



Keep Us Connected!



Did you know?

100,000

San Franciscans - **nearly 1 in 8** - lack access to broadband Internet, devices and digital skills.

Older adults, people with disabilities and those from marginalized communities are disproportionately impacted

200,000

or nearly **1 in 4 San Francisco residents are 60 and older**; nearly 30% live alone and many live on low and fixed incomes

94,000

or **1 in 10 San Franciscans report a disability**; 64% are from communities of color and nearly a third live in poverty



San Francisco has the **highest percentage of older adults and people with disabilities** than any other city in the State.



SAN FRANCISCO CAN DO BETTER.

Despite being recognized as a leader in the technology sector, far too many people lack equitable access to technology in San Francisco.

The pandemic has intensified already-existing digital gaps, and has made it acutely difficult to access information, services, and connections online. This reveals a troubling public health and social justice issue that can no longer be ignored.

There are people who live totally alone and they don't have anybody to help them. And we need to get training for our own benefit, to improve our way of life and be able to learn more about technology."

Older Latinx Adult

WHY IT MATTERS.

Connected living contributes to living longer and healthier lives. Paired with assistive technologies, digital access can help remove barriers for people with disabilities and older adults so they can live and thrive independently in their own homes and communities, while staying connected to the rest of the world.

WHAT WE NEED.

We are urging City policymakers to recognize that access to the internet is no longer a "nice thing to have," but a universal human right. Older adults and people with disabilities need **internet access, devices, digital literacy training, tech support, and assistive technology.**

BUDGET PROPOSAL:

We are asking for **\$3.5 million a year for two years (2022-2024)** to strengthen and expand SF Connected Programs beyond current baseline funding to close the digital divide for people with disabilities, older adults, and other impacted communities. The **Keep Us Connected 2022 Campaign** builds on the recent findings from the 2021 Empowered San Francisco Technology Needs Assessment, and would fund items needed as part of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan through the Dept. of Disability and Aging Services.

Broadband Internet Access \$300,000

Increase the number of free or low-cost internet options to ensure that residents with disabilities and older adults have access to high-speed, reliable and affordable internet.

Digital Devices & Equipment \$525,000

Increase the number of free or affordable devices to SF residents with disabilities and older adults, including those with obsolete 3G cell phones.

Equip Sites for Hybrid Programming \$75,000

Provide sites with needed equipment and support to host hybrid activities.

Assistive Technology \$200,000

Increase the availability of free or low-cost assistive technology (AT) equipment, tools and devices that allow individuals with disabilities to live with greater independence.

Technical Support \$300,000

Expand technical assistance programs to assist individuals in using and maintaining their devices and internet, from initial set-up and online tech support (in multiple languages & at sites), including repair and loan programs, and AT options.

Basic Training for New Users \$200,000

Grow the number of free new user digital literacy classes in multiple languages and accessible formats designed to support older adults and people with disabilities.

Outreach and Engagement \$200,000

Expand outreach materials and strategies to raise awareness of available digital resources and to better coordinate efforts to close the digital divide in San Francisco.

Digital Literacy Staff \$1,050,000

- Provide more one-on-one training and classes; hire more computer trainers, tutors, and volunteer coordinators, a majority of whom could be seniors and adults with disabilities (\$575,000).
- Grow the number of bi-lingual trainers and tutors, and those experienced with assistive technology, to better reach those with loss of vision, hearing, dexterity or other disabilities (\$300,000).
- Provide train-the-trainer workshops to ensure service providers have basic assistive technology (AT) knowledge and can provide AT support to patrons with disabilities (\$175,000).

Digital Inclusion Pilots \$500,000

- Continue current successful pilots that are focused on equity and inclusion for individuals and communities historically left behind; identify and launch new pilot opportunities.
- Expand access to telehealth tools and resources in order to improve linkage to healthcare providers and community health resources.
- Launch a Digital Navigator pilot program in partnership with libraries, social service agencies and healthcare organizations.

Language Access & Accessibility \$100,000

Increase the number of digital inclusion resources in multiple languages and accessible formats (Braille, large-print, ASL, captioning) to ensure that non-English speakers and diverse people with disabilities can access digital inclusion resources.

Program Evaluation \$50,000

Conduct an evaluation of program outcomes; different intervention models; and user experiences.

