



July 2023

MHM Digital Equity RFP| Digital Connector One-Pager

Overview

[Methodist Healthcare Ministries \(MHM\)](#) is a South Texas non-profit leader dedicated to creating access to health care for uninsured and low-income families and is working to advance digital equity in the region. MHM's digital equity strategy focuses on supporting grantees in training and deploying Digital Connectors. This one-pager provides resources for RFP respondents on how Digital Connectors may be incorporated into their project proposals for each funding opportunity.

The goal of centering Digital Connectors is to have dedicated staff who can deliver digital equity programming, interface directly with community members, and in some cases provide individualized support.

Definitions

Digital Connectors: Digital Connectors are trusted community technology ambassadors who apply a lens of health and wellbeing to bringing needed digital services to communities. Digital Connectors may be part-time or full-time employees. Existing organization members may be trained to conduct Digital Connector services, or new hires may be brought on and trained to conduct Digital Connector services. Digital Connectors are a type of Digital Navigator.

Digital Navigators: The [Digital Navigator model](#) of community tech support consists of trusted guides who assist individual community members in internet adoption and the use of computing devices, often available in a familiar setting like a library or school. Digital Navigators are volunteers or staff who work directly with community members and are familiar with resources that address digital equity.

Digital Connectors can act as Digital Navigators, and Digital Navigators can be trained to provide Digital Connector services.

Examples of Digital Connector Services

Below are examples of how Digital Connector services can align with the goals of the [2024 Digital Equity Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#):

- **Accessing Devices.** A Digital Connector may conduct outreach and awareness to increase use of computer centers. A Digital Connector may also facilitate device distribution events within a local community.
- **Developing Digital Skills.** A Digital Connector may act as a Digital Navigator and provide individualized or small group training on digital skills. They may also host focus groups to understand the digital skills gaps within their community.
- **Adopting Public Benefits.** A Digital Connector may create public benefit adoption materials tailored to barriers faced by local residents. They may also promote public benefit adoption through local outreach efforts including events, home visits, and partnerships with community institutions.
- **Train the Trainers.** RFP respondents may submit proposals to “provide ongoing digital skills and digital navigation train-the-trainer sessions to local digital equity service delivery organizations.”¹ MHM is seeking a partner who will

¹ [MHM Digital Equity RFP](#), Digital Skills Funding Opportunity, Develop Capacity for Digital Navigation and Digital Skills Programming

collaborate on a Digital Connectors orientation training and ongoing support for all of MHM partners' Digital Connectors program participants.

Digital Connector Orientation

RFP respondents that are selected for award will be offered a virtual orientation on how to best incorporate Digital Connectors into their proposed project. This orientation will be facilitated by MHM and its partners.

Additional Resources

- 1. Digital Navigator Resource Hub** – Framework provided by Digital US
This resource hub provides a playbook, training guide, community resources, accessibility resources, communication resources, online safety resources, and a digital skills library for Digital Navigators to follow.
Link: <https://digitalus.org/digital-navigator-resources/>
- 2. Digital Navigator Toolkit** – Framework provided by National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)
This toolkit introduces the digital navigator model through a successful case study in a public library in Salt Lake City, Utah. The toolkit includes insights for hiring Digital Navigators, Training, Data Analysis, Impact from Digital Navigator Services, and Lessons Learned.
Link: <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Digital-Navigators-Toolkit-Final.pdf>
- 3. Digital Navigator Model Infographic** – Framework provided by NDIA
An infographic explaining the Digital Navigator Model.
Link: https://www.digitalinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2021/04/DN-Infographic.pdf
- 4. Digital Navigators Model - How to Start in Your Community** – Framework provided by NDIA
A panel of community experts sharing tips on how to start a digital navigator model.
Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lx_608XYu4A
- 5. Tips for Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) Enrollment** – Framework provided by NDIA
This one-pager provides tips such as qualification and income requirements for the ACP.
Link: <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/ACP-Tips-for-DNs-NDIA.pdf>
- 6. Digital Navigators Local Resource Guide** – Framework by Rural LISC and NDIA
A step-by-step guide for a successful Digital Navigator Model including, intake forms, objectives, alternatives, data and mapping, digital skill development tools.
Link: <https://nc-100.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/NC-100-Digital-Navigator-Local-Resource-Guide-2.pdf>