

III. Federal Fund

A. Finances - Update on Federal Funds – Information Item

On May 9, 2025, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) cancelled Idaho's \$6.3 million State Digital Equity (DE) Capacity Grant award for implementing the Digital Access for All Idahoans (DAAI) plan. The administration determined that the State DE Capacity Grant and DE Competitive Grant programs were unconstitutional and terminated the awards to all states, territories, and competitive grant applicants.

At the Idaho Board of Library Commissioners Meeting on December 9, 2021, the Digital Access for All Idahoans plan was first announced in [board document 22-28](#). With support from Governor Brad Little and the Idaho Department of Commerce, the ICfL was designated as the administrative entity for Idaho to lead the development and implementation of a statewide digital access plan. Federal funding was made available through the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) to each state to develop and implement statewide digital access plans.

In November 2022, the ICfL received a federal award of \$564,706 through the State DE Planning Grant to develop the DAAI plan within a year. Through a contract with the Idaho Policy Institute at Boise State University and a team of ICfL staff, work was done on developing the DAAI plan throughout 2023. Development of the plan included 17 regional digital access focus groups held in 13 cities across the state, a statewide digital access phone survey of 1,000 adults, and 15 digital access partner interviews. The DAAI plan was completed a month early in October 2023 and \$180,145 under budget.

In February 2024, Idaho was one of the first six states to have a statewide digital access plan that was fully accepted by the NTIA. Acceptance of the DAAI plan by the NTIA allowed the ICfL to apply for the State DE Capacity Grant in May 2024 to implement the goals and activities identified in the plan over five years. In October 2024, Idaho was the third state to receive a State DE Capacity Grant award.

Over 80% of Idaho's \$6.3 million award was planned to be distributed to eligible entities in Idaho, including libraries, community colleges, nonprofits organizations, and other state agencies. In February 2025, the ICfL team completed its review of the initial round of DAAI subgrants. 29 subgrantees were selected for awards totaling over \$2.3 million. Nearly 200,000 Idahoans were expected to be reached in 61 cities and towns, spanning 39 of Idaho's 44 counties. The ICfL had been awaiting mandatory review and approval of subgrantees by the NTIA before finalizing and issuing subgrant awards.

With the cancellation of the State DE Capacity Grant award, the ICfL has been forced to halt implementation of the DAAI plan that was planned through 2029 with these funds. Resources developed to support ICfL's digital access initiatives that were not funded by NTIA awards will continue, notably IdahoDigitalSkills.org, the state's free one-stop-shop website for digital skills training. The ICfL will leverage these resources and decades of experience to continue supporting libraries and working with partners to address the digital divide in Idaho.

In addition to the loss of the ICfL's \$6.3 million State DE Capacity Grant award, Idaho also lost a \$13.1 million DE Competitive Grant Program award with statewide impact to be implemented by a coalition of the University of Idaho Extension Digital Economy Program, the Idaho Department of Corrections, the College of Western Idaho, the College of Southern Idaho, and North Idaho College.