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Collaborative Framework for Advancing Digital Equity

Katrina Tuggle
She/Her
Digital Equity Program Manager
Washington State Office of Equity

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Building an Ecosystem for Digital Equity

- **Digital Equity Forum**: Leveraging Expertise and Action to Achieve its Mandate
- **Hiring Time-Limited Project Positions for Digital Equity**
- **State Digital Equity Council**: Guiding Statewide Coordination and Impact

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Digital Equity Forum: Key Accomplishments

- **1:1 Member Meetings:** Built connections and gained insights.
- **Facilitator & Co-Chairs:** Leadership in place to guide the DEF.
- **Charter Approved:** Framework for operations.
- **Yearly Calendar:** Planned activities and milestones.
- **Member Application:** Expanded to ensure membership reflected prioritized groups.
- **Increased Representation:** Prioritized groups added.
- **Workgroups Established:**
  - Co-chairs
  - SMART goals
  - Workgroup leader meetings
  - Regular reporting at group meetings

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Office of Equity Hiring
Time-Limited - DE Project Positions

DE Tribal Liaison

Role: Serves as the essential link between tribal communities and state digital equity efforts, while also leading the facilitation of the Digital Equity Forum (DEF).

Why We Hired: This role leads the DEF, bringing stakeholders together to address digital gaps, while ensuring tribal voices and needs are integrated into state digital equity efforts.

Impact: By incorporating tribal perspectives and leading the DEF, this position ensures tribal voices are central to digital equity strategies, respecting sovereignty and driving collective action.

DE Communications Consultant:

Role: Focuses on outreach, relationship-building, and amplifying the voices of those most affected by digital inequity.

Hired: To communicate the importance of digital equity, build trust with communities through trusted messengers, and highlight successes and needs across the state. This role ensures underserved communities' voices are heard and uplifted.

Impact: Enhances our connection with diverse communities, helps us understand their challenges and successes, and ensures our programs are shaped by those they serve.

Impact and Accountability Analyst Specialist:

Role: Focuses on assessing the effectiveness and transparency of digital equity initiatives and AI programs.

Why We Hired: To ensure that our digital equity programs deliver real, measurable impact while maintaining transparency and fairness.

Impact: Provides critical oversight, ensuring our digital equity efforts and AI implementations are accountable and beneficial to all communities.

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State Digital Council (SDEC) Overview

Creation of SDEC:

Coordination and collaboration between Commerce, WaTech, and Equity

Value Added by SDEC:

Coordinating Efforts:

- Aligns and integrates digital equity initiatives across state agencies.
- Reduces redundancy and ensures a unified approach.

Policy & Strategy Development:

- Shapes state-level policies and strategies for digital equity.
- Ensures all residents have access to essential digital tools and resources.

Resource Allocation:

- Pools resources and funding to address digital equity gaps.
- Maximizes the impact of available resources across agencies.

Collaboration & Partnership Building:

- Fosters collaboration between state agencies, community organizations, and stakeholders.
- Drives innovation and enhances the reach of digital equity initiatives.

Monitoring & Accountability:

- Establishes benchmarks and metrics to track progress.
- Holds agencies accountable for their contributions to statewide goals.

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State Digital Equity Council vs. Digital Equity Forum

State Digital Equity Council (SDEC)
Focus: Primarily operates at the state agency level, focusing on coordinating, guiding, and implementing digital equity strategies across various state departments and agencies.

Key Functions:
Policy and Strategy Development: The SDEC is involved in shaping statewide digital equity policies and strategies.
Resource Allocation: It helps manage and direct resources and funding to ensure they are used effectively to close digital equity gaps.
Statewide Coordination: The SDEC aligns and integrates efforts across state agencies to ensure a cohesive approach to digital equity.
Monitoring and Accountability: The SDEC establishes benchmarks and metrics to track the progress of digital equity initiatives across the state.
Collaboration: It fosters partnerships among state agencies, community organizations, and stakeholders to drive collective action.

Scope: The SDEC focuses more on state-level coordination and implementation, while the DEF centers on community engagement and advisory functions.

Participants: The SDEC is composed mainly of state agency representatives and other high-level stakeholders, whereas the DEF includes a broader range of participants from various sectors and communities.

Function: The SDEC is action-oriented, focusing on making strategic decisions and implementing policies, while the DEF is more consultative, offering guidance and recommendations based on community input.

Digital Equity Forum (DEF)
Focus: More inclusive, bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders, to discuss and address digital equity challenges from a broader, more community-centered perspective.

Key Functions:
Policy and Strategy Development: It provides recommendations and guidance to state agencies and policymakers based on the lived experiences and expertise of its members.
Stakeholder Engagement: The DEF serves as a platform for various voices, including those from underserved communities, to share insights, challenges, and needs.
Community-Centric Initiatives: The DEF focuses on understanding and addressing the unique digital equity needs of different communities, ensuring that state-level strategies are informed by real-world perspectives.
Collaboration: DEF members often work in smaller groups on specific digital equity topics, such as accessibility, broadband access, or digital literacy, to develop targeted solutions.