



Federal Reserve
Bank of Dallas

Advancing Digital Inclusion
Digital Inclusion Research Forum
October 13, 2023

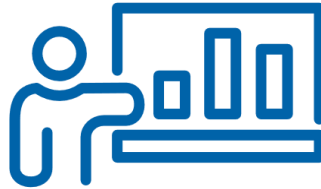


The views expressed are my own and do not necessarily reflect official positions of the Federal Reserve System.

What We'll Cover



What is the Advancing Digital Inclusion initiative?

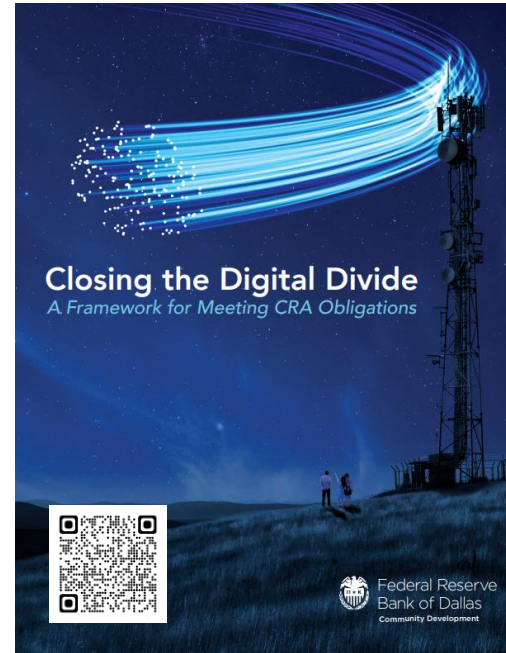
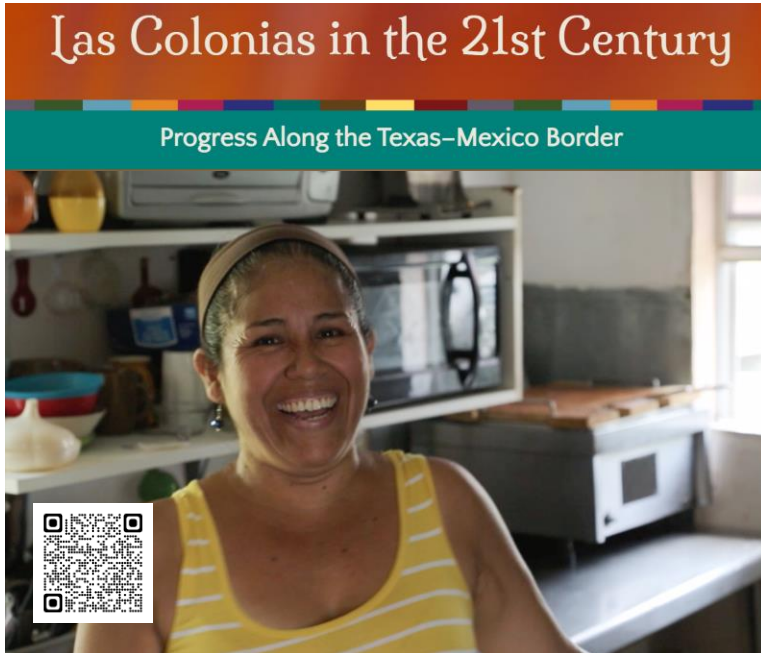


What did the Dallas Fed learn through this initiative?



Where can researchers plug in to assist communities?

The Dallas Fed's Start with Digital Inclusion





About – Advancing Digital Inclusion Initiative



Goals

1. Each community achieves a sustainable strategy for connecting all residents to the internet.
2. Share lessons learned with policymakers & other communities to help advance digital inclusion across the region and nation.

Key Barriers

1. Dearth of leadership capacity/ collaboration
2. Infrastructure/resources
3. Technical know-how

Direct Support to Communities in Pilot Cohort

Each community receives the following assistance:

- **Broadband Action Plan** that include stakeholder engagement, market assessment, business model analysis, network design, financial model, consensus building
- Preparation for securing **competitive public grants** (ARPA, etc.) to fund the plan
- Identifying appropriate **governance structure**;
- Professional **leadership development** for local champions
- Cross-site peer **learning network** to tackle shared challenges and spread promising practices, seed collaboration across communities

Community Overview

South Dallas



El Paso



Ector



Dona Ana



What's on a Community's Mind, A Timeline

Starting Point

Community partners decided to work together and form a coalition.
Starting entities: economic development orgs., school district, nonprofit, county

Help they needed



Convince people this is an issue
and build buy in

i Quick facts about the Digital Divide, it's effect on the community, and the potential cost of not addressing it



Identify assets (horizontal and
vertical) and prioritize areas

i Help with collecting and centralizing data (GIS)



Collect community
information

i Create and assist with a community driven needs assessment

What's on a Community's Mind, A Timeline

Focus Point

Communities needed to decide early on, who's focusing on what and how they will staff, fund, and evaluate their progress.



The speed of their work depended on:

- No. of dedicated staff
- No. of dedicated volunteers
- Technical expert available
- Startup dollars

Help they needed



Deciding focus areas

-  **Examples of successful programs and how to implement them**
-  **Research available for specific populations**



Submitting grants

-  **Identifying grant opportunities**
-  **Grant specific data**
-  **Grant writers / reviewers**

What's on a Community's Mind, A Timeline

Growth Point

If a community can successfully coalesce their partners and are seeing progress, evaluating and expanding their work is their next move.

Help they needed




Evaluating and measuring progress

-  Identify metrics they should keep track of
-  Help create a platform that they can utilize



Being exposed to new ideas in the field

-  Share tools and new research
-  Invite them to digital inclusion events for exposure

Community Highlights

New Mexico Department of Information Technology coordinated with Doña Ana Broadband to produce a Community Broadband Survey report where **3,000+ individuals participated, including 1,475 residents who did not have internet.**



Ector ISD's County Home Connectivity Survey found that **1 out of 5 ECISD students rarely or never has reliable internet access** at home. These students are located all over the county - not only in specific, remote pockets.

Dallas' Affordable Connectivity Program dashboard digital divide **quick facts and provides two maps that bring spatial context** for both the digital divide and ACP enrollment numbers within the City of Dallas.



Community Highlights

The range of Borderplex Connect's (El Paso) community partners positioned them to submit a **holistic infrastructure grant** (included information about opportunity youth, loss from missed health appointments, etc.)

The CARDBoard Project in South Dallas collects data from its program participants that provides context about who they are serving to **(1) guide their work and (2) to use in grant writing and storytelling.**

Mamacitas Ciberneticas completed a digital skills community needs assessment that is **shaping local and state decision making.**



Community Highlights

Harris County **successfully challenged the FCC maps** based off quality of life and ACS data to identify regions that would be challenged.

Borderplex Connect (Dona Ana) is coordinating with the New Mexico Department of Information Technology to **centralize data around colonias** and challenge the FCC maps.

UTEP's Hunt Institute assessed El Paso County to determine the **potential regional impacts of broadband service.**



Areas Where Researchers Can Support Communities

- Map challenging
- Technical support
- Data Support for grants and story telling
- Advocates
- Evaluations

Reminder

- Include actionable steps to go along with research findings
- Make information easy to access and quick to use



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