Opportunity for All:
Digital Literacy and IT Career Equity

Goal: State, local, public, and private partners join forces to eliminate digital illiteracy across the state, and marginalized communities have equitable access to high-demand IT-based careers.

Leaving the digital divide behind

The digital divide must be eliminated for Washington's economy to leave no one behind. The pandemic exposed the tremendous barriers that keep marginalized people and communities from IT-based employment, services and other opportunities. Meanwhile, technology propels Washington's economy forward, and employers clamor for IT talent and hire from outside state borders. The digitally fluent were resilient to pandemic-induced disruptions to work, education, and daily life. It's critical that we make the benefits of a digital world available to all and create pathways for all Washingtonians to access high-wage, in-demand jobs.

WA working together for equity and success

Public and private partners will build upon the current infrastructure and leverage significant resources and proven experience to build a sustainable model and achieve tremendous impact. Lead Entities include:

- **Washington's Workforce Board** - Performance accountability and policy development, partnership communications, fund pool administration, overall collective impact coordination.
- **Washington State University Global Campus** - Work with stakeholders to develop and implement the multi-tiered Digital Literacy program and Workplace Digital Literacy Credential system.
- **Employment Security Department/Washington Service Corps** - Create the IT Service Corps.
- **State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and IT Center of Excellence** - Support development of the navigation portal, and digital literacy curriculum.
- **Mentors in Tech** - Connect marginalized learners to the real tech career world through industry mentors, workshops, capstone projects and internships.
- **Equity in Education Coalition** - Pathways for re-entry and other targeted populations.

Minimum of 10,000 served by year 3

Once the project is fully launched, this partnership aims to help 10,000 Washingtonians per year attain the employer-informed Workplace Digital Literacy Credential.

Project costs

FY25 budget is $7.67 million. FY26 and beyond, based on scale-up projections, is approximately $10.5 million per year.

Technology for daily life

- 32 million Americans struggle to use a computer.
- Half of all Americans say they are not confident in using technology to learn.
- 14 percent do not use any form of technology.

From Digital Resilience in the American Workforce.

Workforce Training & Education Coordinating **Board**
WASHINGTON

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Washington's tech industry employers are investing considerable resources to attract and retain a more diverse workforce, yet report Washington's qualified pipeline is insufficient.

Projected Average Annual Job Openings in Washington

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Avg. Ann. Openings	
		2019-2024	2024-2029
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	8,054	9,205
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	1,237	1,464
12-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	6,253	6,955
15-1241	Computer Network Architects	1,097	1,164
15-1242	Database Administrators	1,058	1,187
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	2,767	3,045
15-1251	Computer Programmers	1,568	1,621
15-1252	Software Developers	38,878	45,548
15-1254	Web Developers	6,785	7,899
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	4,425	4,917
Total		**72,122**	**82,972**

WA's Employment Security Department projects

82,972

openings annually in the 10 most prevalent IT fields over the next 5 years.

Source: Employment Security Department

Washington has highest IT job salaries in the nation!

About

32%

of the tech industry workforce is represented by people of color. Many are recruited via H-1B visas. WA's tech industry employed 36,000 foreign H-1B workers in 2019 alone, most earning over $100,000 annually.

Diversity in Tech Jobs in the USA

Ethnicity	U.S. Population	U.S. tech industry proportion
White	60%	68%
Black	13%	7%
Asian	6%	14%
Hispanic/Latino	18%	8%
Other	2%	1%
Mixed race	3%	1%

ComputerWorld, July 16, 2020. Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2019 estimates, and U.S. Equal Economic Opportunity Commission's Diversity in Tech Report