

Seven Star Communities are Tribal governments, Native entities and organizations working toward digitally inclusive communities. With support and expertise from NDIA, AMERIND Critical Infrastructure and our Indigenous Digital Inclusion Working Group, we celebrate Seven Star Communities for their achievement and excellence in digitally inclusive work, and aim to create a peer knowledge-sharing resource for documents, resources, and best practices produced by and for Tribes that enhance digital inclusion for their communities.

What is the significance of the name, Seven Star?

Stars mean different things to Tribes, but most Tribal entities share a deep cultural understanding of stars and constellations through their stories or as directional guides. “Seven” was chosen as a reference to learning from seven generations who came before, and guiding our work to impact seven generations after us. The name includes art that is meant to transcend any individual Indigenous community.

Seven Star Communities aims to encourage Native nations to invest resources in digital equity and ensure that future generations benefit from current federal programs where broadband infrastructure is being deployed on Tribal lands. Funding is key to sustainable connectivity solutions for all Tribal entities.

Core Values of the Seven Star Communities Program

With the insight of our mentor group we have developed guiding principles to help define the purpose and value of the Seven Star Communities program:

The Seven Star Communities program aims to:

- Serve as a peer Knowledge-Sharing Resource for documents, resources, and best practices produced by and for Tribes that enhance digital inclusion for their communities.
- Set a Standard for Excellent Digital Inclusion Work in Tribal and Indigenous communities. This program is the benchmark for outstanding digital inclusion work representing and serving Tribal communities.
- Establish an Honor Roll and bestows prestige on Tribal governments and/or entities serving Tribal communities that have achieved Seven Star status.
- Promote Digital Inclusion Work by Tribal governments and entities, and provides an opportunity for Tribes to tell their story about their digital inclusion efforts.
- Uphold the Tribal Community’s Sovereignty for effective, sustainable community development, therefore acknowledging ownership and governance of projects rooted in the community’s values.
- Reflect the Community’s Cultural Values through relevant digital equity work that develops effective and sustainable community development.

What are the qualifications and requirements for applying for the Seven Star program?

The Seven Star Communities program accepts applications from:

- A Tribal Government; Federally recognized and state recognized Tribes will be eligible. A letter of support from the Tribe must be included in the application. If awarded, the

- award will recognize the Tribe.
- A political subdivision of a Tribal/Indigenous government, such as a district, community, pueblo, city/town, village, chapter house, etc.
 - A Tribal organization or entity; service areas are focused on specific Tribe or region.
 - Tribal nonprofit organization.
 - For profit organization owned/managed by the Tribe.
 - A letter of support from the community.
 - Place-based organization not located on Tribal lands (e.g. urban Indian organizations).
 - Entities that serve communities in Tribes from the lower 48 states, Alaska Native Tribes and Corporations, and Native Hawaiian communities.

Categories

We have identified seven categories that exemplify how Native nations and Indigenous entities are exercising self-governance and building digital inclusion ecosystems to impact future generations.

- Community Champion
- Planning Process
- Tribal Government Support
- Tribal Resources Available to Support the Work
- Place-based Programs
- Being a Steward of a Digital Equity Ecosystem
- Our Stories

Contact

For questions relating to Seven Star Communities, please reach out to:
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