any hands raised. So, James, introducing James Spencer from the OBDL team.

Hi, thank you, Maria, and welcome everyone. So far, some excellent and interesting comments. I really feel privileged to be part of this process and so I may be a new face for some of those might not know me. My name is James Spencer. I am the broadband administrative manager little bit about myself. I've been with OBDL, the office of Broadband and Digital Literacy for about one year overseeing our grants and business services operations. Overall, I have about 14 years of experience planning and implementing state and federal programs and a lot of that has focused on underserved communities Next slide, please. And so based on stakeholder briefings, questionnaires and public comments over the last few months. The CDT team is working to build out a technical assistance program to support the Digital Equity Capacity Grant Subgrant program applicants. And so today will not be able to answer specific questions or provide advice regarding the development of individual applications. But we will seek to research to provide resources. You know, they provide generalized support as necessary, you know, to help organizations submit quality applications, and either Track 1 or, and or Track 2 and also create an open, transparent, equitable, and inclusive process. And so, I can say right now that the technical assistance program still being designed and it isn't finalized. But for right now, we're kind of planning to offer some resources. The first being our get ready resources and these are just be like, you know, typical one pagers, you know, guidance documents possibly prerecorded videos. We're also going to have Q&A cycles so like regular opportunities to submit questions and receive answers on a general cadence. And finally, we're planning webinars so, like presentations focused on specific topics. And you know, a lot of the comments that we received today will help shape that; next slide, please. So, like in the meantime, several actions that you know, organizations that are planning to submit can get prepared. So, first of all, is you know, just get organized. Ensure that your entity has a Sam. that you have a unique identifying our number, and that you're in good standings. If you have any ongoing or open State Federal audits, complete those as necessary. And then, you know, make sure you're bookmarking the Broadband for All portals. So, you have easy access when it times time. Next, we suggest you identify partners and build coalitions. So, you know, get in touch with your partners, assess the strengths of the organizations you may be partnering with. And what needs you have? And then, you know, meet with other organizations and kind of determine strategies and partnerships. And finally, you can do research and assessment. So, kind of, you know, find out, does your does your locality have an existing digital equity plan? What does that look like? You can also conduct

market research looking for potential contractors and vendors. And you can also just review if you do have a State Digital Equity Plan or a local and equity plan. you know, understand what your needs and barriers are for your community. And so, prior to our discussion. We have a quick poll to help tee up the technical assistance discussion, and Maria will help with that.

Thank you, James. Yes, we're gonna jump into the next round of questions. But we also have a quick 2 question poll, that we'd like to share with you and get that deployed. And you should see in front of you there but once. The first question is, what topics would you like technical assistance materials to address? Please select all that apply. And the second question, we're just asking you to pick your top, your top one of about communication. So, we'll just give you a minute to see if we can get 50% participation. So, we'll watch and see. And then we can understand how best we, the projects or the program, the technical system program, how we can best continue to develop. So, we can serve. And thank you for your patience while we do this and appreciate your engagement as well. It's very helpful. Okay. everyone's doing really great. Thank you so much that we're still populating it. So, I'm gonna leave it up just a little bit longer. And then we can share the results. And it looks like James. It looks like under how we prepare to raise questions. It's all 3. It's looking like everybody likes to communicate in the 3 ways. Okay. Let's go ahead and end the poll. And so, we can go back to questions. I do want to go back to one that got buried a little bit, and it's somewhat related to technical assistance, but it's more about allocations too. So, we want to be able to catch all these up. So, Scott, if I can move back a little bit to. I have a couple. Let's start with this one. Will CDT make any changes? I think we've answered this one. But will CDT make any changes to the draft guidelines based on the 60 plus public comments to the State? And I think we touched on that at the beginning. But would you please remind us what you shared.

Yeah, so we're very grateful for the public comments. We may, and most likely make some changes. How substantive? I'm not sure about that. But over the coming weeks we will do those, and we intend to come back in December at our stakeholder briefing to share with you folks. How public comment, you know, has led to any modifications to the guidelines.

Thank you, Scott. And then we're kind of catching up again on a lot of all the catch-up ones. There was a question about Track 1 and Track 2. And thank you, you know, we're happy to answer any questions that you have as they're rolling in. There was a question about local and regional ecosystems. If they're expected to receive no less than 54% of total funding, what steps is the State taking to exceed the 54% funding floor for localities?

Yeah, thanks for the question, Maria. Again. It is like I think it. It's shared in the conversation with Mr. Messac earlier, like in in as was outlined in you know, with the information that Shawn shared is the big challenge here in California is you know, 33 1 million self-identified members of covered populations. them $70 million dollars. And potentially, you know, 9,000 eligible entities. How we came up with that language is that we're still trying to figure out how we can reduce the cost that it takes CDT to administer this program and put as much of that funding into the subgrant program, whether it's Track 1 or Track 2, you know. Part of the challenge with us is we also have to look at, you know, how much impact we can do at scale through state programs. That's why we're looking at centralized services. And really, the percentage caps or the kind of like do not go below that. We wanted to include in the guidelines that was really reverse kind of engineered. When you look at the what the caps were on the allowable expenses that NTIA would allow the Department of Technology is the administering or receiving entity and administering entity of the grant to do so. I'll just reiterate that we're absolutely committed to trying to find ways to administer the program, you know, with as low cost as we possibly can, and put as much as we can into our Subgrant program. And we're just you know, working that through.

Thank you. Thank you, Scott, and I want to touch on the results really quickly again, on sort of how the technical, as we're looking. As James said, we took the poll because we want to be responsive and develop a supportive and helpful technical assistance program. And it looks like the two primary ones are partnerships and subgrantees. What support can be putting those together, and then clarification around allowable and unallowable costs and activities. So, if anybody would like to answer, ask any additional questions, sort of around the technical assistance, while you have us, would love to be able to try to answer them. And also, I'm still looking through the questions that are coming in. And some of the timeline questions we're gonna touch on that really. Shortly, we have a timeline slide we'll share with you, and if we don't capture it there. Please elevate your question again. Lots of questions, Scott around centralized services. Given that people have raised issues of identifying potential partners in like in the poll, has CDT given any thought whether or not subgrantees will need to be identified at the time of applying?

Yeah, I'm wondering. Shawn, are you here? Can you answer that question? Because I know we've been meeting with the NTIA

Sure. Yeah, I think we're still waiting to get verification on that. But we know that you know that part of the way the subgrant program has been designed is to allow entities to develop a Digital Equity Plan, and then through the

development of that, it might change, maybe how they choose to administer who those you know, those subgrantees, might be. So, we will provide more clarity on that. Once we have more information from the NTIA on whether that's required or not.

Thank you, Shawn.

Yeah, thank you so much. Dr. Rawls. I see your hand up. If you'd like to unmute and ask your question.

Hi, please forgive the camera. I'm sick. So, I'm gonna do that. My question is really around the centralized services and specifically the DEEM tool. Our community in particular, held a lot of hope for what that tool could be, and we have some ideas about what it needs versus what it is, but I don't know where that work is. It just says centralized services. So, I'd like to hear more about what that piece of the plan looks like.

Alright, and thank you, Dr. Rawls. It's always good to see you and learn from you know your wisdom and contributions. And so, the centralized services. Just to kind of go back and recap a little bit for you know. Maybe folks who are newer to the conversation is throughout the planning process. Many stakeholders had shared that there are areas where the State could provide like centralized services that could help minimize administrative burden? Could eliminate duplication? And create efficiencies. And so there are 3 kind of buckets that we're thinking about. Those are, you know, developed, procured and curated. And so, the developed centralized services or tools or the best examples are the you know, the online and mobile digital equity survey that was developed during the SDEP or the digital equity ecosystem mapping tool that was developed during the planning process for the Digital Equity Plan. We fully acknowledge that those that the first iteration of both the survey and the DEEM tool were developed in service of creating the Digital Equity Plan. but those would have to be further modified and updated to support and be of service, of tracking progress of both the State and its subgrantees. And we fully expect and would welcome input from the stakeholder community, particularly the subgrantee communicate on how we could improve those tools to suit your needs. And also, just to you know, would want to level set, and not over promise that. What we would be, you know, seeking to track is on the survey. We would continue to you know, want to develop and promote greater data, you know, gathering that could inform the progress that the work has been doing, you know, and how the baselines are changing and how we can measure. You know our progress towards our targets on the on the digital equity survey and on the DEEM tool and we've already had some. Really, you know, fruitful

conversations with a number of stakeholders and continue to seek more, and I'm wondering, Dr. Rawls, did I answer your question?

There we go. I was muted. To some extent, I like, I very much like to that. You're saying that there is going to be continued work toward it, and I guess I'm trying to find a path forward. So, do what do I do? Write it up and send it in as a grant application to give you feedback on things that right? We have a lot of campuses and stuff that do this kind of research regularly. Where do we submit to that? Because that's a centralized service. Where do we submit our input? Or where is that input, being solicited.

Yeah, you know, let us circle back with the team and potentially have that be a follow up that we could share in our December meeting. What we really want to do is what we heard from the community is that folks have been really busy. There's a lot of cross work on, you know applications to the to the PUC for their various programs. Then there was a lot of focus on competitive grants. And now a lot of focus on this. We will. Like, I said. Get back to you in December, on a timeline for engagement on, you know when and how folks can provide feedbacks on you know further modification to the survey and the Dean tool.

Okay. Awesome. Thank you very much.

Thank you.

Kari. Did you want to ask a question, or there you are.

I put my camera on before I raised my hand. I'm like jumping in there. And so several times now you've mentioned the centralized services and everything. Are you gonna have a separate info meeting about applying for the centralized services? Or how are you gonna choose the centralized services?

Good question, Kari, and so you know, in a number of our previous briefings. Well, in first, you know, when you look at the Digital Equity plan, the strategies and key activities and recommendations that we put in there where that we would develop. You know, amongst many things, develop a subgrant program. Developer, procure a statewide digital literacy training platform, workforce development and some other platforms. And those are kind of in the second bucket of like procured centralized services where you know, we could, you know, leverage our purchasing power and develop a kind of a baseline. You know, digital literacy training platform and curriculum for subgrantees and ecosystem partners to use. And potentially, you know, individual residents. to use those. That's one example. And the way that we would have been envisioning that and wrote it in to the grants is that the subgrantees could use the, you know, digital literacy training platform. We had a questionnaire that went out

on, you know this, and we saw a lot of feedback. We have a pretty good idea of the baseline needs that folks have had, that they could use that as their baseline. And then, as I mentioned to Mr. Messac, in response to Mr. Messac's question. Earlier, there may be communities that have different needs, you know, there might not be one procurable system or platform that can, you know, accommodate every language needs, but that's where the flexibility, and that the Track 2 or the Track 1 you know, subgrantees would have the flexibility to kind of develop curriculum, say, in specific languages, for you know, key targets in their members of covered populations. And you know, particular communities. I'm sorry, Kari, I think you went on mute.

Yeah. So that doesn't exactly answer my question. My question is, you know, we know that there's an and there might be a need for and you know, professionally, instructionally designed curriculum for us to share across the State, and perhaps the country and we all, many of us have curriculum and curriculum in different languages that has been professionally developed by instructional designers, especially for our communities of learners. My question is, how are you going to choose. Are you going to have a working group to select curriculum or shared resources? Is this something that internally you'll have a working group? Or is it something that we will be asked to submit proposals. And you review our curriculum. I'm just kind of wondering if you've had any thought about the process of choosing that that not just the curriculum, but other services. Because, you know, we have a really robust, as many others do. I have really robust digital navigator training as well.

Yeah, no, thank you for asking and I know we've been really transparent about this, like in our briefings, we had through our questionnaires asked folks to suggest vendors that they had worked with, that they were satisfied with. We had published those, and then we had done, and have done a significant mark amount of market research and had multiple meetings and many cases with a lot of those. And so, you know, we're taking the information that we heard from. The planning process, from the briefings from the questionnaires and merging (you know) that together to make a decision on, you know, how we would procure those. Thank you.

Thank you, and we may have touched on this one. But I want to elevate it before we move on to our timeline, Scott. The implementation of subregional digital equity plans is that an eligible project?

You know. That's I think that was Mister. No. This question. I think it's a great question, and that is, you know, related to at least a couple of the public

comments. So that's something that we're considering. And you're gonna have to confer with NTIA, and we'll circle back on that next month at our next briefing.

Yeah, thank you so much. Oh, and we do have a new hand raised, Anthony, if you'd like to unmute and come on camera, please. Again.

Hi! Thanks so much for taking another question from me. Just in light of Kari's question, and some of the other good questions I heard popping up. Is there any thought either Scott or Maria about having some type of state hub where some of these resources could be housed at in the early stages. We talked about doing some outreach and obviously digital navigators and things of that nature with so many different groups across the State working and kind of in a similar focus. Is there any thought to, as those submissions be able to come as those submissions be begin to come in, or some of the resources begin to come in for you all to maybe hub them in somewhere as a digital resource center; where agencies like ours or CBOs can go in and kind of grab those and adopt those in our areas?

Yeah, thank you again for the question. Mr. Bailey and we have developed this goes way back to like during Covid in response to the Governor's Broadband Executive Order. And then it was kind of specific action item called out in the Broadband for All Action Plan. The Department of Technology has developed a Broadband for All portal, which is really the kind of central repository of information here, and we fully do expect and envision that the 3 buckets of centralized services, be it the you know; developed, procured, or curated. Will be posted online and made accessible to all ecosystem partners, not just subgrantees, but other folks as well. And if we could, if someone from the team could drop that link in the chat that would be appreciated. Thanks for the question.

Yeah, thank you so much. we still have a couple of questions. But I think we're gonna answer them. Scott, as we move on to sort of the next steps portion of the of the program, and so I will keep monitoring, and if we need to circle back and follow up with them, we can. So, but thank you.

Great. So, Amanda, can you advance to the next slide, please? Thank you. Just real quick, wanted to give folks a timeline on the next steps. We've tried to modify our tentative timeline here so that it's a little more easier to consume. You can see in the first row which is row one. We're past that phase and program designed. We're still in that phase, we're analyzing public comment. We'll come back to you next month. And let you know how public comment has led to any modifications of program design or the grant guidelines themselves and the administrative issues, or the timelines, etc. In terms of the application and award

process. As I mentioned, we received our formal grant award on November 4th. The period of performance official date begins on December first. And I think I'll ask you to look at the 4th row first. The challenge with this program is from December first on we will have 9 (nine) months to award all subgrants to do all procurements and enter into all contracts within 9 (nine) months of December first. So, we're really gonna be having to hustle on that and get things right. There are some administrative processes that we have to go to like. We've received the award. But there's some internal administrative work we need to do to be able to expend that money that's something we're going through and have been for the last couple of weeks. So, that's the one piece. And then, in terms of the subgrant application and award process given the administrative steps that need to be done, we're looking at you know, the beginning of 2025, when we will release the request for applications. And so that's sometime after the first of the year. In early 2025, there will be a 60-day request for application period. You know, both prior to that and during is when James and his team will implement the technical assistance program that he spoke about. We envision that there will be a 90-day application review process that could also probably include some carrying and back and forth with applicants, etc., and then, an award period of about 30 days you know, to finalize those award details. So that is where we're at, and we endeavor to have more specificity next time we come back to you in December. Maria, do we have? Oh

Next steps. Yeah.

Obviously, thank you for this. Did want to say again. I've mentioned it a couple of times. We will have a December stakeholder briefing. We're zeroing in on a date. We'll let you know as soon as possible when that's gonna be because we know that it's the holiday season, and people are going to be taking time off. The we're gonna continue to work through the centralized services and the State agency digital inclusion efforts to really, you know, determine what's feasible. We'll report back out in December on the centralized services piece. We are like many of you tracking what? You know, we're actually when the NTIA awards the competitive grants. We're as eager as you are to see how that might inform us, moving forward and then obviously wanted to place a reminder there that the NTIA and the Federal Government's been really great. There's the separate Digital Equity; Native Entity Capacity Grant that's out there, and want to make sure that any tribal entities or native entities or groups on this call that are working with native entities, that either reach out directly to the NTIA or reach out to our office, and we'll definitely, you know, provide as much information and support as possible about that program. Okay.

Thank you for that, and as we prepare sort of our last round of questions, we wanted to share the poll with you, I know I was speaking to it, but we want to share the results with you, so you can see that ecosystem is pretty well balanced out. Can. So, can they see that? I'm sorry, I'm not seeing it. Okay, there we go, alright. Thank you, Luke. So, as Scott mentioned, we will be back very soon with more information so there's gonna be more opportunities to ask questions. If there's anything that that we didn't get to today that you would like to drop again, either into chat or raise your hand, or into the questions we have a few minutes. We'd love to take time to do that. Scott, if you could please remind us what the 8 areas? what the covered populations are? Is that? I'm sorry, Anthony, is that what you're asking? Is it the covered population? Or is it the list of okay. Or covered population?

Well, yeah. So, the covered populations are covered households. Aging individuals, individuals with disabilities, veterans, incarcerated individuals. Members of racial and ethnic minority groups. Individuals with language barriers, including low levels of literacy and individuals who reside primarily in rural areas. I think that is all 8 of the covered populations.

Thank you, because I don't think I would have been, even though we talk about it all the time. I'm not sure I would have remembered to roll those off the top of my head. The question, Anthony. Yes, we once the team goes through and we pull the web recording and remediate the slides. It does. We do put it on that Broadband for All portal, and so all our past meetings are there. As well as this one will be there as well. A clarifying question on the start date just to be clear, the start date is 12/1/24, but the RFA doesn't come out and the awards aren't made until Q2. So, maybe we need to look at that timeline slide one more time. If that's helpful.

Well.

No, okay.

No, no, no, it's not that. I think that is clear, that the RFA will not come out until early 2025, and that the awards won't be made. I think you know, on or about Q2. It could potentially be later than Q2 of next year and you know the we'll make the timeline slide available. But we're still kind of working it through. All the administrative steps and other things that we have to fulfill in order to, you know. Get the RFA out and get the grants awarded. Maria, I think you're you accidentally muted.

I did.

Yeah.

I was thinking, Kari, for helping answer, that online and following up. Anthony, do you have? Is your hand raised to ask another question, or was that tied to the one you hear you are? Or was it tied to chat.

Yeah, I was gonna hold off and look for the slides. But in light of seeing a couple of other questions kind of in that same area. I saw, I see, another chat question about Digital Equity. Was there a slide that had the allowable services, the allowable scope for this? Like, I know that some of the infrastructure stuff is not included in it, but do we have a slide of what the included services could be?

Amanda, are you able to bring that slide up? So? The answer, so yeah, yes, Mr. Bailey, there is. Oh, and I see Amy Cortina just dropped it in the chat, too. Thank you, Amy.

Yeah, thank you, Amy. And when we get to the end slide, and maybe we can move to the end of it. And Scott will give us our we'll wrap up our final comments. We do have a contact email. So if, as additional questions. Come up, please. You're always free to reach out to the team at any time. So we do monitor those emails daily. And so, and yeah. Thank you in chat. Ricki asked If you make sure to sign up for our newsletter as well. So, thank you so much, and I think we can move on to the end of the to the wrap up, Scott.

Yeah, just again. Thank you very much to everyone in California. We are all aware of just how sophisticated and special our Digital Equity ecosystem is just populated with tremendously advanced. (you know) Organizations and entities and subject matter experts we continue to thank you for your support and partnership and developing the digital equity plan. And now you know, as we get close to honing in on the final shape of the State Capacity Grant program and the Subgrant program. We're just very humbled and grateful for your partnership or thank you. For you, taking the time out of your busy day. We hope we advance this conversation and understanding on your end. You've definitely, you know, helped ours, and we just wish you a great day and look forward to seeing you in December. Thank you.