



Research Area Specialist – Intermediate
Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan

Job Code:

Working Title: City of Detroit Digital Inclusion Policy Fellow

Hours/Week: 40 hours

NOTE: This is a 2-year term-limited appointment.

A cover letter and resume are required for consideration for this position. The cover letter should be included in the same document as your resume and should specifically address your interest in digital inclusion policy and highlight related skills and experience.

OVERVIEW

As part of a Partnership on Economic Mobility with the City of Detroit Mayor’s Office, Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan is seeking a Digital Inclusion Policy Fellow to support digital inclusion efforts in Detroit. The Fellow will be housed within the Department of Innovation and Technology with supervision from top City officials and direct mentorship from U-M faculty and staff. The Fellow will be responsible for convening partners, developing methods to track and evaluate city-efforts, and identifying and incorporating best practices for digital inclusion in Detroit. The City is currently in a dynamic time, with many challenges facing a multifaceted population and many more opportunities on the horizon. Barriers related to internet access have led to 38 percent of Detroiters not having broadband internet access at home, with that number jumping to 63 percent within low-income households. The goal of the position is to provide strategic research and policy support to city staff while offering in-depth skills and training working in city government. The Fellow will participate in professional conferences, national training and networking events.

Poverty Solutions is an interdisciplinary initiative at the University of Michigan (U-M) that seeks to foster research to identify and test strategies for the prevention and alleviation of poverty. The Partnership on Economic Mobility is an effort to boost economic mobility and break the cycle of poverty in Detroit. The partnership leverages U-M resources to enhance Detroit initiatives, provides research and analytical support, and tracks overall progress and impact. The partnership draws in the departments of technology and innovation, workforce, housing and revitalization and others in the city and a number of units at U-M including the Ford School of Public Policy, School of Information, Michigan Engineering, and more.

RESPONSIBILITIES

This position will be housed in the Department of Technology and Innovation with additional oversight support from U-M faculty and staff. The Digital Inclusion Policy Fellow will have responsibilities in a number of areas, including development of knowledge about Detroit's access to broadband internet, convening stakeholders to identify and align assets, identifying opportunities and best practices to improve digital equity and inclusion, using data to track, analyze and evaluate impacts over time, and dissemination (along with other possible duties). This person will:

- Act as a central home for information and understanding of Detroit's Inclusion ecosystem – including systems related to connectivity, tools and training – and develop an easy-reference “grid” of available digital inclusion resources.
- Connect with City agencies to identify opportunities to integrate internet connectivity components into projects (e.g., Housing and Revitalization Dept., Detroit Dept. of Transportation, Detroit Public School District)
- Research local and national regulatory & policy barriers that limit Detroiters access to broadband
- Research local opportunities to increase Internet connectivity
- Act as a convener of the multitude of partners involved in digital inclusion efforts in Detroit, and in concert with partners work to effectively/efficiently connect and grow the digital inclusion resources available to Detroiters.
- Leverage the resources and expertise available through the University of Michigan to identify best practices from NDIA network and other communities and work to ensure that those practices are understood and, where appropriate, implemented in Detroit.
- Develop methodology to track and evaluate Detroit digital inclusion efforts, and the impact of effort and best practice integration over time.
- Conduct analysis, prepare presentations, produce report, memos and briefs, and develop MS Excel models.
- Communicate and share openly their work on an ongoing basis (e.g., city blog posts, community presentations & feedback sessions)
- Work with Assistant Director of the Detroit Partnership on Economic Mobility to enhance communications and coordination across efforts.
- Other duties as assigned.

Required Qualifications:

- Master's degree in information technology, computer engineering, public policy, or other closely related field or equivalent related experience
- At least 2 years of work experience in a related field (information technology, policy engagement, data management)
- Demonstrable interest in digital inclusion policy
- Significant knowledge of IT and digital inclusion policy and concepts

- Strong data analysis skills with MS Excel and other statistical analysis software
- Thorough understanding of program evaluation concepts and practices
- Experience working in team-based setting and with diverse groups
- Personal commitment to high quality work
- Excellent communication skills, both oral and written
- Ability to think critically and creatively
- Detail oriented and entrepreneurial
- Ability to multi-task and prioritize efforts across multiple simultaneous projects
- Ability to work both as part of a team and individually while meeting deadlines

Desired Qualifications:

- Experience working on city government initiatives
- Experience working with city, state and federal-level datasets
- Demonstrated interest in economic mobility and poverty prevention and alleviation.