

Digital Connection Committees: Instructions and Guides

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Introduction

Purpose of this Document

The intent of these instructions and guides is to support Digital Connection Committees (DCCs) in gathering and sharing a breadth of data and information related to digital inclusion assets, needs, and goals. The data and information gathered will profoundly shape the content of Minnesota’s digital equity plan and play a significant role in determining the state’s future strategies to advance digital inclusion.

For the purposes of this work, the Office of Broadband Development (OBD) is defining digital inclusion as **the condition in which all Minnesotans have the option and opportunity to adopt and use technology – including internet access – in ways that enhance their daily lives**. According to the National Digital Inclusion Alliance, digital inclusion includes five components:

1. Affordable, robust, consistent broadband internet service
2. Internet-enabled devices that meet the needs of the user
3. Access to digital skills training
4. Quality technical support
5. Applications and online content

This document provides instructions and guides for compiling asset inventories, conducting surveys, convening focus groups, and holding 1:1 conversations. In general, DCCs are welcome to pick and choose which of these methods they use, which of the example questions they use, etc. **We want the data you gather to be meaningful for you, and we want your method of information gathering to be relevant to your audience.**

Instructions for Submitting Data to OBD

Some DCCs will submit digital inclusion data gathered during past efforts. Some DCCs will submit digital inclusion data gathered during this current effort. Other DCCs still will submit a combination of previously gathered data and new data. All of these scenarios are correct, and **all data is submitted in the same way: through this [online form](#)**. The fully spelled-out URL is presented at the end of this section.

The submission form will accept most files types, including but not limited to docx, xlsx, pptx, csv, txt, pdf, png, jpg, gif, mp3, mp4, etc. Only one file can be submitted at a time. The maximum file size per submission is 10MB. If you are submitting larger files or more than 10 files, reach out to Hannah Buckland at OBD to coordinate.

No paper submissions will be accepted. Surveys distributed in paper form need to be organized into an Excel spreadsheet or other digital file for submission. This is your responsibility.

<https://mndigitalinclusion.wufoo.com/forms/digital-connection-committees-data-submission/>

A Quick Note About Trust

Collecting accurate data and information about people's lives depends on a high degree of trust. DCCs inherently hold trust with the communities they serve, trust that we know does not necessarily transfer to OBD or state government at large. To protect individuals and not jeopardize trust between DCCs and communities, OBD will not accept any personally identifiable information.

OBD also reminds DCCs that they are ultimately at liberty to choose what information they want incorporated into the Digital Equity Plan. We want to know what matters to you. **This is Minnesota's digital equity plan – not OBD's digital equity plan for Minnesota – and we place full trust in your strategies and perspectives.**

Reminder for Mini-Grant Recipients

If you have received an Assessing Digital Inclusion mini-grant, please be aware that you must provide the following deliverables by June 30:

1. Evidence of having established a local Digital Connection Committee. This includes contact information for a committee leader and minutes from 2 meetings occurring during the grant period.
2. Quantitative digital inclusion data. Quantitative data uses numbers, such as "Through surveys, 75% of respondents said their internet service is not reliable."
3. Qualitative digital inclusion data. Qualitative data refers to stories, characterizations, and personal accounts, such as "In a focus group, we heard participants express frustrations about the unreliable internet service they receive at home."
4. An asset inventory identifying existing resources that contribute to digital inclusion.

Questions?

Happy to help, as always. For assistance in gathering or sharing data and information, please contact Hannah Buckland at hannah.buckland@state.mn.us.

Asset Inventory Guide

What is an Asset Inventory?

In the context of this digital equity planning process, the purpose of an asset inventory is **to list the existing strengths, tools, organizations, programs, services, resources, etc. (referred to broadly as “assets”) that contribute to digital inclusion locally, regionally, or statewide.** Assets can be things directly supporting digital inclusion, like public computers and free wifi. Assets can also be things indirectly supporting human connection and wellbeing more broadly, like spaces where people gather and services that people depend on.

For Minnesota’s digital equity plan to be truly effective, it must integrate and build off these existing assets. Extensive digital inclusion work has been underway across our state for many years; the state’s plan must honor this.

The format for this will be a list created in Excel using the template OBD provides. This will be submitted to OBD using the [online data submission form](#).

Instructions for Compiling an Asset Inventory

Use the asset inventory template provided by OBD. For ease of analysis, please use this template rather than devising your own. By default, only the empty, white cells can be edited. If you need further editing permissions, just ask.

Refer to these instructions as you work through the template:

- A. First, complete the template’s coversheet. This sheet asks you to define the scope of your inventory by answering these questions:
 - 1) *PLACE: Define the geographic area your DCC represents or aims to learn more about.*
 - i. This could be a town, city, county, region, Native Nation, etc.
 - ii. This could also be the entire state’s geography. You can use the next question to narrow your focus.
 - 2) *PEOPLE: Describe the people whose digital inclusion needs your DCC represents or aims to learn more about. What age range are they? Do they belong to a specific racial or ethnic group? What languages do they speak? Etc.*
 - i. This question seeks to learn what key identities, experiences, and/or values these people have in common.
 - ii. If your DCC is exploring organizations instead of people (e.g. examining digital inclusion across small businesses in your area), please use this space to provide that description instead.

B. Second, list out the assets your DCC has identified using the following facets:

1) *ORGANIZATIONS*

- i. What organizations or groups in your area reach the people you identified from the coversheet?
- ii. Options might include local or tribal governments, schools, libraries, healthcare providers, non-profits, businesses, associations, faith-based groups, culture-based groups, major local employers, community centers or gyms, YMCAs, etc., etc.
- iii. These don't necessarily need to be limited to groups specific to digital inclusion.

2) *PHYSICAL LOCATION*

- i. No need to look up individual addresses. Just naming a city is enough.
- ii. If there is no physical location or you're unsure where it is or this just doesn't make sense, you can skip this.

3) *WEBSITE*

- i. Please try to include a URL when applicable.
- ii. Can't find a website? That's totally okay too.

4) *HELPERS*

- i. Who makes this organization work? Who do people trust? Who has the knowledge, skills, and wisdom?
- ii. This could be just the staff of an organization, e.g. all the librarians. This could also be specific people who are well-known, well-trusted, and/or influential, e.g. the Anishinaabe elder who convenes language tables at the library on Thursday evenings.

5) *RESOURCES*

- i. This could be things directly related to digital inclusion. Think about computer classes, discount internet service, free wifi, etc.
- ii. This could also be things indirectly related to digital inclusion. Think about spaces where people gather, programs that do an exceptional job reaching people where they are, etc. When you think about a strong, healthy community, what resources are available?
- iii. As always, there are no wrong answers.

A Note on Completion

A complete inventory is one that adequately describes the key existing assets that contribute to digital inclusion in your area for the people you're representing or trying to learn more about. "Complete" does NOT mean comprehensive. You do not need to provide an exhaustive list of every possible organization and resource that's available. Instead, focus on the most successful, positive, and meaningful assets. **What assets do you want to be sure that OBD knows about?** A complete inventory answers this question. That said, if you want a specific number of assets to aim for, go with 10.

Survey Guide

Instructions for Conducting Surveys

This survey is a modifiable outline which you can adapt and customize as needed. OBD is not requiring uniformity across all DCCs’ surveys, so feel free to use fewer questions than are included here or supplement with questions of your own. We want the data you gather to be meaningful for you.

From the participant side, taking a survey means providing time, energy, and care. Consider how your DCC might compensate participants for their effort.

You get to choose how you administer surveys. Here are some options:

Format	Advantages	Disadvantages
An online survey through a platform like Google Forms , Jotform , or Supersurvey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of data analysis. Platforms often make it easy to consolidate, download, and review data. • Ease of distribution. An online survey can be distributed quickly via email, websites, and social media. • Flexibility. Spot a typo after publishing your survey? That’s easy to correct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility. An online survey may not be appropriate for people with visual impairments, developing literacy, etc. • Cost. Not all online platforms are free of charge. • Language translation. An online survey written in English will need to be re-created in other languages. • Limited audience. An online survey only reaches people who have internet access and a device.
A printed-out paper survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost. Printing is often quick and inexpensive. • Ease of distribution. A paper survey can be distributed through person-to-person connections. • Familiarity. Printed surveys may be more inviting to people who lack digital skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility. A printed survey may not be appropriate for people with visual impairments, developing literacy, etc. • Difficulty of data analysis. In order to consolidate and review data, it must be entered afterward into a program like Microsoft Excel. • Language translation. An online survey written in English will need to be re-created in other languages.
A survey conducted through spoken or signed language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility. Spoken or signed surveys are more accessible to people with visual impairments, developing literacy, etc. • Cultural relevance. Spoken and signed languages are a trusted norm in some cultures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty of data analysis. In order to consolidate and review data, it needs to be collected in writing and entered afterward into a program like Microsoft Excel. • Difficulty of distribution. Conducting a survey through spoken or signed

Format	Advantages	Disadvantages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiarity. Spoken or signed surveys may be more inviting to people who lack digital skills. 	language requires connecting 1:1 with individuals for extended time.

Example Survey Questions

OBD has prepared a survey which you are welcome to use as-is or customize to fit your audience. It focuses on three main areas – technology at home, barriers to access, and using technology. The questions are listed below, and a copy of the survey is available [online](#) as well. The fully spelled-out URL is pasted at the bottom of this section.

If you choose to distribute OBD’s online version of the survey, these survey results will be routed directly to OBD. Because this will include survey responses from all DCCs using the online version of the survey, we will be unable to identify which responses are specifically associated with your DCC.

<https://mndigitalinclusion.wufoo.com/forms/mn-digital-equity-plan-public-survey/>

Technology at Home

1. Do you have non-mobile internet access in your home? Non-mobile means your internet access doesn’t depend on a cell phone data plan or a mobile hotspot.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Yes, I have internet access in my home, but I don’t know if it’s non-mobile

2. How fast is your internet access at home?
 - a. Very fast
 - b. Pretty fast
 - c. Just fast enough
 - d. A little slow
 - e. Too slow
 - f. I do not have internet access at home

3. How reliable is your internet access at home?
 - a. Very reliable
 - b. Pretty reliable
 - c. Just reliable enough
 - d. A little unreliable
 - e. Too unreliable
 - f. I do not have internet access at home

4. If you don’t have internet access at home or if your home internet connection is unavailable, do you go to any of the following places to use the internet instead? Check all that apply.

- a. A public library
 - b. A community center, community gym, or recreation center
 - c. A community organization
 - d. A school, college, or university
 - e. A restaurant or coffeeshop
 - f. A laundromat
 - g. A place of worship
 - h. My place of work
 - i. A friend or family member's house
 - j. Other
5. What tech devices do you regularly have access to at home? Check all that apply.
- a. Laptop computer
 - b. Desktop computer
 - c. Smartphone
 - d. Tablet
 - e. Other
 - f. None
6. Which tech device do you use most often at home? Select only one.
- a. Laptop computer
 - b. Desktop computer
 - c. Smartphone
 - d. Tablet
 - e. Other
 - f. None
7. Does your most frequently used tech device at home have all of the applications and software (such as Microsoft Word) that you need?
- a. Yes
 - b. Mostly, but some additional software would be helpful
 - c. No
8. Do you use any assistive technologies?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I don't know
9. Are there any assistive technologies you need but currently do not have access to?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I don't know

Barriers to Access

1. In the past six months, have you experienced any of the following situations related to internet access?
Check all that apply.
 - a. My home internet was disconnected for five days or more due to a technical problem, bad weather, etc.
 - b. My home internet was disconnected for five days or more due to late payments
 - c. All the data for my cell phone or hotspot got used up
 - d. I tried to get internet access at home but was denied by the internet provider
 - e. I tried to get internet access at home but the process was overwhelming
 - f. I tried to get internet access at home and didn't know who to ask for help
 - g. I wanted to use a public internet connection, such as at a library, but didn't have transportation
 - h. I wanted to use a public internet connection, such as at a library, but didn't have time to during the location's open hours
 - i. I sat outside of a closed building and used their public internet from a personal device
 - j. I went to a friend or family member's house specifically to use their internet connection
 - k. I couldn't use the internet to do what I needed to do because my home connection is slow
 - l. I couldn't use the internet to do what I needed to do because my home connection is unreliable
 - m. I couldn't use an important website because it wasn't written in a language I read fluently
 - n. I couldn't use an important website because it wasn't accessibility for people with disabilities
2. What is the biggest challenge you routinely experience related to internet access? [short answer]
3. In the past six months, have you experienced any of the following situations related to tech devices?
Check all that apply.
 - a. I didn't have the tech device that I really needed. For example, I used a smartphone to do homework or used a laptop from my parked car
 - b. My primary tech device broke and I didn't know who to ask for help
 - c. My primary tech device broke and I couldn't afford to replace or fix it
 - d. My primary tech device was being so slow that I just gave up trying to use it
 - e. I borrowed a tech device from a family member or friend because I didn't have one that worked
 - f. Too many people in my house were trying to share too few tech devices
 - g. I wanted to use a public computer but didn't have transportation
 - h. I wanted to use a public computer but didn't have time during the location's open hours
 - i. I needed assistive technology but didn't have access to it
4. What is the biggest challenge you routinely experience related to tech devices? [short answer]
5. In the past six months, have you experienced any of the following situations related to your tech skills?
Check all that apply.
 - a. I wanted to do something using the internet but couldn't figure out how
 - b. I wanted to do something using the internet but couldn't find help in the language I use fluently
 - c. I asked a family member for help with the internet and technology

- d. I asked a friend for help with the internet and technology
 - e. I asked someone at my work or school for help with the internet and technology
 - f. I asked someone at a public library for help with the internet and technology
 - g. I missed out on something (like attending an online appointment) because I didn't have the digital skills I needed
 - h. I missed a deadline (like paying a bill online) because I didn't have the digital skills I needed
6. What is the biggest challenge you routinely experience related to your tech skills? [short answer]

Using Technology

1. In a typical week, how many days do you spend at least 30 minutes using the internet?
2. In the past six months, have you used the internet for any of the following activities? Check all that apply.
 - a. To complete schoolwork (example: writing and submitting a research paper)
 - b. To do my job at a place of work located outside of my home
 - c. To do my job from my home
 - d. To search and apply for a new job
 - e. To pay bills
 - f. To manage personal finances (example: online banking)
 - g. To apply for government programs (example: submitting an application for food assistance)
 - h. To receive healthcare (example: telehealth appointment)
 - i. To manage the healthcare of a family member (example: refilling a child's prescription online)
 - j. To connect socially with friends and family
 - k. To connect with a therapeutic or support group (example: attending Al-Anon online)
 - l. To connect with a faith-based group (example: attending a religious service through Zoom)
 - m. To conduct personal research (examples: looking up vehicle repair instructions; looking up recipes; looking up a map and directions)
 - n. To make online purchases
 - o. For entertainment (example: watching fun videos; playing games)
3. What are the three most important activities you use the internet for? [short answer]
4. Briefly describe one important aspect of your life that would be different if you had full access to affordable, reliable, fast internet; a tech device with all the right applications and software; and all of the necessary tech skills. [short answer]

Demographics

1. In which Minnesota county or Native Nation do you reside?
2. Including yourself, how many people of any age live in your household most days?

3. How many people under age 18 live in your household most days?
4. Do you relate to any of the following identities or experiences? Check all that apply:
 - a. I live in rural Minnesota.
 - b. I'm Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color.
 - c. I'm a U.S. immigrant or refugee.
 - d. I'm 60 years of age or older.
 - e. I'm under 18 years old.
 - f. I have one or more disabilities.
 - g. I am not fluent in spoken English.
 - h. I have limited English literacy skills.
 - i. I am experiencing poverty.
 - j. I am a veteran of the U.S. military or a veteran from a military outside the U.S.
 - k. I have experienced incarceration within the last two years.
5. What is your employment status? Check all that apply.
 - a. Employed full-time
 - b. Employed part-time
 - c. Unemployed and looking for work
 - d. Not employed and not looking for work
 - e. Retired
 - f. Student
 - g. Prefer not to answer

Focus Group Guide

Instructions for Conducting a Focus Group

Before the Focus Group Convenes

This guide is intended as a framework and a starting point. You know your audience best, so please modify this as needed. Here are a few considerations as you get started:

- Who will your participants be? Will you invite specific people or put out an open call for participation? Will one focus group provide enough information, or do you want to do more than one?
- Who will your helpers be? Do you need a notetaker? Someone to welcome participants at the front door? Someone to provide technical support over Zoom?
- When will your group meet? We recommend at least 90 minutes.
- Where will your group meet? In-person or online?
- Can you provide refreshments?
- Participating in a focus group means providing time, energy, and care. Consider how your DCC might compensate participants for their effort.
- What barriers might people face to participating, and how can you accommodate? Here are some examples; this list is by no means exhaustive:

Barriers	Accommodations
Participants lack reliable transportation to get to venue	Reimburse participants for mileage or provide bus passes. Meet participants in a location that is most convenient for them.
Participants are not fluent in spoken English	Hold separate focus groups in languages that participants are most comfortable speaking or signing. Hire a fluent facilitator to conduct these. Hire an ASL interpreter for participants fluent in ASL. Use plain language. Provide the list of focus group questions a few days beforehand.
Participants have caregiving responsibilities and can't give full attention to the group	Provide on-site childcare for the duration of the focus group. Expand focus group participation to include families rather than just individuals.
Participants have physical disabilities, such as vision loss, hearing impairments, and mobility challenges	If meeting in a physical space, ensure it is accessible for people who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices. Use a microphone. Any information communicated in writing, such as through a handout, should also be read aloud (and vice versa).
Participants are people, and all people experience the world differently and process information differently	Provide the list of focus group questions a few days beforehand so participants have time to reflect and process As participants register, ask about their preferences

During the Focus Group

Here is a sample agenda you can use as-is or build from:

- **Introductions** (15 minutes)
Take time for everyone to introduce themselves. Consider including a simple ice-breaker question to get participants chatting.
- **Creating common ground**
 - Group agreements (5 minutes)
 - Talk through and agree on group expectations and norms. Should one person speak at a time? How should a person indicate when they want to speak next? What are the ground rules around confidentiality?
 - Here are some sample statements of agreement from adrienne maree brown's emergent strategy, published in 2017:
 - Take space, make space. Ensure participants get equitable time to speak.
 - Be open to learning
 - Build, don't sell. Speak to converse and understand
 - Assume best intent
 - Attend to self-care and community care
 - Naming "Why" (5 minutes)
Ensure participants are clear on the purpose of this focus group. The information they share, while it may not be immediately actionable, will play a significant role in shaping the state's digital equity plan. Here's a summary you can read directly to participants:

Today you are participating in a focus group on digital inclusion. "Digital inclusion" refers to a condition in which all people have the option and opportunity to adopt and use technology – including internet access – in ways that enhance their daily lives. The MN Office of Broadband Development (OBD) is preparing a statewide Digital Equity Plan to strategize improvements to internet affordability, access to internet-enabled devices, and access to digital skills training. A draft of this plan will be released in August, and the final version will be complete at the end of this year. This plan is important because it will determine how the state invests future funding in digital inclusion activities.

We have partnered with OBD to help them understand what the real digital inclusion needs and goals are in Minnesota. The insights you share in this focus group will play an important role in shaping Minnesota's digital equity plan. Any information from this conversation that we send to OBD will be fully anonymous, so please speak honestly and openly.
- **Holding the conversation** (30 – 45 minutes).
 - Your role is that of a facilitator (or a notetaker). Sharing your thoughts during a focus group to establish context is useful, but allow most of the time for participants to share.
 - Take a break partway through. This is hard work.

- Be prepared to redirect and encourage. Here are some examples of strategic phrases a facilitator can use to address challenging behaviors:

Challenge	Strategic Phrases
One or two participants are dominating the conversation	<p>“Thank you for those thoughts. Would anyone like to add anything on the point they were making about [the original topic]?”</p> <p>“One of our group agreements is to make space. Let’s hear from a couple people who haven’t shared recently, and then we’ll come back to you if there’s time.”</p> <p>“I appreciate your experience with this topic. Now I’d like to hear from someone else. Who else has some thoughts about this?”</p>
Some participants are silent	<p>“Let’s make sure we’re hearing from everyone. [Name], would you like to answer this question, or should I come back to you in a couple minutes?”</p>
A participant is angry about their digital inclusion experience and wants to vent	<p>“I understand your frustration. Does anyone have a solution to offer?”</p> <p>“I’m sorry you’re experiencing this. Would anyone like to add anything on the point they were making about [the original topic]?”</p>
A participant says something rude or offensive	<p>“Let’s see if we can re-phrase that in a way that is more inclusive.”</p> <p>“I’m sensing some tensions coming up. Let’s take a ten-minute break and then re-convene.” Then talk to the individual participant privately.</p>
A participant is off-topic	<p>“Thank you for bringing this up. Let’s table this topic for the end of our conversation if we have time.”</p> <p>“I hadn’t considered that angle. Let’s spend two more minutes on this topic before returning to [the original topic].”</p>

- **Concluding** (5 minutes)
 - Thank participants for their time.
 - Provide participants with information on who they can contact if they have additional questions or thoughts.

Example Focus Group Questions

Technology at Home

- Let’s start with some simple questions so we understand where each of us is coming from. Raise your hand if...
 - You have internet access at home.
 - You have a laptop at home.
 - Your laptop works.
 - You have a smartphone.
 - Your smartphone works.
 - Your internet at home is fast enough.
 - Your internet at home is reliable.
- How does the digital divide impact you?
- How does the digital divide impact your community?

- Why do you care about digital inclusion?
- Why is digital inclusion important to your community?

Barriers to Access

- What challenges does your household face regarding digital inclusion?
- What challenges do you see your community facing regarding digital inclusion?
- What barriers are specific to your community regarding digital inclusion?
- Tell me about your experience with seeing, hearing, or navigating online content.
- In a typical month, what, if any, challenges do you experience navigating websites and apps?
- Tell me about your experience trying to set up service with an internet service provider.
 - What went well?
 - What should have gone better?
- What individuals or organizations do you trust when you need technology support?
- Tell me about a time you couldn't do something because of a technology barrier.

Using Technology

- What goals does your community have around digital inclusion? This could refer to internet access, device access, access to digital skills training, etc.
- What would be effective ways to increase digital knowledge and/or internet access in your community?
 - What solutions have you heard that sound feasible?
 - What is your knowledge of low-cost internet options or programs in your area? What has your experience been like with these programs?
- Imagine it's five years from now and your community has fully achieved digital inclusion.
 - What does that look like?
 - How is your community different than it was before?
 - How does this digitally inclusive future impact people? Businesses? The workforce? The healthcare system?
- What in your life would be different if you had no access to the internet, a device, or digital skills?
- What in your life would be different if you had full access to the internet, a device, and digital skills?
- Anything you would like to add that can help inform Minnesota's digital equity plan?

1:1 Conversation Guide

Instructions for Conducting a 1:1 Conversation

Before the Conversation

This guide is intended as a framework and a starting point. You know your audience best, so please modify this as needed. Here are a few considerations as you get started:

- Who will your participants be? Will you invite specific people or put out an open call for participation? How many conversations do you intend to hold?
- How will you document the information being shared during the conversation? Will you take notes during it? Will you write up a summary afterward? While audio recordings can ensure all details are retained, be mindful of whether your participants are comfortable with this.
- When will you meet? We recommend at least 30 minutes.
- Where will you meet? In-person, online, or over the telephone?
- Can you provide refreshments?
- Participating in a 1:1 conversation means providing time, energy, and care. Consider how your DCC might compensate participants for their effort.
- What barriers might people face to participating, and how can you accommodate? Here are some examples; this list is by no means exhaustive:

Barriers	Accommodations
Participants lack reliable transportation to get to venue	Reimburse participants for mileage or provide bus passes. Meet participants in a location that is most convenient for them. Hold conversations over the internet or over the phone.
Participants are not fluent in spoken English	Hold conversations in languages that participants are most comfortable speaking or signing. Hire a fluent facilitator to conduct these. Hire an ASL interpreter for participants fluent in ASL. Use plain language. Provide the list of conversation questions a few days beforehand.
Participants have caregiving responsibilities and can't give full attention	Provide on-site childcare for the duration of the conversations. Expand conversation participation to include families rather than just individuals.
Participants have physical disabilities, such as vision loss, hearing impairments, and mobility challenges	If meeting in a physical space, ensure it is accessible for people who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices. Use assistive technology. Any information communicated in writing, such as through a handout, should also be read aloud (and vice versa).
Participants are people, and all people experience the world differently and process information differently	Provide the list of conversation questions a few days beforehand so participants have time to reflect and process. As participants register, ask about their preferences.

During the Conversation

Here is a sample agenda you can use as-is or build from:

- **Creating common understanding** (5 minutes)
 - Take time to introduce yourself and let the participant introduce themselves. Provide a cup of coffee or a snack. If you haven't met before, these introductions will help you build trust with one another.
 - Ensure the participant is clear on the purpose of this conversation. The information they share, while it may not be immediately actionable, will play a significant role in shaping the state's digital equity plan. Here is a paragraph you can read to the participant directly:

Today you are participating in a conversation on digital inclusion. "Digital inclusion" refers to a condition in which all people have the option and opportunity to adopt and use technology – including internet access – in ways that enhance their daily lives. The MN Office of Broadband Development (OBD) is preparing a statewide Digital Equity Plan to strategize improvements to internet affordability, access to internet-enabled devices, and access to digital skills training. A draft of this plan will be released in August, and the final version will be complete at the end of this year. This plan is important because it will determine how the state invests future funding in digital inclusion activities.

We have partnered with OBD to help them understand what the real digital inclusion needs and goals are in Minnesota. The insights you share here will play an important role in shaping Minnesota's digital equity plan. Any information from this conversation that we send to OBD will be fully anonymous, so please speak honestly and openly.
 - Ensure the participant understands their privacy will be respected.
 - The information they share will be fully confidential. When you send information to OBD, all personally identifiable information will be removed.
 - The participant is free to end the conversation at any time. They are in control.
- **Holding the conversation** (20 minutes)
 - Have questions prepared, and also be willing to deviate as the conversation evolves.
 - Your role is that of a facilitator. Sharing your thoughts during a conversation to establish rapport and context is useful, and allow plenty of time for the participant to share too.
 - Be prepared to encourage the participant to elaborate if needed. Questions like "Can you tell me more about that?" or "What does that look like to you?" can be helpful.
- **Concluding** (5 minutes)
 - Thank the participant for their time.
 - Provide the participant with information on who they can contact if they have additional questions or thoughts.

Example 1:1 Conversation Questions

Technology at Home

- Let's start with some simple questions so we understand where each of us is coming from. Do you...
 - Have internet access at home.
 - Have a laptop at home.
 - Have a laptop at home that works.
 - Have a smartphone.
 - Have a smartphone that works.
 - Find your internet at home is fast enough.
 - Find your internet at home is reliable.
- How does the digital divide impact you?
- How does the digital divide impact your community?
- Why do you care about digital inclusion?
- Why is digital inclusion important to your community?

Barriers to Access

- What challenges does your household face regarding digital inclusion?
- What challenges do you see your community facing regarding digital inclusion?
- What barriers are specific to your community regarding digital inclusion?
- Tell me about your experience with seeing, hearing, or navigating online content.
- In a typical month, what, if any, challenges do you experience navigating websites and apps?
- Tell me about your experience trying to set up service with an internet service provider.
 - What went well?
 - What should have gone better?
- What individuals or organizations do you trust when you need technology support?
- Tell me about a time you couldn't do something because of a technology barrier.

Using Technology

- What goals does your community have around digital inclusion? This could refer to internet access, device access, access to digital skills training, etc.
- What would be effective ways to increase digital knowledge and/or internet access in your community?
 - What solutions have you heard that sound feasible?
 - What is your knowledge of low-cost internet options or programs in your area? What has your experience been like with these programs?
- Imagine it's five years from now and your community has fully achieved digital inclusion.
 - What does that look like?
 - How is your community different than it was before?

- How does this digitally inclusive future impact people? Businesses? The workforce? The healthcare system?
- What in your life would be different if you had no access to the internet, a device, or digital skills?
- What in your life would be different if you had full access to the internet, a device, and digital skills?
- Anything you would like to add that can help inform Minnesota's digital equity plan?