

Western New York Digital Equity Coalition Steering Committee

2024-09-11

Attendance

Present

- Steve Heist; VP, Information Technology & CIO; OneBridge Benefits
- Don Matteson; Chief Program Officer; Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation
- Sam Mattle; Executive Director; Center for Self Advocacy
- Jeff Sanderson; Vice President – Strategic Initiatives; People Inc.
- Bob Spino; Director of Technology; Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES

Absent

- Christine Carr-Barmasse; Executive Director; Mission:Ignite

Financial Update

- The coalition has spent \$78,129.12 out of the total grant, with a remaining balance of about \$117,700.
- \$70,000 of the remaining balance is earmarked for re-granting.
- The statewide convening cost approximately \$3,800, which was under the initial budget estimate of \$5,000-\$7,000.
- The operational services budget line is over due to the grant duration extending beyond the initial one-year grant period.

Marconi Society Digital Inclusion Training

- The committee reviewed the Marconi Society's digital inclusion training materials, consisting of 48 videos.
- Members found the videos to be of varying quality, with some good information but lacking engagement and interactivity.
- The committee decided against offering the training to the broader coalition membership due to concerns about value and cost-effectiveness.
- A counter-proposal was suggested to negotiate bulk access for the entire coalition (approximately individual 70 members) at a rate of \$5,000-\$7,000, instead of the initial offer of \$500 per seat. Don will reach out to the Marconi Society with this counteroffer.

Project Updates

Strategic CaseMaking

- Jeff Sanderson previously volunteered to re-engage with the strategic case making piece.
- Steve Heist offered additional assistance for this project.

- Don will reach out to the roster of Coalition members who attended the Strategic CaseMaking training to see if any of them are interested in helping with this project.

Digital Equity Stories

- Several Coalition members have volunteered to work on collecting digital equity stories:
 - Sam Mattle (Center for Self Advocacy)
 - Rolanda Ward (Niagara University) and Trent Hamilton (Entrepreneur School of Thought)
 - Katie Earl (Erie County Department of Senior Services)
- Next steps include developing focused questions or prompts to elicit stories.
- Logistical considerations need to be addressed, such as audio vs. video format and storage methods.

Digital Inclusion Week (October 7-13, 2024)

- The Peace Bridge will be lit teal on October 7th and 11th to recognize Digital Inclusion Week.
- The committee discussed planning more activities for future Digital Inclusion Weeks, potentially starting preparations over the summer.
- Suggestions included promoting member services and raising awareness about digital inclusion issues.

NYS Digital Equity Technical Assistance Grant Application Update

- The coalition received a request from Connect All for minor revisions to the milestones section of their application.
- The revisions involved adjusting completion dates to the end of 2025.
- This development suggests that the application is still under consideration.

Sample RBA (Results-Based Accountability) Action Plan

- Don presented a sample RBA action plan focused on increasing broadband Internet subscriptions in Western New York.
- The plan included:
 - Data analysis of current broadband subscription rates
 - Factors contributing to and hindering broadband adoption
 - Potential partners in digital inclusion work
 - Effective strategies for increasing broadband adoption
 - Action items and high-priority initiatives