



Washington State Broadband Office



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Broadband Action Team (BAT) Implementation and Support

We are excited to collaborate on a statewide effort to support and expand Broadband Action Team capacity, with the goals of increasing equitable access, adoption, and the application of broadband technology.

Why are we doing this? If WSBO develops a statewide broadband plan, with *community engagement* to National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), it will bring in extra money! Let's go BATs! This year-long project is divided into two components to help create that plan.

Broadband Action Team (BAT) Support

Washington State University Extension has a presence in every county in Washington, along with a Colville Tribal Extension office and other locations. Extension has experience with the formation and support of Broadband Action Teams (BATs) at the local level and has participated in efforts to increase BAT capacity at a national level.

Assessment August – September	Some counties and federally recognized tribes already have mature BAT activity, some have emerging programs, and some need help initiating a BAT. This assessment to help identify strengths and gaps to lead us to improvements and solutions.
Identify and communicate BAT Success September	<p>An organized working group, inclusively representing the variety and breadth of interests regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• equitable broadband access, adoption, and application• submission of a plan with required components for enhanced broadband access and adoption <p>Achievement of these milestones may entitle a BAT, in association with WSU, access to continued support, the ability to compete for limited grant funds, or other incentives as determined by WSBO.</p>
The work: December – June	Each BAT will move at the pace and direction they need to go with support from each of the Regional Coordinators.
Evaluation: July	To inform program development and adaptation for improvement with a culminating evaluative report which can inform future BAT and digital equity work.
Organizational Structure:	<p>WSU Extension Leadership Team</p> <p>State Broadband Coordinator; leadership and organization</p> <p>Associate Coordinator; subject-matter expertise</p> <p>Eight Regional Coordinators; direct support to BATs, will be qualified to provide training, and will directly conduct BAT support activities as necessary and appropriate</p> <p>County Extension offices will provide logistics and administrative support.</p>

Digital Equity Plan Development

The 2022 Legislature provided the WSBO with \$3,000,000 to support local digital equity planning efforts for each of 39 counties and 29 federally recognized tribal nations. Recipient(s) must submit a qualifying application; to effectively deploy these funds, WSBO will partner with Extension to distribute these funds in the following ways:

Benchmarks for a Qualifying Application to be developed in coordination with WSBO; a partial list of application requirements is as follows:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actively participate in one of two digital equity webinars being co-hosted by WSU, WSBO and the Office of Equity throughout the grant period• Attend a webinar outlining the application requirements• Applicant demonstrates effective plan for utilizing funding toward the completion of a draft county-level or tribal-level digital equity plan,• Applicant includes spend plans for baseline funding and total project costs, and• List of local stakeholders agreeing to participate in ongoing digital equity planning efforts.
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baseline funds of \$20,000 available to every county or tribe who submits a qualifying application• Competitive funding available up to total project cost based on review and scoring of applications
Deadline	Substantive draft digital equity plans (plans) that will be submitted to WSBO and Extension on or before June 15, 2023.
Details of the Plan December – June	<p>Each recipient will produce a draft digital equity plan that details the needs of each County or federally recognized tribal nation and propose specific plans and projects that would be developed in order to promote and support digital equity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• stakeholders involved in plan development<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ the outreach and groups within the county or tribe that have been included in the BAT efforts, including key stakeholders identified in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law where applicable.¹• process employed to inform the draft plan• local and regional broadband service needs and gaps, including<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ unserved or underserved locations, and○ community anchor institutions without gigabit service.• barriers to digital equity faced by covered populations as defined in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.• proposed programs sufficient to promote and support digital equity

¹ H.R 3684, <https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr3684/BILLS-117hr3684enr.pdf>