



Request for Proposal (RFP)

National Digital Inclusion Alliance: National Digital Navigator Corps

April 2022

Summary

The National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) in partnership with Google.org has launched the National Digital Navigator Corps to build and advance local digital inclusion work and strengthen the digital equity model in rural and Tribal communities. NDIA is partnering with AMERIND Critical Infrastructure to provide additional support to digital navigator programs in Indian Country. NDIA has worked alongside more than 20 affiliate organizations and communities to develop the digital navigator model.

[Digital navigators](#) are trusted guides who assist community members in internet adoption and the use of computing devices. Digital navigators help demystify technology by providing one-on-one, ongoing assistance to connect residents to affordable internet, devices, technical skills, and application support.

NDIA will select 18 partner organizations in rural areas or that serve Tribal and Indigenous communities, with a minimum of six organizations that serve Tribal and Indigenous communities, to host a digital navigator program as part of the National Digital Navigator Corps. Selected grantees will be trusted community-based organizations or local agencies, which will include nonprofits, social service agencies, libraries, and Tribal governments. The National Digital Navigator Corps will require a two-and-a-half year service commitment from the individual serving as a digital navigator and a three-year commitment from the grantee organization. Over this time, the grantees will receive funding for one full-time, paid digital navigator salary plus fringe benefits and financial support for program management, capacity building, and data collection and analysis. The grant also includes funding for computing devices to be distributed to community members.

NDIA is requesting Letters of Intent (LOI) for organizations interested in submitting a full proposal to be a National Digital Navigator Corps grantee. The primary purpose of the Letter of Intent (LOI) is to demonstrate the need for the project in the proposed community and the capacity of the organization to serve a rural or Tribal community for the duration of the project. The program need must be well-documented in the LOI, and the LOI should include examples of how the interested organization works with the prioritized rural and/or Tribal communities.

NDIA will review all submitted LOIs and invite select prospective organizations to submit a full proposal to be a National Digital Navigator Corps grantee.

Timeline for LOI and Request for Proposals

April 29 - May 20, 2022	Letters of Intent (LOIs) accepted
May 23 - 27, 2022	LOIs Reviewed
May 31, 2022	Select LOI applicants invited to submit a full proposal
May 31 - June 30, 2022	Full proposals accepted from invited organizations
July 1 - July 28, 2022	Proposals reviewed
July 29, 2022	Grantees selected & notified
August 2022	Kick off meeting with grantees

Program Overview

The work of digital navigators is to implement digital inclusion activities to make digital equity part of a social safety net for those who cannot access social support systems and community institutions whose services are online. Digital navigators' work begins with local asset mapping to identify existing community-based digital inclusion resources, continues with developing processes customized to each site, and results in local communities with stronger digital inclusion ecosystems.

NDIA's training prepares a digital navigator for the following types of common technology-related services:

- Provide basic procedural training and support to clients
- Help clients fill out paperwork, submit required identification documentation (if they don't have access to a computer/scanner/printer), and support them in getting documentation if they don't have it
- Walk clients through setting up and operating a computer
- Walk clients through establishing and beginning to use an affordable internet connection
- Walk clients through learning "how-to" basics for priority computer applications
- Work with community members to set goals, track progress, keep records, and evaluate and report outcomes, using the program's protocols to assess individual needs
- Direct community members to all available, appropriate community and online resources

Grantee program management and data management staff will receive training and technical assistance from NDIA on establishing the digital navigator program. Digital navigators will receive training and support for the 31 month period of service for program delivery of digital navigator services in their identified rural and Tribal communities.

In addition, NDIA will provide the following to the National Digital Navigator Corps members:

- Training, support, and technical assistance on data collection methods, and data analysis strategies to communicate program efficacy and to encourage policy change. Analysis tools and instruction will emphasize visualizations to make data concepts understandable to those without specialized backgrounds
- Quarterly training sessions (hybrid of in-person and virtual)
- Guidance and support for attendance at regional meetings with other digital navigators in their region, NDIA staff members, and mentors from the Program Advisory Panel in 2022 and 2024. The regional meetings will provide an opportunity for members to network with each other, have in-person opportunities for peer-to-peer support, and guidance on resources and best approaches to doing the digital navigator's work in their local community as needs evolve.
- Access to additional training and networking opportunities within the digital inclusion field through attendance at NDIA's 3-day Net Inclusion Conference in addition to a 1.5 day pre-conference meeting in 2023, 2024, and 2025
- Travel to select digital inclusion practitioners and digital navigator sites to observe the digital inclusion field, the work being done at the community level, and emerging and innovative models
- Updates and informational sessions on the latest digital inclusion research, news and trends
- Participation in a digital-navigator-only forum to exchange ideas and best practices and troubleshoot challenges
- Informal opportunities to engage with their peers

Organizations serving Tribal communities will receive additional support from AMERIND Critical Infrastructure.

Success for the project will be measured and evaluated by:

1. How grantees meet their service goals stated in their project proposals
2. The extent to which community members meet their stated personal connectivity, device, and digital skills goals through their engagement with digital navigators

The goals will be measured with a variety of provided survey tools to collect qualitative and quantitative information.

Grant Award Information

The grant award range is from \$300,000 up to a maximum of \$389,000 for the 3-year term. Amounts are set for all line items except *Digital Navigator Salary and Fringe*, *Program Management Support*, *Data Manager Support*, and *Indirect Costs*.

- *Digital Navigator Salary and Fringe* will be set by the applicant within a range of \$44,000-\$60,000.
- *Program Management Support* and *Data Manager Support* will each be set by the applicant within a range of \$10,000-\$15,000 each, but they do not need to be the same amount.
- *Indirect Costs* should be set by the applicant between 0%-10% of the total budget and calculated accurately.

National Digital Navigator Corps Budget						
	Range Annually	Year One (six months)	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four (six months for DN)	Total
<i>NOTE: For DN salary & fringe, select an amount between \$44,000-\$60,000. Year One & Four should only be half the amount for a half year of employment.</i>						
DN Salary & Fringe	\$44,000- \$60,000	\$22,000- \$30,000	\$44,000- \$60,000	\$44,000- \$60,000	\$22,000- \$30,000	\$132,000 - \$180,000
<i>NOTE: For Program Management Support and Data Manager support respectively, select an amount between \$10,000-\$15,000 for partial salary. Year one should only be half the amount for a half year of the program.</i>						
Program Management Support	\$10,000- \$15,000	\$5,000 - \$7,500	\$10,000- \$15,000	\$10,000- \$15,000	\$10,000- \$15,000	\$32,000 - \$52,500
Data Manager Support	\$10,000- \$15,000	\$5,000 - \$7,750	\$10,000- \$15,000	\$10,000- \$15,000	\$10,000- \$15,000	\$32,000 - \$52,500
Net Inclusion + Pre Conference Travel for DN			\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$6,000
DN Regional Meetings for DN, Program Manager, & Data Manager			\$1,200	\$1,200		\$2,400
Computer for DN		\$1,000				\$1,000
Computer/Tablet for Community Members			\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$60,000
Subtotal	Calculated from above					
Indirect Costs	Calculated as up to 10% of subtotals					
Total						\$300,000- \$389,000

Eligibility Information

This funding opportunity to host a digital navigator program is open to community-based organizations and local agencies in rural areas and/or that serve Tribal and Indigenous communities.

- **Rural Community**

We are using [the definition](#) from the U.S. Census Bureau to identify a rural community as “any population, housing, or territory NOT in an urban area.” Its definition of rural is closely tied to its urban definition. There are two types of urban areas: “Urbanized Areas” – population of 50,000 or more – “Urban Clusters” – population of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 – and “Nonmetro” does not mean rural.

- **Tribal and Indigenous Community**

Under 47 C.F.R. § 54.400(e), Tribal lands include any federally recognized Indian tribe’s reservation, pueblo or colony, including former reservations in Oklahoma; Alaska Native regions established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlements Act (85 Stat. 688); Indian Allotments; Hawaiian Home Lands—areas held in trust for Native Hawaiians by the state of Hawaii, pursuant to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, Act July 9, 1921, 42 Stat. 108, *et seq.*, as amended; and any land designated as such by the Commission for purposes of this subpart pursuant to the designation process in § 54.412. Please note this definition includes both rural and urban areas.

In addition to this definition, we use a more expansive definition also to include off-reservation Tribal trust lands. This expanded definition has been supported by, for example, the National Congress of American Indians in resolutions and in pleadings to the FCC. We would be happy to discuss Hawaii-specific issues. We would envision, for example, that a digital navigator in Hawaii would work with Native Hawaiians both on and off the Home Lands.

Organizations that primarily serve Native people will also be considered for this opportunity.

Contact for more information

If you have any questions about the LOI, proposal process, or funding opportunity, please reach out to DigNavSupport@digitalinclusion.org

More information about Digital Navigators:

[National Digital Navigator Corps](#)

[Digital Navigator Model](#)

[Digital Navigators Toolkit](#)

About [National Digital Inclusion Alliance \(NDIA\)](#)

NDIA advances digital equity by supporting community programs and equipping policymakers to act. Working collaboratively with more than 700 digital inclusion practitioners, NDIA advocates for broadband access, tech devices, digital skills training, and tech support.

About [Google.org](#)

Google.org, Google's philanthropy, supports nonprofits that address humanitarian issues and apply scalable, data-driven innovation to solving the world's biggest challenges. We accelerate their progress by connecting them with a unique blend of support that includes funding, products, and technical expertise from Google volunteers. We engage with these believers-turned-doers who make a significant impact on the communities they represent, and whose work has the potential to produce meaningful change. We want a world that works for everyone—and we believe technology and innovation can move the needle.

About [AMERIND Critical Infrastructure \(ACI\)](#)

Located on the Pueblo of Santa Ana in New Mexico – a federal enclave – AMERIND Critical Infrastructure (ACI) assists Tribes in planning, building, and financing modern community broadband networks designed to bring 21st century connectivity to their peoples. ACI is a division of AMERIND, a federally chartered and Tribal government-owned risk management company.