

Digital Access for All Idahoans



PLAN

SUMMARY



The DAAI plan establishes goals and objectives to improve digital access for Idahoans, particularly Idahoans who are members of covered populations.

The Digital Access for All Idahoans plan was prepared by the Idaho Commission for Libraries using federal funds under award 16-30-DP247 from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

ABOUT DAAI



Many Idahoans face barriers to digital access at a time when internet use is increasingly vital to the ability to thrive in every aspect of life.

Digital Access for All Idahoans (DAAI) plan documents pervasive barriers to digital access and proposes a visionary strategy to end digital access divides that prevent many Idahoans from accessing crucial technology.

The DAAI plan will serve as a benchmark for achieving digital equity in Idaho.

<https://libraries.idaho.gov/digital-access-for-all-idahoans>



ABOUT DAAI

The DAAI plan will increase broadband affordability for Idahoans, as well as improve digital skills, cybersecurity awareness, access to devices, technical support, and access to public services.


The DAAI plan includes specific populations that are covered by the Digital Equity Act of 2021 and considers the unique barriers and solutions for each covered population.

The DAAI plan aligns with existing efforts to improve digital access outcomes.

Stakeholders and Idaho residents were highly engaged in collecting information about digital access barriers and promising solutions. Focus groups, surveys, and stakeholder interviews and events were utilized. There were 17 in-person sessions held in 13 Idaho cities.

**IDAHO'S VISION IS TO SUPPORT ALL RESIDENTS
IN THRIVING ONLINE.**

COVERED POPULATIONS

household
income less than
 **150%**
of federal
poverty level



**aging individuals
(over age 60)**

**incarcerated
(or recently
incarcerated)**

veterans



**individuals with a
disability**

**individuals with a
language barrier**



**members of a
racial or ethnic
minority group**

reside in a



rural area

DAAI PLAN GOALS

THE DAAI PLAN ESTABLISHES FIVE GOALS TO BE ACHIEVED WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS:

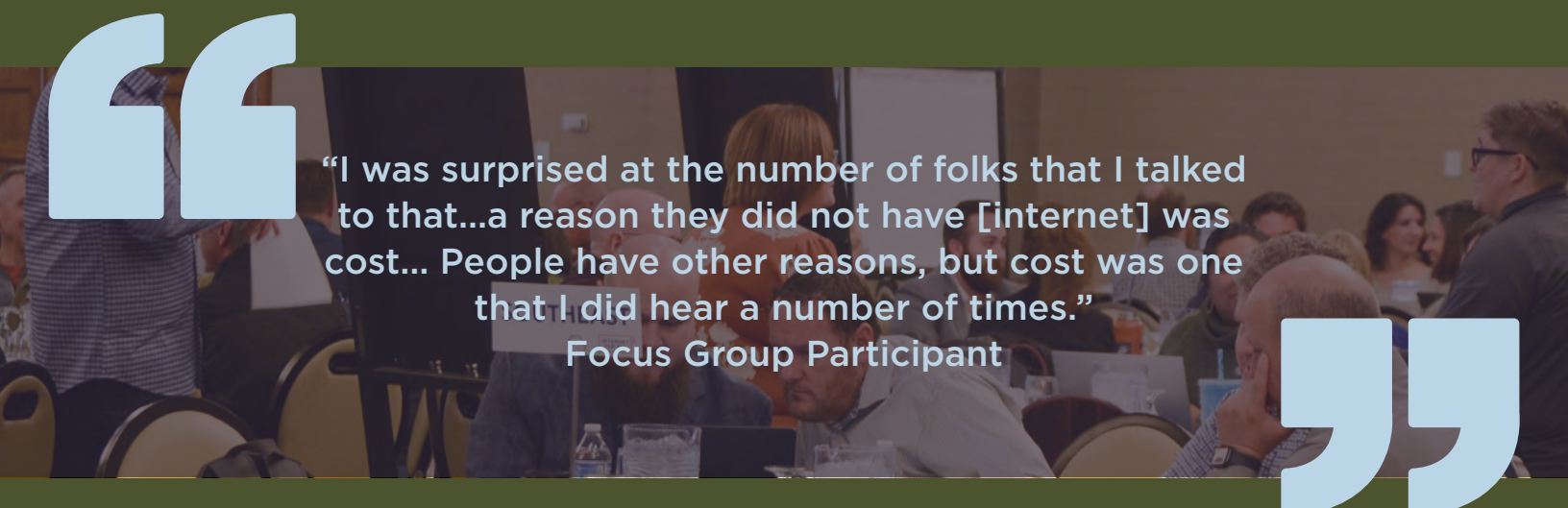
GOAL 1

increase adoption and affordability of broadband technology

objectives of goal 1:

- expanding participation in and public awareness of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)
- increase broadband plan transparency
- develop a framework for lowering costs for internet service, especially in rural areas

Participants reported a disconnect between advertised speeds with those actually received in their community. Having more information about broadband plans will contribute to affordability because it will help Idahoans only pay for the amount of speed and bandwidth they need and give them the ability to better compare different plans.



“I was surprised at the number of folks that I talked to that...a reason they did not have [internet] was cost... People have other reasons, but cost was one that I did hear a number of times.”

Focus Group Participant

DAAI PLAN GOALS

(continued)

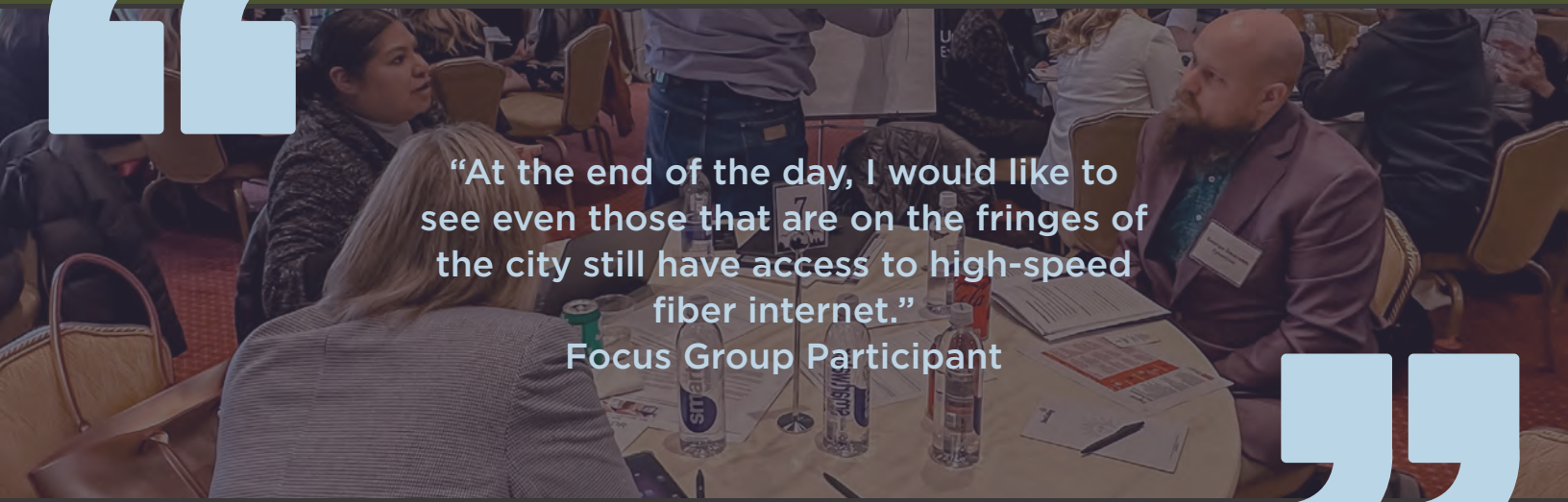
GOAL 2

improve online accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services

objectives of goal 2:

- increase accessibility of state websites and online services
- increase compatibility between state websites and mobile devices
- ensure access to essential state services
- continue development and promotion of Idaho's digital access inventory

Focus group and stakeholder interview participants reported that many people rely on only a cell phone for internet service. Some focus group participants reported no longer having a landline but also unreliable internet and cell phone service.



“At the end of the day, I would like to see even those that are on the fringes of the city still have access to high-speed fiber internet.”

Focus Group Participant

RURAL VS. NON-RURAL residents

**RURAL RESIDENTS ARE
MORE LIKELY:**

to have no internet

**to report low satisfaction
with the quality of their
internet service**

**to have lower confidence in
their digital skills**

BroadbandNow ranks Idaho in 2023 as 40th in the nation in terms of internet coverage, speed and availability, and estimates that only 19.4% of Idahoans in 2023 are able to purchase broadband at a price of \$60 or less per month.*

*BroadbandNow. (2023) Idaho internet coverage & availability in 2023. <https://broadbandnow.com/idaho>

DAAI PLAN GOALS

(continued)

GOAL 3 increase digital skills

objectives of goal 3:

- provide funding for basic digital and computer skills training
- establish a digital skills education internship program
- decrease social stigma surrounding digital confidence

Focus group participants viewed harnessing the digital skills of Idaho's youth as an opportunity to increase access for all by offering school credit or extracurricular options to incentivize community youth to tutor or help less technologically savvy residents become more comfortable using a computer.



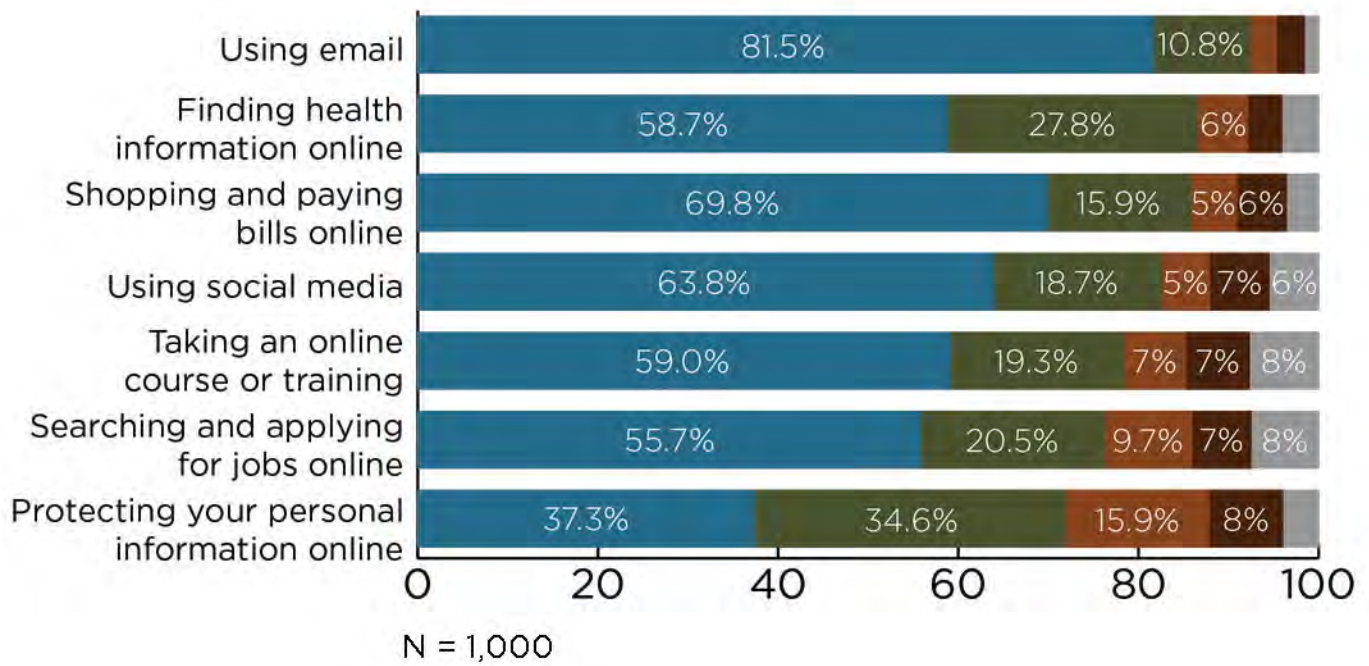
“A plan for that statewide, where our students can be utilized, getting the generations together and use the knowledge that they come by so easily to help the generation who isn't intuitive. I think that would be really excellent and would be unique to Idaho.”

Focus Group Participant

DAAI PLAN GOALS

SURVEY RESULTS

Even though many Idahoans feel confident with digital skills, there are still those who struggle with basic digital skills.



Survey results description

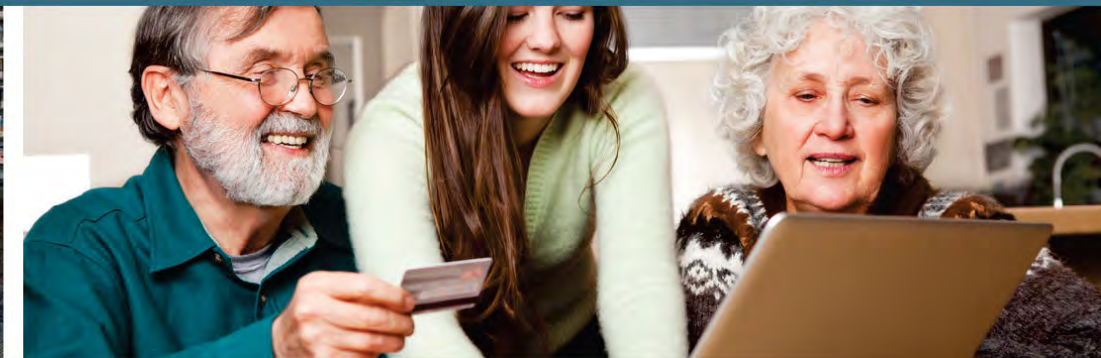
AGING VS. YOUNGER INDIVIDUALS CONFIDENCE LEVEL

BIGGEST GAP:

- searching/apply for jobs online
- taking online course/training
 - using social media
- protecting their info online
- shopping/paying bills online
 - using email

“It’s not that the younger demographic is necessarily smarter, it’s just they’re growing up with the devices. The older demographic didn’t grow up with the devices.”

Focus Group Participant



SOCIAL STIGMA

For many Idahoans, social stigma surrounding digital confidence is a huge barrier to improving digital skills.

In 85% of focus groups, participants spoke of individuals' recognition that they need instruction on how to use a computer or access the internet but being reluctant to admit such need in a public setting, such as a formal class or program.

They report that this “fear of breaking something” makes them reluctant to engage with technology.



DAAI PLAN GOALS

(continued)

GOAL 4

spread awareness of cybersecurity and online privacy

objectives of goal 4:

- increase awareness of cybersecurity and protecting personal information
- improve cybersecurity training opportunities

Statewide, nearly a quarter of those surveyed said they were not confident about protecting their personal information online. Cybersecurity was mentioned as a concern in 100% of the DAAI focus groups. Through training and education, Idahoans' awareness of online dangers can be increased while also equipping them with the skills they need to feel confident in their ability to avoid those dangers.

“

“Scammer 101 would be a great class.”

Focus Group Participant

“Anything that you can do in this program to educate people in cybersecurity would be money well spent.”

Focus Group Participant

”

DAAI PLAN GOALS

(continued)

GOAL 5

increase availability and affordability of devices and technical support

objectives of goal 5:

- create a digital navigator program
- establish statewide, regional, and local technical support options
- provide funding to refurbish devices for covered populations
- increase devices available at public libraries



“I’m surprised my laptop is actually still in one piece, knowing how many sledge hammers we have.”

Focus Group Participant

“There have been people that post little notes in here, like I need help with my computer, give me a call. . . . Those people are desperate, some of them posting notes around town asking, seeking out help with their computers like on billboards.”

Focus Group Participant



DAAI FUNDING

Included as part of the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is the Digital Equity Act, which provides all states with funding to develop and implement digital inclusion plans that specifically address the digital access needs of eight distinct covered populations.

The State Planning Grant Program funded development of the DAAI plan, while the Digital Equity Capacity Building Program and the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program will provide funding over five years to support the implementation of state digital access plans and projects like those found in the DAAI plan.

The Idaho Commission for Libraries will apply for and administer the funds from the Digital Equity Capacity Building Grant Program to accomplish the goals and objectives of the DAAI plan, including providing statewide resources and subgrants to eligible entities.

Eligible entities will also be able to apply directly to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration for the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program to support digital access projects.

More information about the Federal Digital Equity Act Grant Program is available here:

<https://www.internetforall.gov/program/digital-equity-actprograms>.

IMPLEMENTATION

of the DAAI Plan

In order to achieve the vision set forth in the DAAI plan and support all Idaho residents in thriving online, it will take a concerted effort on the part of as many partners as possible and include a range of statewide and local initiatives.

Primary implementation strategies include stakeholder outreach events, creating or expanding statewide programs and initiatives, creating and awarding subgrants, conducting marketing campaigns, and carrying out additional research to measure progress.

If stakeholders don't come together and create a plan and implement it within five years, more Idahoans will lack the resources and knowledge to fully benefit from the opportunities that access to the internet provides.

The DAAI plan implementation strategy will take place over a five-year period to provide more access to digital resources and the digital access every Idahoan requires to thrive.

DIGITAL RESOURCES

at the ready



<https://idahodigitalskills.org>

includes: resource directory, being safe online, digital navigators, job skills, & more

gateway to work & life digital skills for all Idahoans



Through LiLL.org, Idahoans have free, 24/7 access to a wide range of online resources that support their education, business, and recreational needs.

easily find your local public library and explore all it has to offer

<https://libraries.idaho.gov/idaho-library-directory>

Idaho public libraries offer a wealth of resources and assistance, including help to navigate the internet and find online information, plus your local library has reliable, high-speed internet.

(Many libraries have 24/7 Wi-Fi that's available beyond the library's doors.)

CONTACT



For more information about the Digital Access for All Idahoans (DAAI) Plan, visit <https://libraries.idaho.gov/digital-access-for-all-idahoans/>.

Or email digitalskills@libraries.idaho.gov with specific questions or concerns.

The DAAI plan will serve as a benchmark for achieving digital equity in Idaho.

