



NDIA Announces \$10 Million Grant from Google.org to Remove Digital Divide Roadblocks for Rural & Tribal Communities

by Yvette Scorse | Feb 15, 2022 | Digital Inclusion News

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National Digital Navigator Corps!

Coming to Rural
& Tribal Lands
in 2022

With support from Google.org
In partnership with AMERIND

Funding to Create National Digital Navigator Corps Across 18 Sites to Reach Thousands

Today National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) announced a multi-year, \$10M grant from Google.org to create a National Digital Navigator Corps. The Corps will span 18 rural and tribal communities across the United States and impact thousands of people through one-on-one technology training and community outreach to connect people to the internet, appropriate devices, and training.

The grant from Google.org represents the single largest grant to NDIA to date and will support the hiring of the community-based digital navigators alongside programmatic and technical support to grow and scale NDIA's digital navigator model.

"When access to the internet, a computer, and tech support keeps a community member from education, work, healthcare, and all the necessities of life, it is heartbreaking. We must address any and all barriers to digital equity. This is what digital navigators do – weave digital support into our social safety net," said Angela Siefer, executive director of NDIA. "We're thrilled to have the support of Google.org to build a digital navigator model in rural and Tribal lands, both supporting those communities and further defining navigator programs for the benefit of the whole country."

"Where you live shouldn't be a barrier to connecting to the world. Internet connections and digital skills training can provide enormous opportunities," said Kent Walker, President for

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communities, providing tailored, one-to-one support.”

NDIA will launch a public process in spring 2022 to identify 18 established community organizations – such as social service agencies, libraries, and health clinics – and fund the creation of digital navigator programs. The navigator will connect individuals with the technological resources that will be most helpful to their communities; from broadband deployment, home internet connectivity, devices, and digital skills training.

To learn how your organization can be a National Digital Navigator Corps site, visit digitalinclusion.org/navigator.

In addition to establishing the National Digital Navigator Corps, the grant funding and program will:

- Further formalize NDIA’s digital navigator model, which has been developed and defined by NDIA and [practitioners](#) across the country at more than 20 digital navigator programs
- Establish a data collection system with sites to measure people served, their confidence online, and digital skill growth over time
- Support digital navigator programs at Tribal sites in partnership with AMERIND, which provides solutions for Tribal broadband deployment
- Create publicly available digital navigator assets like trainings, templates, and outreach tools which will allow fellow digital inclusion organizations to expand and scale their community impact.

“AMERIND Critical Infrastructure is honored to partner with NDIA and to receive support from Google.org in this effort,” said Geoffrey Blackwell, chief strategy officer and general counsel of AMERIND. “This program will bring a grassroots focus to our nation’s Indigenous peoples, so that they can fully utilize all of the benefits of high-speed internet. The National Digital Navigator Corps will embed digital inclusion advocates across Indian Country. This important strategy will address the breadth of inclusion needs where they occur – at home in Native communities – and will help our Tribal Nations take their rightful place in the world through the internet.”

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About National Digital Inclusion Alliance: NDIA advances digital equity by supporting community programs and equipping policymakers to act. Working collaboratively with more than 600 digital inclusion practitioners, NDIA advocates for broadband access, tech devices, digital skills training, and tech support.

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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: 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.

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