

Digital Inclusion Program – Application

Project Title (Name of project):

Swain County Digital Inclusion Project

Project Grantee (Legal name of organization/entity):

Marianna Black Library, a Member of Fontana Regional Library, Inc.

County Served:

Swain

Indicate status of proposed grantee as governmental entity or non-profit organization. (Select from the following list):

Governmental Entity
Non-profit organization x
Tribal Entity
Other: _____

Total funds requested (maximum of \$75,000):

\$75,000

Please provide a breakdown of all funding sources for this project, including any matching funds:

Swain Digital Inclusion Program funds will likely be the only funds used for this project. Fontana Regional Library will be applying for the for the Champion grant and those funds, if granted, will likely go toward the same project.

Please describe specific uses of funds (Specify line item uses of each source):

With the funds from the Digital Inclusion Program Grant, The Marianna Black Library will hire and pay Digital Navigators to assist the public with their technology needs. This will include one-on-one assistance in the library and in the community (for example, the Swain Senior Center) and classes/workshops in the library and community. The grant will also fund the equipment, peripherals, and accessories needed to accomplish the goals of the library and the Digital Navigators.

This grant will specifically fund:

- 3 Digital Navigators (two already under contract with Fontana Regional Library and one that will be hired and trained by the two experienced Digital Navigators). \$12,600
- The equipment needed to provide workshops in the community (approximately 72 Chromebooks and accessories/peripherals). \$36,000
- Chromebooks and accessories/peripherals to circulate from the Marianna Black Library into the community (20). \$10,000
- Verizon Hotspots to circulate with Chromebooks (20). \$2,600
- Verizon Hotspots to circulate from the Marianna Black Library into the community (20). \$2,600
- Verizon Hotspot subscription fees (40). \$6,400
- CybeReef application (Library Filtering) (40) \$80
- Digital Navigator Travel. \$2,000
- Additional staffing (translator and care provider). \$900
- Additional administrative costs/supplies (printing, instructional materials, folders, paper, pencils, etc). \$500

Approximate total of \$73,680.

Full budget attached as Appendix A.

Please provide two to three paragraphs describing the purpose of the proposed project.

The Marianna Black Library, in Swain County, will continue on the success of a Digital Inclusion Project that ended in September of 2023 due to grant funds expiring. With Government Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funds, the Fontana Regional Library (Jackson, Macon, and Swain) was able to hire two Digital Navigators and the equipment needed to provide one-on-one and group training, both inside and outside the library.

With the Digital Inclusion Program funds, the Marianna Black Library will continue working with the two Digital Navigators and hire an additional Digital Navigator, who will add to the diversity of the Digital Navigator team to meet the needs of the entire community and establish a level of comfort during home visits with seniors. These Digital Navigators will provide one-on-one technical assistance and instruction with library patrons in-house and, through outreach measures, travel to the homes of patrons who make such appointments. Digital Navigators will also provide classes in the community, for example Swain Schools (to parents), Swain Senior Center (to area seniors), La Poblanos Restaurant (to area Hispanics, with community partner UNIDXS), and in the library itself. Along with technical assistance, Digital Navigators will also assist patrons in signing up for the Affordable Connectivity Program and scheduling telehealth appointments.

Digital Inclusion Program funds will also be used to purchase the equipment needed to provide classes in the community and in the library. This will include Chromebooks, plus a case, mouse and sd expansion card. Equipment will also be purchased to circulate to the community from the library, including Chromebooks and hotspots. Finally, funds will be used to pay the travel expenses of the Digital Navigators and other expenses to ensure a successful program (i.e., paper, pencils, folders, and printed materials). A translator may be hired for those who speak Spanish and a caretaker to provide care to children whose parents attend classes.

Please provide a list of all major project activities. Include what will be done and who (whether your organization or a partnering organization) will complete each activity.

Major Project Activities will include:

- Digital Navigators will provide six, six-week, sessions of workshops in the community. Those who sign up will learn to use Chromebooks, search the internet, understand internet safety, etc., in each successive classroom session. Attendees will also learn about the Affordable Connectivity Program and library services. Each session will be limited to 12 attendees.
- Digital Navigators will provide one-on-one technical assistance to patrons in the library at least 4 hours per week. Patrons will be able to bring in questions regarding their personal devices, using email, navigating the internet, applying for employment online, etc.
- Digital Navigators will provide one-on-one technical assistance to patrons outside of the library, either in patron homes or in the community (ie, at the Swain Senior Center) as scheduled. Those in need of assistance will be able to bring questions regarding their personal devices, using email, navigating the internet, etc.
- Library staff will circulate 20 Chromebooks, along with 20 Verizon Hotspots, to members of the community. These will circulate for extended periods of time (not the normal 3-week circulation period).
- Library staff will circulate an additional 20 Verizon Hotspots to the community. These will also circulate for extended periods of time.

Provide a project timeline. Include dates for all project milestones.

- This will depend on when the grant is approved. Digital Navigators will begin their first six-week workshop session upon grant approval. Every eight weeks the navigators will begin another six-week session with a new group of participants. If grant is approved January 15, 2024, the timeline will be as follows:
 - Session 1 - Jan 30 - March 5, 2024
 - Session 2 - March 19 - April 30, 2024
 - Session 3 - May 14, 2024 - June 18, 2024
 - Session 4 - July 2, 2024 - August 6, 2024
 - Session 5 - August 27 - October 1, 2024
 - Session 6 - October 22 - November 26, 2024
- Digital Navigators will provide one-on-one technical assistance to library patrons inside the library every Tuesday afternoon upon grant approval until December 31, 2024.
- Digital Navigators will provide one-on-one technical assistance to library patrons in their homes by appointment immediately upon grant approval.
- Chromebooks will be purchased and circulated to library patrons upon grant approval.
- Verizon Hotspots will be purchased and circulated to library patrons upon grant approval.

Explain performance measures your organization will use to measure the success of the project. Performance measures are quantifiable impacts expected from the project. These will include

quantifying specific activities of the grant (i.e., xx positions created, xx number of trainings held), as well as the overall impact of those activities (i.e., xx number of residents with improved digital literacy skills, xx communities with access to public wifi).

An example of this could be, "We will conduct 10 digital literacy training classes (output), which will result in 50 participants (5 per class) having increased digital literacy skills (outcome)."

1. Digital Navigators will present six, six-week, workshops in the community and in the library. 72 participants (12 per class) will complete the session with an increased knowledge of digital technology, including how to use a Chromebook and peripherals, how to safely navigate the internet, and how to apply for the Affordable Connectivity Program. Moreover, participants who complete all six workshops will receive a Chromebook, case, mouse, and sd expansion card.
2. Digital Navigators will be on hand to answer questions regarding digital technology for at least 40 in-house sessions, with 4 participants per session on average. Approximately 160 members of the community will be able to bring in questions regarding their personal devices, how to use their email, navigate the internet, apply for employment online, scheduling telehealth appointments, etc., increasing knowledge of their own devices and the digital world.
3. 20 Chromebooks, along with a hotspot and other peripherals, will circulate out of the library with a circulation period of approximately 90 days. Approximately 80 members of the community will have increased awareness of what the internet can offer, including the internet, email services, telehealth services, social media etc.
4. 20 Verizon Hotspots will circulate out of the library for a period of approximately 90 days. Approximately, 80 members of the public will have increased access to the internet on their own devices, including cell phones, tablets and laptops.

Appendix A

Swain County Digital Inclusion Project 2024 Budget			
	Qty	Price	Total
Chromebooks (w/ case, mouse, sd card) for classes	72	\$500.00	\$36,000.00
Chromebooks (w/ case, mouse, sd card) to circulate	20	\$500.00	\$10,000.00
Verizon Hotspots for circulating Chromebooks	20	\$130.00	\$2,600.00
Verizon Hotspots to circulate	20	\$130.00	\$2,600.00
Verizon Hotspot Subscription*	40	\$160.00	\$6,400.00
CybeReef (library filtering)	40	\$2.00	\$80.00
Digital Navigators Salary	700	\$18.00	\$12,600.00
Travel			\$2,000.00

Additional staffing - Translator and Care Provider	50	\$18.00	\$900.00
Additional administrative costs/supplies (printing, folders, paper, pencils, etc)			\$500.00
			\$73,680.00
<p>*Note from FRL IT Manager: Verizon/CybeReef - FRL Jetpacks</p> <p>CybeReef costs: \$2.00 per device per month / Service Start - End Dates: 7/1/2023 - 6/30/2024</p> <p>Verizon costs: - Initial device costs: \$98.00 - \$165.00 (\$110.00) - Monthly data costs: \$10.52 per device a month -- \$1,030.95 (Surcharges: \$104.07, tax: \$75.89) - Total monthly costs: \$1,306.05 for 98 devices</p>			