

City of Austin – Digital Inclusion: Public Access Survey Delivery

The Peer-City Review was undertaken to compare Austin and its peer cities by identifying public access services to overcome barriers, ensuring all residents have access to the skills and devices necessary to engage in our digital society. The City of Austin Digital Inclusion program measures dashboard goals through six key indicators of connectivity: usage, relevancy, digital literacy training, access, barrier accommodations and awareness. The Digital Inclusion Program staff evaluated Austin and its peer cities across these metrics in order to draw comparisons and track performance over time. This report examines the public access programs of nine peer cities. Cities were chosen based on existing digital inclusion programs and similarity in size and technology innovation to Austin. Cities examined in this report include Austin, Chicago, Kansas City, Miami, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Riverside, CA, San Diego, San Francisco and Seattle.

Chicago

- YOUmedia offers Mentors at several public libraries for teens to develop digital skills.
- CyberNavigators provide one-on-one and class-based digital skills training to nearly 100,000 Chicagoans every year at 49 library locations.
- Internet To Go - a lending program for Wi-Fi hotspots piloted by Chicago Public Libraries for residents to borrow a hotspot from the library for up to 3 weeks at a time.

Kansas City

- Introduction to the Computer; Using Microsoft Windows 7; Internet & Email 101; Microsoft Office Basics
- No info found on staff trainers
- 64 Public Access sites in libraries and community centers
- Connecting for Good: a mobile computer lab that travels throughout the metro area, including Kansas City Public Libraries, teaching everyday digital skills, like online communications and job searching classes.

Miami

- Elevate Miami - 37 City of Miami parks are equipped with computers and offer open lab hours available to all residents. Some offer monitored lab hours during the week where *technology coaches* are available to assist computer users with any questions they may have

Minneapolis

- The City's IT department reviewed the number of computers available to the public at libraries, parks, community centers, and employment and social service organizations. While there are about 1700 public computers available, less than half are open to the general public, and access during evenings and weekends drops dramatically.
- The St. Paul Public Library uses the Northstar Digital Literacy Standards as a digital literacy focus, teaching Basic Computer Skills, Microsoft Office, Email, and Social Media.
- Established new computer labs and training programs with residents and community leaders, USIW-Wireless Minneapolis, Takoda Institute and IT interns, MN Computers for Schools.

- The digital inclusion office has used Interns and an AmeriCorps position through their Community Technology Empowerment project, which bridges the “digital divide” for new immigrants and low-income communities.

Philadelphia

- Through the KEYSPOOT program, the city has provided 50 computer labs to residents throughout Philadelphia. In just four years, public computers at these centers have been used more than 750,000 times to help low-income, homeless, and senior residents apply for government benefits, file taxes, and apply for jobs.
- The Computer and Internet Class (CIC) is designed for individuals who have little or no computer experience, as well as the intermediate computer user. Through the class students become proficient in operating system fundamentals, basic MS Office applications and internet usage while exploring how computers can improve their access to crucial information and resources. The course is supported by Comcast Internet Essentials program.
- Free Library of Philadelphia has renovated 5 neighborhood libraries across the city, each with community-specific focus areas. The 5 focuses are: Family Literacy, Community Partnerships, Health Literacy services for New Americans, Small business owners & entrepreneurs, and Early Childhood literacy services for New Americans.

Riverside, CA

- Offered classes at 18 different locations throughout the city including Park & Recreation Community Centers and schools.
- The Digital Inclusion Program provides deserving families with access to computer labs and monthly technology courses. Upon satisfactory completion of the beginning computer course, qualifying participants are given a free, refurbished computer system for home use.
 - Participants will learn:
 - Introduction to MS Windows and basic computer operation
 - Introduction to MS Office (Word, Excel, Power Point, etc.)
 - Basic Internet Fundamentals
 - Hardware troubleshooting - and more!
- The SmartRiverside Digital Inclusion Program is a program designed for bridging the Digital Divide in our local community. Low-income families do not have the available resources to take advantage of new technologies that can assist in improving their education, communication and overall quality of life.
 - Free refurbished computers are provided to families with a total household income of \$45,000 per year or less. Participants must first complete a free 8 hour training class in English or Spanish, after which time they will receive their free computer.

San Diego

- San Diego Futures Foundation (SDFF) commits to closing the “Digital Divide” by providing beginner and intermediate computer skill classes to disadvantaged individuals.

San Francisco

- SF Tech Connect offers Internet monitoring sessions, where volunteer computer mentors work directly with San Franciscans and help them enhance different aspects of their internet skills on request. They also offer hands-on workshops, which are used to demonstrate specific software applications or hardware devices.

Seattle

- The Technology Matching Fund annually provides grants of up to \$30,000 for technology projects. In 2015, the Fund granted money to 22 local nonprofit groups for a total of \$470,000 in grants. One of the nonprofit recipients is the Big-Brained Superheroes Club, which will provide STEM programs for youth from Yesler Terrace, ages 8 and up. Another nonprofit recipient, the Coalition for Refugees from Burma, will use funds to purchase laptops and provide basic computer literacy courses for newly-arrived refugee adults, conduct trainings for parents of school-aged youth to support their children's education, and offer enrichment programs to engage youth with high-tech concepts and careers.
- In March 2015, the City of Seattle partnered with Microsoft to implement a new free Wi-Fi service at Seattle Center. More than 12 million people visit Seattle Center each year, and this allows users to enjoy fast, free broadband on their devices. This device handles more than 25,000 users at a time and enables speeds more than 100 times faster than the old system.

Digital Inclusion Initiatives Matrix

Public Access Service Delivery Peer Cities Review 2016

	Training & Services Offerings?	Staff trainers available at key facilities?	Trainings offerings focusing on the digital divide?	Public Access training partnerships?	Public Library Training Programs, Computer Lab Operations and Staffings (Paid/Volunteer)	
Austin						
Chicago		YOUmedia offers Mentors at several public libraries for teens to develop digital skills.	CyberNavigators provide one-on-one and class-based digital skills training to nearly 100,000 Chicagoans every year at 49 library locations.	Internet To Go - a lending program for WiFi hotspots piloted by Chicago Public Libraries for residents to borrow a hotspot from the library for up to 3 weeks at a time.		
Kansas City	Introduction to the Computer; Using Microsoft Windows 7; Internet & Email 101; Microsoft Office Basics	No info found on staff trainers		64 Public Access sites in libraries and community centers	Connecting for Good: a mobile computer lab that travels throughout the metro area, including Kansas City Public Libraries, teaching everyday digital skills, like online communications and job searching classes.	
Miami			Computer usage fundamentals, internet and web usage, financial fundamentals, better health through the internet, etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elevate Miami - 37 City of Miami parks are equipped with computers and offer open lab hours available to all residents. Some offer monitored lab hours during the week where technology coaches are available to assist computer users with any questions they may have 	
Minneapolis						
Philadelphia						
Portland						
Riverside, CA						
San Diego						
San Francisco				Google has provided funding for free WiFi in 32 of San Francisco's parks, plazas, and open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SF Tech Connect offers Internet monitoring sessions, where volunteer computer mentors work directly with San Franciscans and help them enhance different aspects of their internet skills on request. They also offer hands-on workshops, which are used to demonstrate specific software applications or hardware devices. 	
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