

# Digital Equity

Digital Equity is a condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for **full participation** in our society, democracy and economy. Digital Equity is **necessary for** *civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.*

# Digital Inclusion

- **Access to affordable** high speed internet
- Device that meets the needs of the user
- The digital skills to use the internet and device (digital literacy)

# Institute for Emerging Issues

- Mission: Make North Carolina a more **Vibrant** and **Economically Competitive** state for all
- Annual Forums since 1986; Year round work since 2002
- Regional listening sessions
- Community meetings
- “The best solutions for community problems come from communities themselves.”



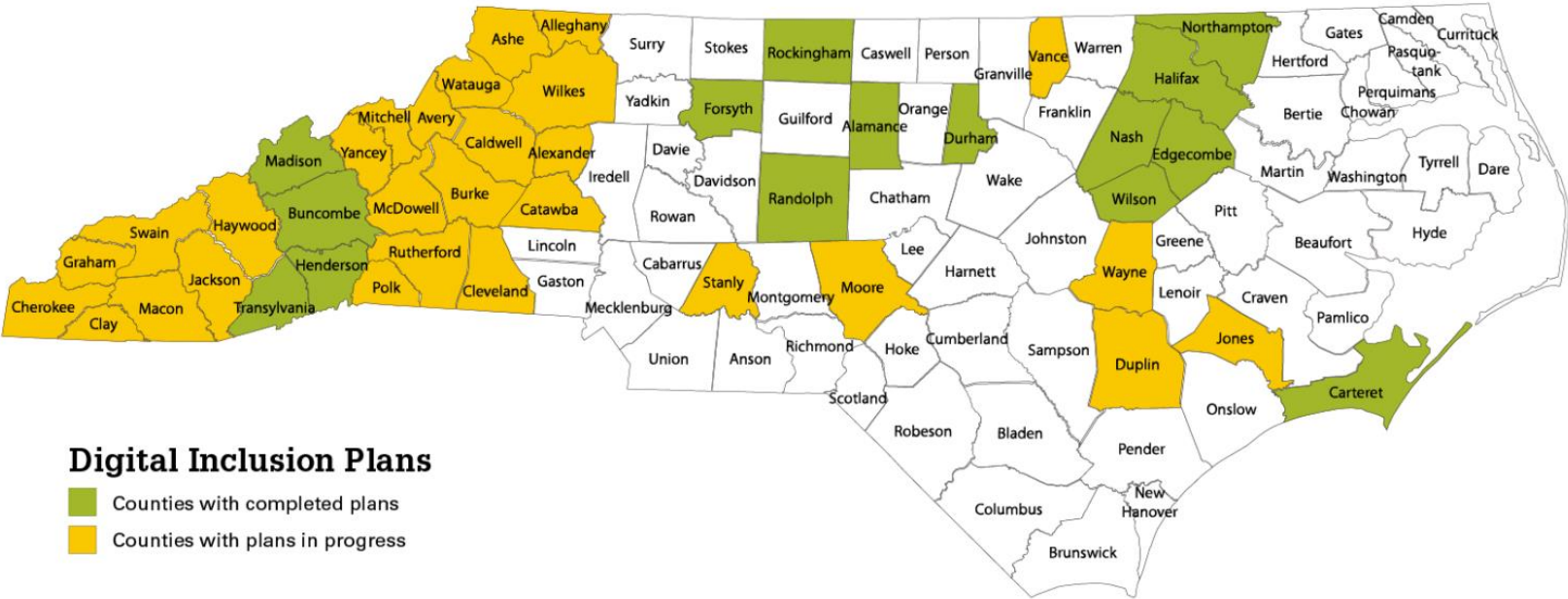
# What is BAND-NC?



Goal: Equip counties to meet needs and build more digitally equitable communities. Make North Carolina the first state in the nation where every county has a digital inclusion plan.

Digital Inclusion plan is a community strategic plan that address the components of digital inclusion and outlines strategies to close the digital divide.

# Digital Inclusion plans



**Digital Inclusion Plans**  
■ Counties with completed plans  
■ Counties with plans in progress

# KEY SUCCESS METRICS

N.C. Today

N.C. 2025



Households with broadband internet access

“95.5%”

98%



Households with broadband internet subscriptions

73%

80%



Households with children with broadband internet subscriptions

81%

100%



Adoption rates across racial subgroups

- Native American
- Black
- Hispanic/Latinx
- White

57%

80%

64%

80%

68%

80%

76%

80%

# GOV. COOPER'S INVESTMENT PLAN



## INFRASTRUCTURE

\$971M

Ensure availability of internet service at speeds of at least 100/20 Mbps for more than 98% of North Carolina households.

\$380M

- GREAT Grant (\$350M American Rescue Plan Act; \$30 State CIF)

\$400M

- Completing Access to Broadband (CAB)

\$90M

- Stop Gap Solutions

\$100M

- Broadband Make Ready Accelerator (Pole Replacement Fund)

\$1M

- Broadband Mapping



## AWARENESS AND DIGITAL LITERACY

\$50M

Improve awareness and enable North Carolinians to realize the benefits of high-speed internet through digital literacy and upskilling aimed at accessing the digital economy.



## ADMINISTRATIVE

\$15M

Supplement existing state administrative capacity to support high-speed internet efforts.

# INTERNET FOR ALL PROGRAMS

| Program   | Funding         |
|---|-----------------|
| <b>FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides \$30 per month subsidy for qualifying households; Up to \$75 subsidy for households on Tribal lands</li><li>• One-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet or desktop computer (with a co-payment of more than \$10 but less than \$50)</li><li>• 20 internet providers now offering \$30 high-speed internet monthly plan; details at <a href="https://getinternet.gov">getinternet.gov</a></li></ul> | \$14.2 billion  |
| <b>Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High-cost areas (\$4.245B), Formula grants (\$37.356B)</li><li>• Initial minimum allocation of \$100M per state or territory</li><li>• Must include affordability component; prohibits exclusion of municipal networks</li><li>• NC signed on May 16; Initial planning funds application due Aug. 15</li></ul>   | \$42.45 billion |
| <b>Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Application opens June 21</li><li>• Application closes Sept. 30</li></ul>  | \$1 billion     |
| <b>Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program</b>  | \$2 billion     |
| <b>State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planning application or letter of intent due July 12</li></ul>   | \$60 million    |
| <b>State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program</b>  | \$1.44 billion  |
| <b>Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program</b>   | \$1.25 billion  |



# STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM

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- Supports the creation of community-centric solutions and provides resources to community organizations to help scale digital literacy programs
- Projects will be used to share best practices and show successful models of state-community partnerships
- Projects should aim to help the following groups:
  - Low-income households
  - Aging populations
  - Incarcerated individuals
  - Veterans
  - People with disabilities
  - People with language barriers
  - Racial and ethnic minorities
  - Rural inhabitants