Request for Contractual Services
Community Anchor Consultants - Project/Job Description

Job Title: Community Anchor Consultants (4 positions available).

Reports to: Southern Tier Digital Equity Coalition (STDEC) Digital Equity Project Manager

Status: Part-time, Temporary, Contractual with a Memorandum of Understanding

Hours: 200 hours maximum per position; the time is flexible and may run for 50 weeks

Pay: Contracted for $15,000 each, to include all expenses such as travel and equipment.

Travel: The four consultants will be required to travel within their area of the region. Mileage will not be covered. Most of the work may be remote.

Position Summary

The Southern Tier Digital Equity Coalition (STDEC) will hire four part-time community anchor consultants to assess existing local digital equity resources (examples of resources). These consultants will identify gaps in available digital literacy assistance throughout the region. They will compile existing training for public librarians and staff at other community anchor institutions to address these needs. In short, these consultants will examine and identify specific digital equity needs in each community and prepare detailed plans for upcoming grant opportunities. Each consultant will summarize findings, conversations, focus groups, etc. and work with the other consultants and regional stakeholders to assist in the development of future digital equity projects or recommendations.

This position will entail working with and considering the needs of people of diverse backgrounds, including aging individuals, formerly incarcerated adults, individuals with disabilities, individuals with language barriers, low-income households, racial and ethnic minorities, rural inhabitants, and veterans.

Three consultants will each be assigned to a public library system's region (Finger Lakes Library System, Four County Library System, and Southern Tier Library System) within the 8 counties explicitly covered by STDEC that include 69 distinct public libraries (14 for FLLS, 30 for 4CLS, and 25 for STLS) and many other community anchors. A fourth consultant will be assigned to the more urban areas, focusing on Binghamton, Elmira-Corning, and Ithaca.

The four positions are as follows:
1. Rural Four County:
   Chenango, Broome & Delaware counties

2. Rural Finger Lakes:
   Tompkins & Tioga counties
3. Rural Southern Tier:
   Chemung, Schuyler & Steuben counties
4. South Central Cities:
   Binghamton, Elmira-Corning & Ithaca

From the focus groups, survey, and needs assessment work done in 2023, we learned that our urban areas have starkly different digital equity needs than the rural areas, though the consultants may choose to invite stakeholders from any background or location to their facilitated discussions. Our target is minimally a total of 300 stakeholder-participants.

Responsibilities and Deliverables

- Hold group, online conversations with public librarians, local non-profits, and other potential partners to discuss digital equity and identify perceived gaps.
  - Each of the three consultants working for the library systems will hold a minimum of 3 online or in-person group conversations with member public library workers and partners, facilitating conversations and forging partnerships in rural communities and small towns.
  - The fourth consultant will hold a minimum of two online or in-person group conversations for each of those cities, with the public libraries and other community anchors.
- Assess digital literacy gaps in each community and develop a plan to address those gaps with any upcoming grant opportunities.
- Develop and provide tailored resources for the community anchor institutions to share with their users where needed, e.g. a list of sites in the community that offer free Wi-Fi, based on the 2023 Asset Inventory.
- Each consultant will determine the feasibility of a culturally relevant digital navigator program for their area, and working with the lead consultant, make a recommendation for STDEC's region.
- Consultants will create a detailed guide that directs community members to community anchor institutions and their public libraries and other organizations (found in the asset map) when they have digital literacy needs (with a focus on the covered populations).

Other information

The guides must be detailed, i.e., including individual names, organizational titles, strengths & weakness, and community-specific concerns and resources. For example, public WIFI should be listed with a street address. If a community lacks capable digital literacy assistance, e.g., a village has just one non-librarian staff member with limited hours, that should be documented and outlined. The purpose of the plan is to have "shovel-ready" digital equity project ideas when the anticipated grant opportunities are released.

Education & Experience

Required

Associate's Degree or higher

Evidence of project management skills

Familiarity with the assigned area.

Experience working with and empathy for people from diverse backgrounds

Benefits

This position is contractual, part-time, and temporary. It does not qualify for employee benefits.

STDEC is committed to a diverse and inclusive work environment to ensure a wide range of experiences, perspectives, and skills to advance the mission of the organization.

Application Process

Applications are due August 29, 2025. Please submit (via e-mail) a meaningful cover letter, resume, and at least three professional references to: Mary-Carol Lindbloom at mclindbloom@scrlc.org.