



**TEXAS BROADBAND
DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**

Leveraging State Digital Opportunity Programs to Expand Digital Literacy

July 30, 2024



Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Ice Breaker
3. Presentation from the Broadband Development Office
4. Roundtable Discussion on State Digital Literacy Programs
5. Closing Statements

ICE BREAKER

House Bill 5 (87R)

- Created the Broadband Development Office (BDO) at the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts in 2021.
- Required the BDO to:
 - Create a state broadband plan (June 2022).
 - Create a broadband development map (January 2023).
 - Implement a broadband development program to administer broadband expansion grants.
- Created the BDO Board of Advisors
- Chaired by the Comptroller with seven appointed members by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, & Speaker

The Texas Digital Opportunity Plan (TDOP)

- Funded by the Digital Equity Act of 2021 as part of the nation-wide Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).
- Serves as a roadmap for the BDO's digital opportunity programs.
- Informs a grantmaking strategy for implementation of funds received through the Digital Equity Act Capacity Grant.
- The final draft was submitted to National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) on Feb. 28, 2024, and accepted on March 28, 2024.
- You can find the TDOP here: BroadbandforTexas.com

The State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program

- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program (SDECGP) was published on March 29, 2024.
- NOFO can be found on [NTIA's website](#).
 - Potential SDECGP subgrantees are encouraged to read through the document as it is guiding the BDO on development of future grant plans.
- BDO submitted SDECGP application on May 27, 2024.
- SDECGP will fund the implementation of TDOP.
- Texas' tentative award allocation is \$55.6 million.
- The BDO is in the early stages of establishing digital opportunity programs.

The Texas Digital Opportunity Plan

Federal legislation requires the TDOP to prioritize improving outcomes for covered populations.
85.6% of Texans belong to a covered population

Covered Population Group	Share of Texas Population
Members of a racial or ethnic minority group (racial or ethnic minorities) ¹	58%
Individuals in households below 150% poverty (low-income households) ¹	23%
Individuals residing in rural areas (rural residents) ²	22%
Persons who are 60 years of age or older (aging individuals) ¹	18%
Individuals with disabilities ¹	11%
Individuals with limited English proficiency (Individuals who speak English less than "very well" or have low levels of literacy) ²	27%
Veterans ¹	5%
Incarcerated individuals ²	1%

The Texas Digital Opportunity Plan

Texas' goals based on the NTIA's measurable objectives:

Broadband Availability and Affordability

- All Texans have access to reliable, affordable internet service at home.

Device Availability, Affordability and Technical Support

- All Texans have access to affordable computers and other internet-enabled devices in their home, with corresponding technical support services

Digital Literacy

- All Texans have a broad foundation of digital literacy skills and access to a continuum of digital skills development programs.

Online Privacy and Cybersecurity

- All Texans feel safe online and are familiar with cybersecurity and online privacy measures.

Online Accessibility and Inclusivity of Public Resources

- All Texans can utilize the internet for public resources and services.

The Texas Digital Opportunity Plan

Strategies to address barriers to digital opportunity in Texas.

Strategy 1: Partner With and Fund Statewide Institutions

- Work with other state agencies and statewide partners already advancing digital opportunity.

Strategy 2: Fund Local Partners

- Create a digital opportunity grant program to fund local initiatives addressing gaps in digital opportunity for covered populations and regions most impacted by the digital divide.

Strategy 3: Promote Internet Adoption

- Support activities to encourage and assist Texans to sign up for and use broadband service as it's made available .

Strategy 4: Maintain a Living Digital Opportunity Plan

- Continue to collect critical data to enable the state and its local partners to advance and iterate impactful programs.

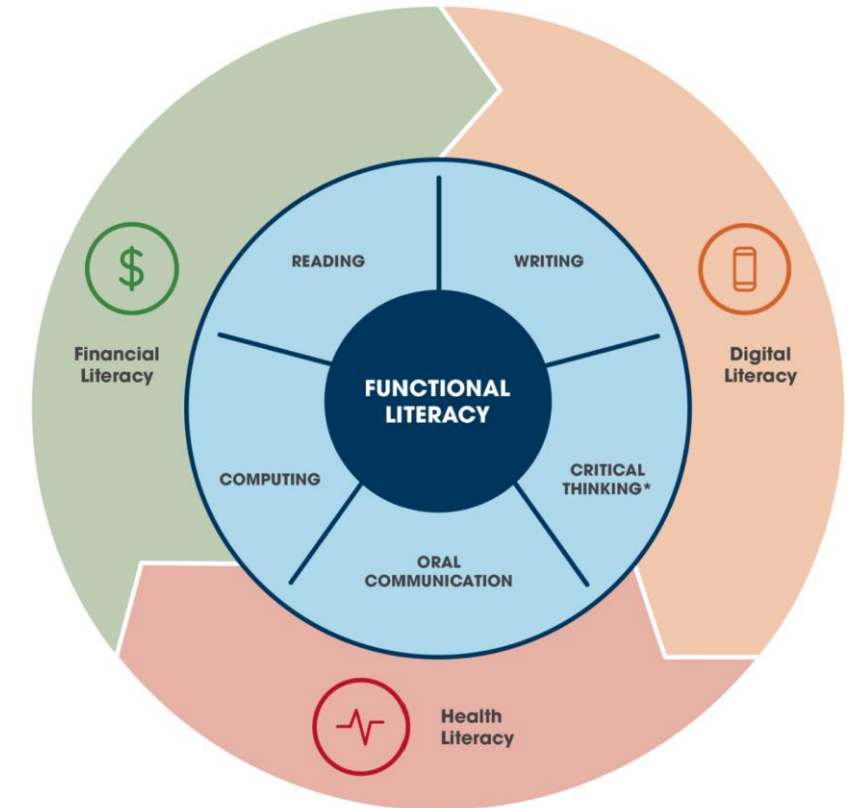
Texas Digital Literacy Goals

Texas Goal 3: All Texans, including those belonging to covered population groups, have a broad foundation of digital literacy skills and access to a continuum of digital skills development programs.

- KPI 3.1 – Increase the percentage of Texans who have basic digital literacy skills, including Texans belonging to all covered population groups.
- KPI 3.2 – Increase the availability of digital literacy programs and services, including those serving all covered population groups.
- KPI 3.3 – Increase the percentage of Texas workers, including those in all covered population groups, who have the level of skills training jobs require, by supporting a continuum of digital literacy skills beyond basic digital literacy.

Digital Literacy to Functional Literacy

- *Digital Literacy- the skills associated with using technology to enable users to find, evaluate, organize, create and communicate information.*
- Digital Literacy is a key component of functional literacy and allows Texans to participate fully in society:
 - Economic development
 - Workforce
 - Healthcare
 - Education
 - Cybersecurity



* Refers to the ability to make decisions, synthesize information, and solve problems.

Source: [Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation](#)

State Programs Involving Digital Literacy

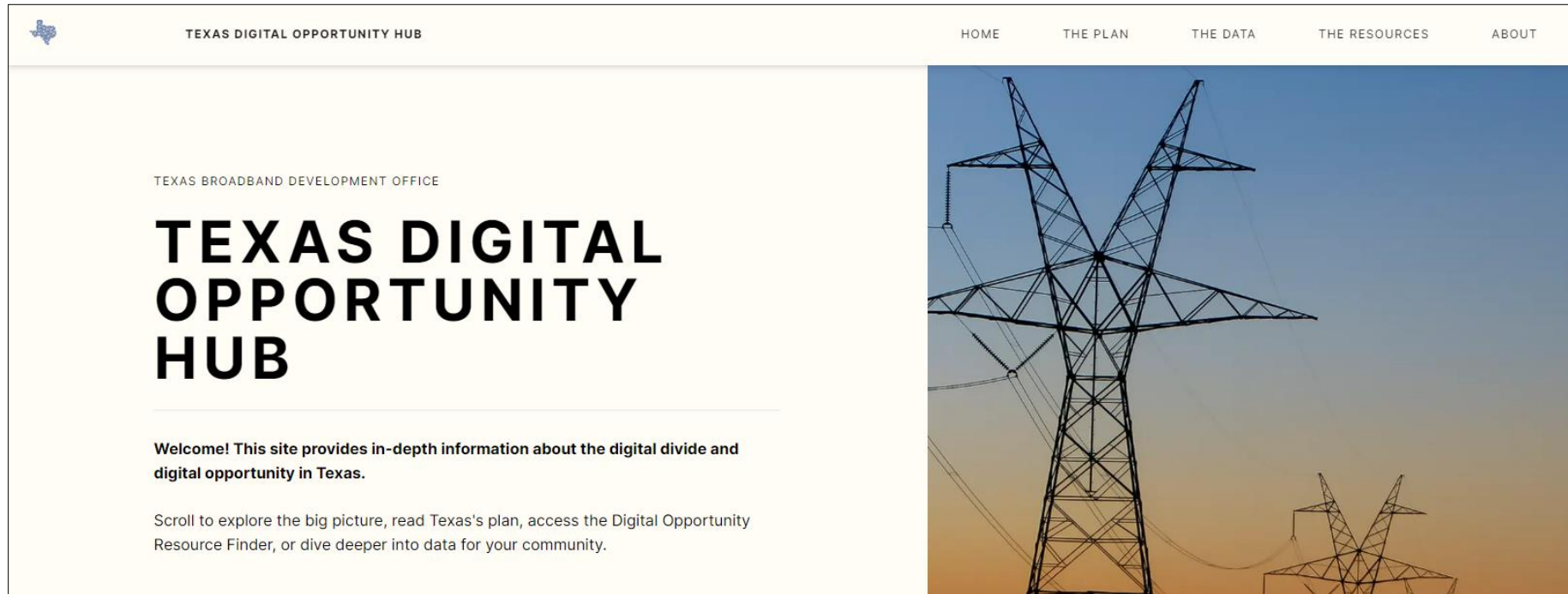
- The BDO relies on stakeholder feedback to inform its grant design.
 - Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC)
 - AgriLife
 - Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR)
 - Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning (TCALL)
- Organizations and subject matter experts in digital literacy programs are encouraged to reach out to the BDO to share insights and knowledge.

The Digital Opportunity Hub!

**Follow along at this link or scan the QR code:
[Digitalopportunityfortexas.com](https://digitalopportunityfortexas.com)**

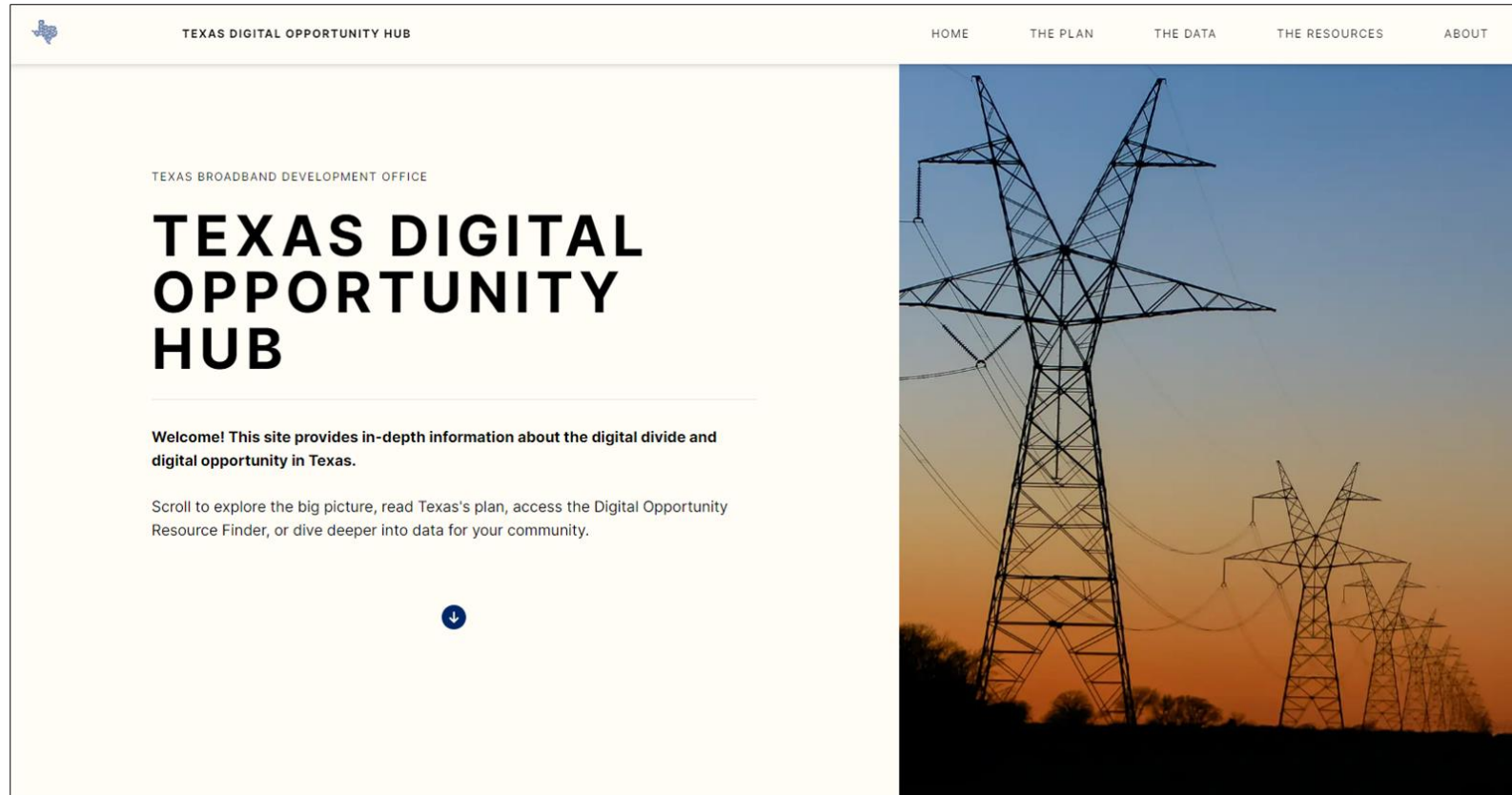


Texas Digital Opportunity Hub



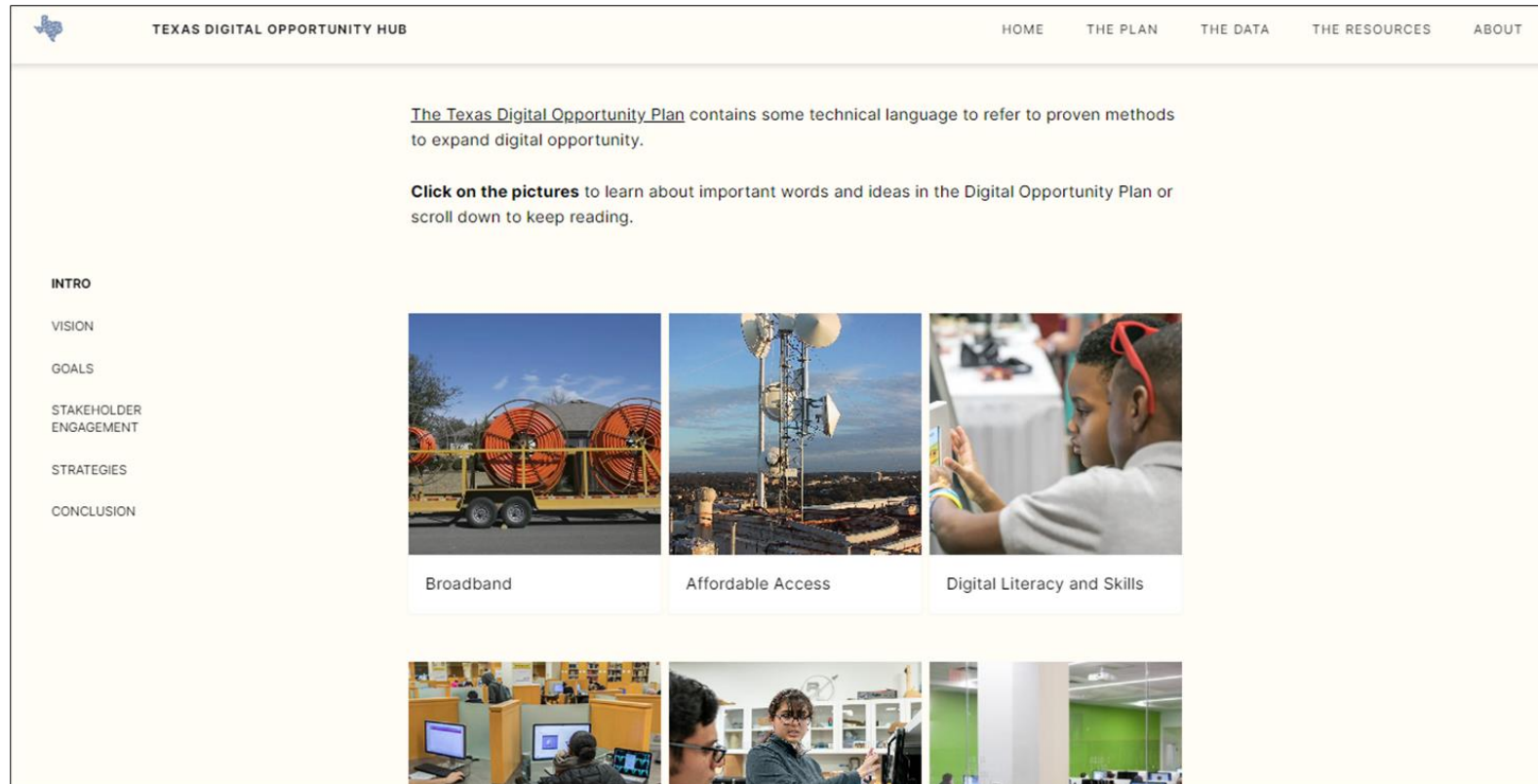
The Hub has four main sections: the Texas Story, the Plan, the Data and the Resources.

The Texas Digital Opportunity Plan: Home



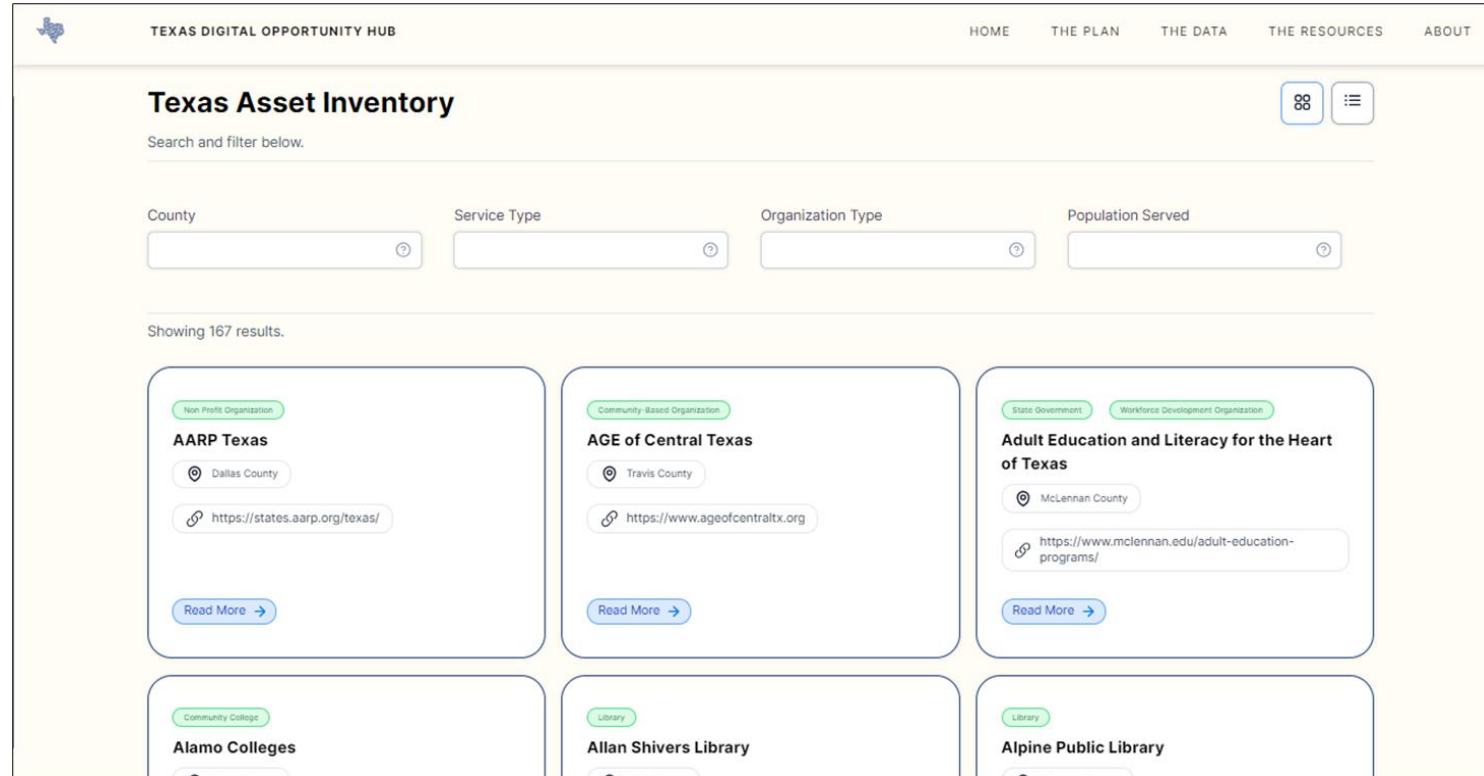
The Home page of the Hub provides a “big picture” story of digital opportunity in Texas.

The Texas Digital Opportunity Plan: The Plan



The Plan page is an interactive online version of the TDOP. It includes information about the State's vision, goals, stakeholder engagement actions, and strategies for achieving digital opportunity.

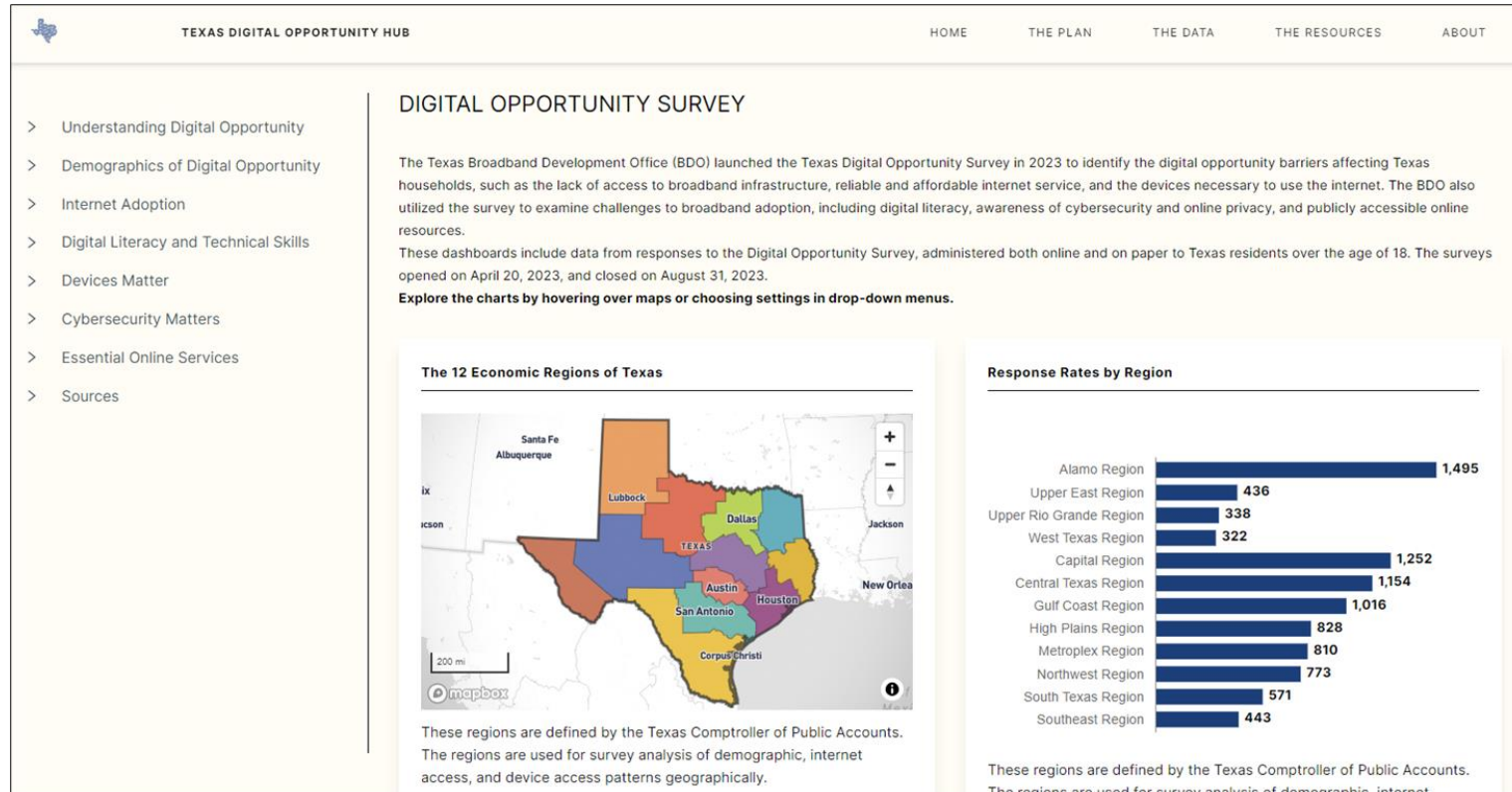
The Texas Digital Opportunity Plan: The Resources



The screenshot displays the 'Texas Digital Opportunity Hub' website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'HOME', 'THE PLAN', 'THE DATA', 'THE RESOURCES', and 'ABOUT'. The main heading is 'Texas Asset Inventory', followed by the instruction 'Search and filter below.' Below this, there are four filterable dropdown menus: 'County', 'Service Type', 'Organization Type', and 'Population Served'. The results section indicates 'Showing 167 results.' and displays a grid of resource cards. Each card includes an organization name, its type (e.g., 'Non-Profit Organization', 'Community-Based Organization', 'State Government', 'Workforce Development Organization', 'Community College', 'Library'), location (e.g., 'Dallas County', 'Travis County', 'McLennan County'), a URL, and a 'Read More' button. The visible cards are for AARP Texas, AGE of Central Texas, Adult Education and Literacy for the Heart of Texas, Alamo Colleges, Allan Shivers Library, and Alpine Public Library.

The Resources page serves as a tool for users to find organizations and programs that address digital opportunity in Texas. These resources can be filtered according to location, service and organization type, and population served.

The Texas Digital Opportunity Plan: The Data



TEXAS DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY HUB HOME THE PLAN THE DATA THE RESOURCES ABOUT

- > Understanding Digital Opportunity
- > Demographics of Digital Opportunity
- > Internet Adoption
- > Digital Literacy and Technical Skills
- > Devices Matter
- > Cybersecurity Matters
- > Essential Online Services
- > Sources


DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY SURVEY

The Texas Broadband Development Office (BDO) launched the Texas Digital Opportunity Survey in 2023 to identify the digital opportunity barriers affecting Texas households, such as the lack of access to broadband infrastructure, reliable and affordable internet service, and the devices necessary to use the internet. The BDO also utilized the survey to examine challenges to broadband adoption, including digital literacy, awareness of cybersecurity and online privacy, and publicly accessible online resources.

These dashboards include data from responses to the Digital Opportunity Survey, administered both online and on paper to Texas residents over the age of 18. The surveys opened on April 20, 2023, and closed on August 31, 2023.

Explore the charts by hovering over maps or choosing settings in drop-down menus.

The 12 Economic Regions of Texas



These regions are defined by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. The regions are used for survey analysis of demographic, internet access, and device access patterns geographically.

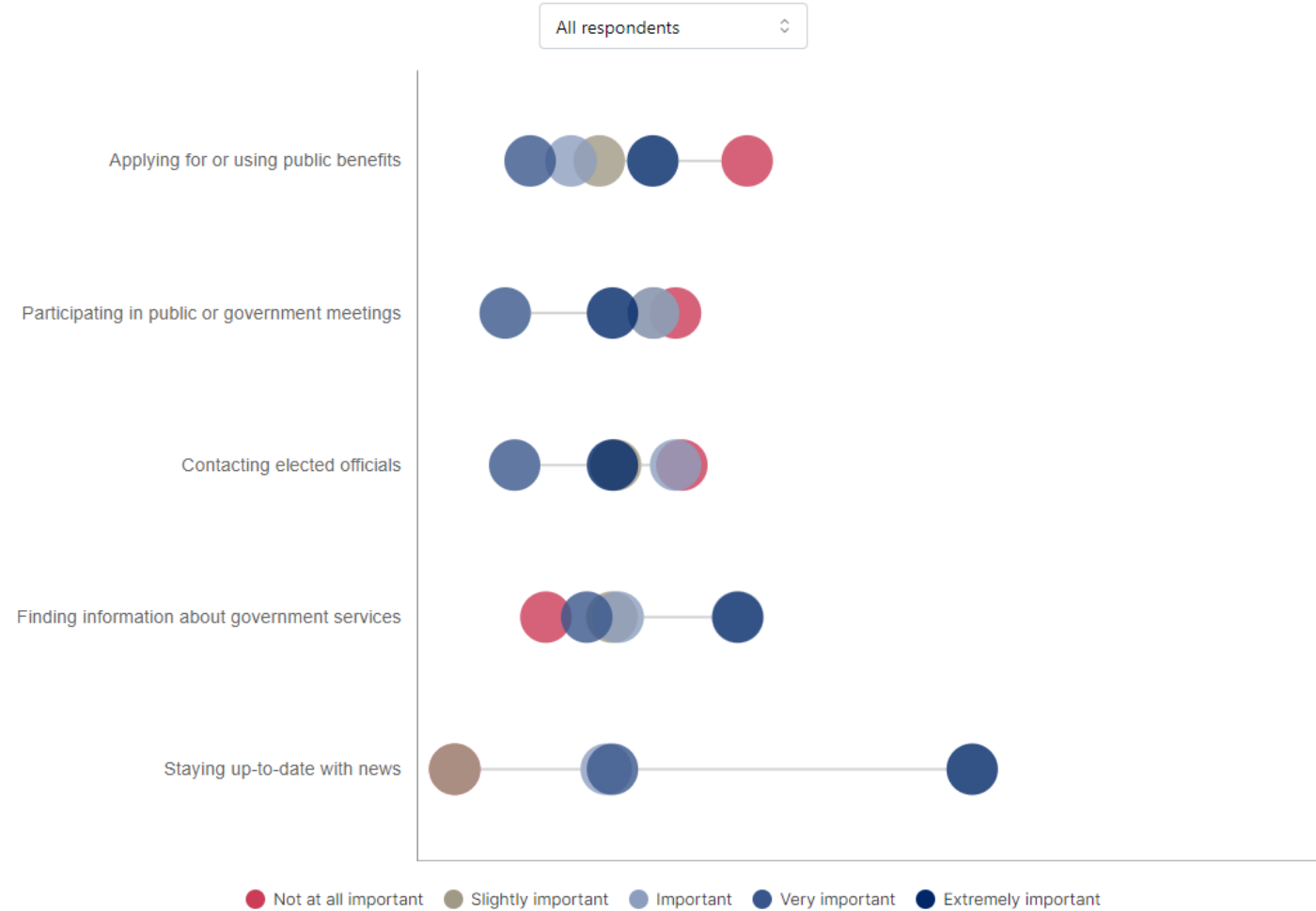
Response Rates by Region

Region	Response Rate
Alamo Region	1,495
Upper East Region	436
Upper Rio Grande Region	338
West Texas Region	322
Capital Region	1,252
Central Texas Region	1,154
Gulf Coast Region	1,016
High Plains Region	828
Metroplex Region	810
Northwest Region	773
South Texas Region	571
Southeast Region	443

These regions are defined by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. The regions are used for survey analysis of demographic, internet access, and device access patterns geographically.

The Data page includes a set of interactive dashboards that dive into critical issues that affect Texans’ digital opportunity. This data can be viewed through the lens of specific geographies and covered populations.

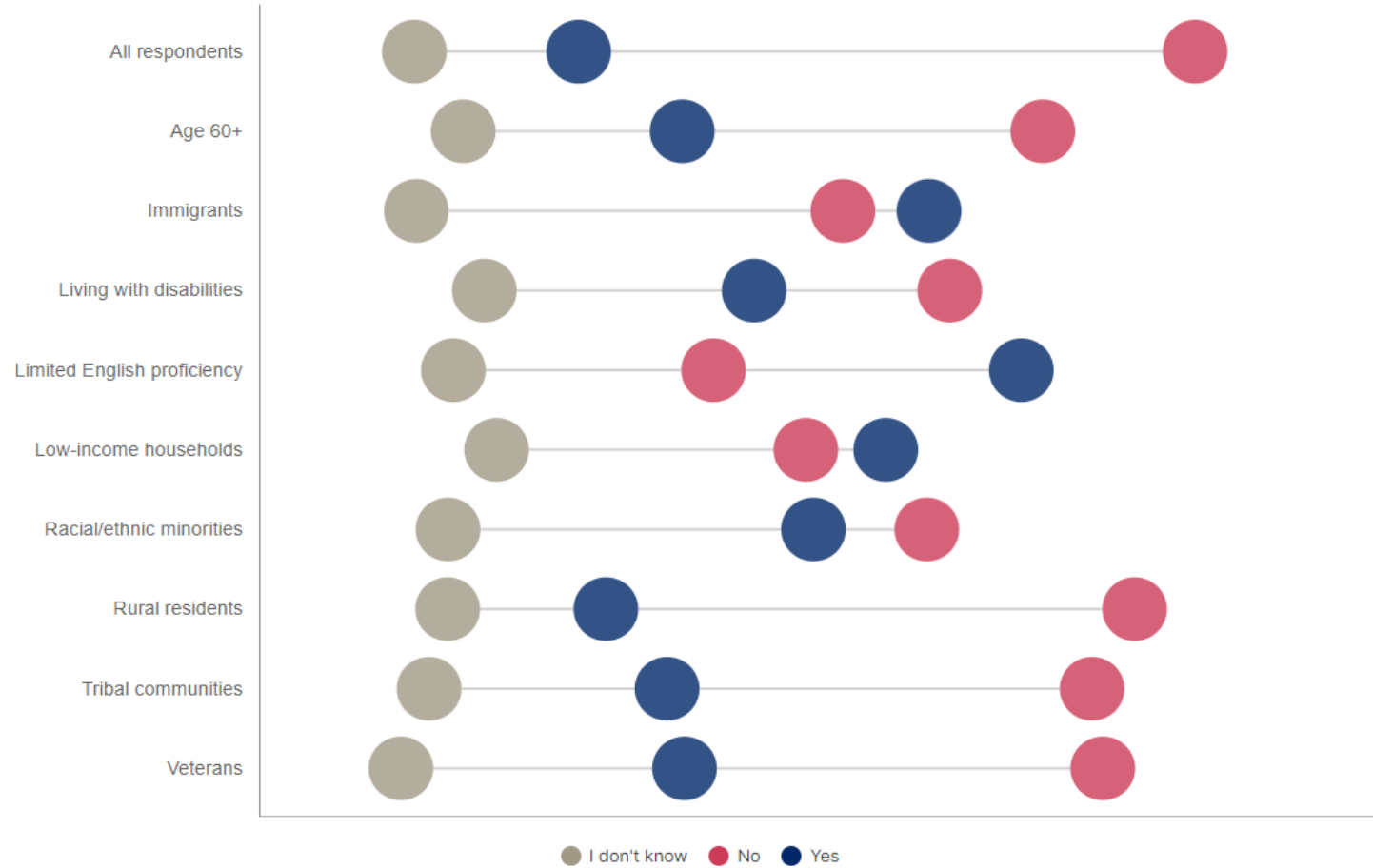
How Important is the Internet for Accessing Public Resources?



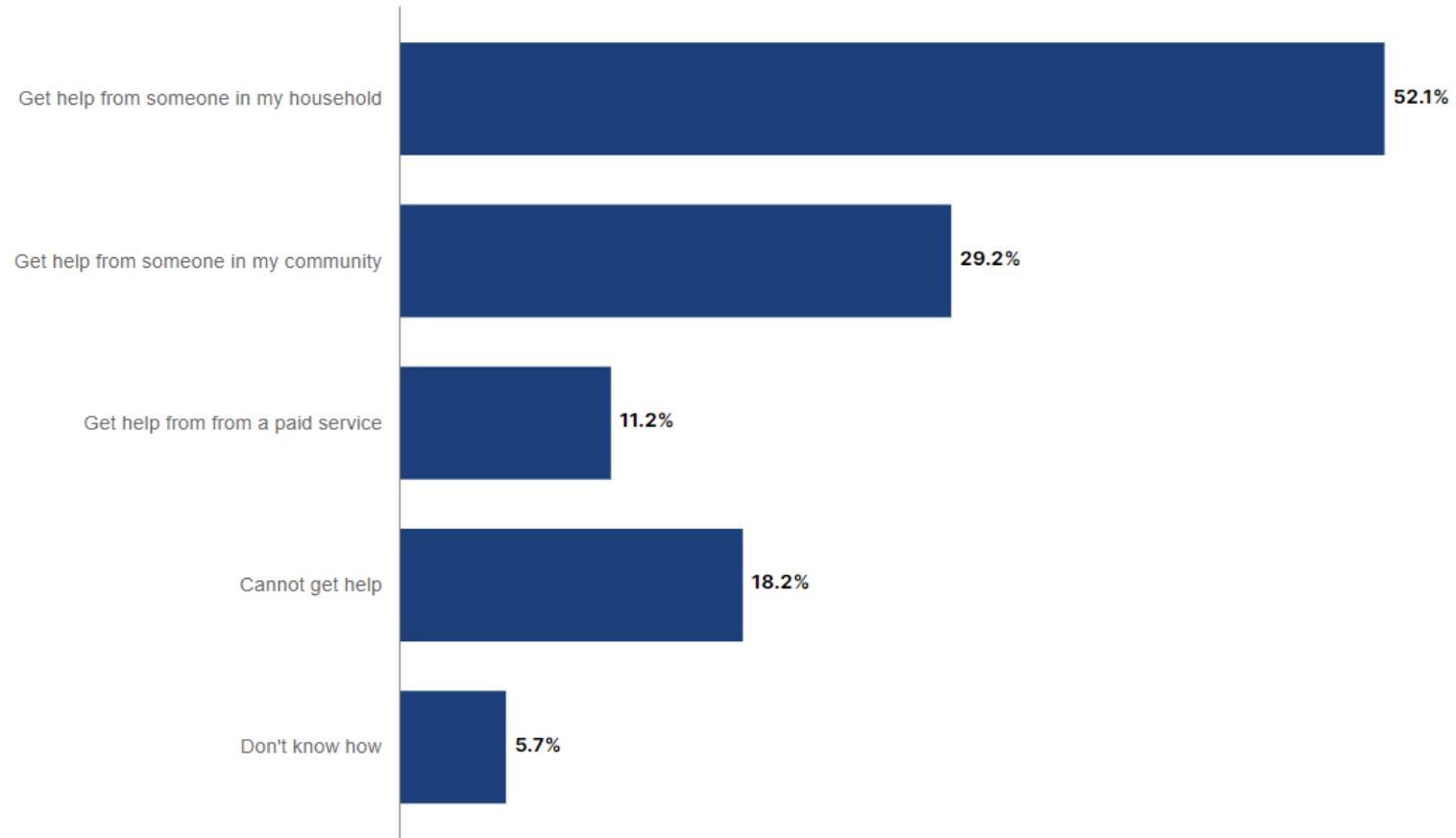
What Public Resources do Texans Use Most?



Interest in Internet or Computer Training Classes



How do Texans Get Technical Support?



Survey Question: If you have trouble with computers or the internet, is there someone in your household or community who can help you? Please check all that apply.

QUESTIONS?

Roundtable Discussion



What are innovative digital literacy programs or strategies you have come across that you think would be useful for building a statewide digital opportunity program?



Think about digital literacy efforts in rural areas compared to urban areas. What methodologies should we consider to address the unique needs of each?



If your organization focuses on a covered population, what are the specific digital literacy needs for that group?



What should the state consider when creating and supporting digital literacy programs?

Thank you for your participation!

Connect with the BDO

Monthly roundtable:

- [Local Government and Community Roundtable](#)– first Thursday of every month at 10 a.m.
- [Sign up](#) for monthly newsletters and announcement.
- Visit our [outreach page](#) to learn about all opportunities to engage with our office.

Web:

- [BroadbandForTexas.com](#) - BDO website
- [DigitalOpportunityForTexas.com](#) - Digital Opportunity Hub

Questions?

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