



Digital Literacy Alliance 2024 GRANT GUIDELINES

Building Digital Resiliency through Community Ambassador Models



The Digital Literacy Alliance is pleased to announce guidelines for its 2024 grant cycle, which will offer grants to organizations that leverage or create **innovative community engagement practices to address digital inclusion by activating resident volunteers, peer leadership, and/or community ambassador models**. Please find an overview of the Digital Literacy Alliance (“the Alliance” or “DLA”) below followed by an invitation to apply for funding that aims to support the Philadelphia digital inclusion ecosystem by expanding the network of community members to be engaged in digital inclusion work.

OVERVIEW OF DIGITAL LITERACY ALLIANCE

The Digital Literacy Alliance is a broad coalition of institutional stakeholders working to alleviate the digital divide in Philadelphia. We define digital literacy as “the ability to access technology and the Internet and use those tools to find, evaluate, share and create content.” Our coalition develops strategy, manages an existing seed fund, oversees funded programs, and seeks additional funding with the assistance of relevant stakeholders and coalition members.

The goals of the Alliance are:

- To provide financial support to programs in Philadelphia that address issues of digital literacy and inclusion
- To serve as a convener of stakeholders and partners from diverse sectors who are interested and invested in closing the digital divide in Philadelphia
- To serve as a resource for best practices and innovations in digital literacy programming and policy-making

Since its foundation in 2017, the Digital Literacy Alliance has conducted eight annual grant cycles and funded a broad array of digital literacy and equity programs. For the 2024 grant cycle, the Alliance will allocate a total of approximately \$160,000 for a series of two-year grants.

The Digital Literacy Alliance is made possible through fiscal sponsorship of the [Philadelphia City Fund](#).

OVERVIEW OF DLA GRANT PROCESS

Our membership has created a transparent and ethical process for grantmaking and will again use that process for the current grant cycle. The Alliance uses a two-stage application process for grant opportunities: online submission form, serving as a Letter of Intent (LOI), followed by an invitation for a full proposal. Applicants will have approximately one month from the public grant announcement to submit the Letter of Intent online, and these submissions are then evaluated by a review committee of DLA members (see timeline below for dates). The review committee will then meet and reflect on what they have read with the goal of creating a shortlist of organizations from whom full proposals will be invited. Shortlisted organizations will then have another month to develop and submit a full proposal, and these proposals are reviewed with an **evaluation matrix that will include the following criteria: program merit, experience with this type of project, community impact, budget feasibility, organizational capacity,**

and innovation. Based on these evaluation criteria and further discussion, the review committee will make its final grant recommendations to the full Alliance membership.

OVERVIEW OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY

For its 2024 grant cycle, which focuses on creating **innovative community engagement practices to address digital inclusion by activating resident volunteers, peer leadership, and/or community ambassador models**, the DLA will consider proposals that meet the following guidelines:

- Proposals should address how they will connect volunteers, peer leadership programs, and/or community ambassador models to directly help residents with digital equity challenges they are facing. Only proposals that demonstrate a clear connection will be considered.
- Proposals should clearly identify how they will utilize their volunteers/peers/ambassadors to link residents to the existing resources in the City's digital inclusion ecosystem, i.e. the City's Digital Navigator Network.
- Proposals should be created for **two-year grants**. Organizations should carefully consider program needs and request an appropriate amount to implement the grant program.
- Grant requests from individual organizations should be no more than \$40,000 in total over the two-year period.
- The Alliance anticipates awarding up to \$160,000 in total for this grant cycle.
- Our grant opportunity seeks creative ideas increasing community engagement in digital literacy and equity by **activating resident volunteers, peer leadership, and/or community ambassadors**. Examples of programs that could be funded under this opportunity could **include, but are not limited to**, the following:
 - a) Creating youth digital ambassadors to help residents navigate digital resources and online forms (i.e., job search information, engagement with schools and youth-serving organizations, college access, financial aid).
 - b) Leveraging an existing canvassing or advocacy team or program to help residents access digital resources.
 - c) Developing a senior tech volunteer program to work with other seniors to improve digital skills.
 - d) Training volunteers to teach digital skills and placing them across the city in community-based organizations.
 - e) Working with neighborhood or block captains to support and refer residents to digital inclusion resources.

GRANT ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for a grant from the Digital Literacy Alliance, applying organizations and proposals must meet the following criteria:

- Organizations and/or individuals applying for grants must be based in Philadelphia.
- The application must be for a two-year grant. The maximum award for two years will be \$40,000.
- If awarded funding, the organization must agree to communicate regularly with the Alliance and complete two reports: at the 1-year and 2-year marks. The organization may also be asked to present to Alliance or other organizational representatives.

- Applicants submitting a proposal for an entity without 501(C)(3) status will be required to have a fiscal sponsor to demonstrate how they will responsibly manage the grant if awarded.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Friday, June 28, 2024 by 5pm EST	<p>Initial DLA Letter of Intent (LOI) submission form is due; applications must be submitted via the online submission form linked below.</p> <p>DLA LOI submission form is HERE.</p> <p>All submissions will be reviewed and evaluated by the Digital Literacy Alliance and a select group of applicants will be invited to submit full proposals.</p>
Monday, July 22, 2024	Applicants are notified regarding whether they are invited to submit a full grant proposal.
Friday, August 16, 2024 by 5pm EST	Full grant proposals are due to Juliet Fink-Yates (juliet.fink-yates@phila.gov).
Monday, September 16, 2024	Organizations are notified of funding decisions.

Please direct any questions or issues to Juliet Fink Yates (Juliet.fink-yates@phila.gov).

FULL PROPOSAL FORMAT

All organizations who are invited to submit a full proposal will receive specific instructions regarding the process and requirements. These requirements are subject to change before the notification date, but proposals will include the following elements:

1. Executive Summary (no more than 1 page)
 - Explain what you hope to accomplish and how, why you/your organization is the right entity to execute this project and what impact you hope to have on Philadelphia and/or its residents.
2. Program Narrative
 - Name the team that will implement the project and briefly list their respective roles and qualifications.
 - Describe the project in detail.
 - What is the current concern it is working to resolve?

- Identify any target populations that you will recruit for your program and who and / or what neighborhoods they will serve.
 - Describe the model you are employing, if it is already in place or you are creating it from scratch, and how it will connect residents to the current digital inclusion ecosystem.
 - State what will change as a result of your project.
 - Describe what makes your project or approach innovative or creative?
3. Timeline
- Describe the start and end date of the project and any major milestones.
4. Organizational Infrastructure, Partnerships & Budget
- Complete the attached budget template.
 - Describe what, if any, other sources of funding you have applied for and the status of that funding.
 - Explain how you/your organization manages finances, including but not limited to employee roles, financial management software and accountability standards.
 - Outline any partnerships necessary to implementing your project and explain all relevant stakeholders.
5. Evaluation & Goals
- Explain what your goals are (short and long term) and how you will know if you've accomplished them.
 - Provide examples of your indicators of success based on your goals and intended outcomes, i.e. people served, measurable growth in skills, jobs attained, program graduates, etc. and how you will measure progress.
6. Sustainability/Dissemination
- Describe how this program could continue once the grant funding has ended, either in its entirety or in another capacity, and/or how you plan to share your learnings with others.