



Digital Equity Advisory Panel Terms of Reference

Committee type

Advisory – Formed in response to recommendations for municipal action following research conducted by The University of Calgary on current policy and best practices for closing the Digital Divide to provide advice on digital equity. This committee type is time-limited and typically dissolves after work has been completed.

Purpose

- To oversee the development of a community based digital equity strategy including the principles, priorities, and strategic actions to bridge the digital divide and move toward digital equity
- To build a collective, community approach to ensure Calgarians have the hardware, access, and digital literacy skills the need to fully engage and participant online in our community, economy, and society
- Advise on emerging issues and risks in Calgary context
- To support new programs, services, interventions, and policy in being inclusive and accessible to all Calgarians
- To support culture change within Calgary
- To support The City of Calgary in engaging Calgarians and in telling the story of the digital divide and the work being done to bridge the gap
- To provide input into phasing and/or implementation of Calgary initiatives related to the digital divide
- To provide guidance and a united voice on advocacy efforts
- When appropriate, to provide support in implementation of Calgary initiatives
- Advocate and support alignment of digital equity in broader equity policy and strategy work, recognizing that digital equity is a result of broader inequities in our community

Expected outcomes

To build a collective, community approach to ensure Calgarians have the hardware, access, and digital literacy skills they need to fully engage and participate online in our community, economy and society. Which is inclusive of:

- Strategies and actions that overcome barriers

- Areas of focus for long term advocacy
- Recommendations for policy shift within The City of Calgary and suggested considerations for community organizations
- Recommendations to consider for virtual application design and service delivery within CoC and member organizations
- Phasing of short- and long-term community interventions
- Plan for ongoing community engagement and coordination of support efforts

Composition

This advisory panel is led by the Digital Equity Team and is made up of self-appointed and role based individuals who are a mix of internal City of Calgary representatives accountable for key CoC functions as well as external representatives with subject matter expertise in key knowledge areas. The goal of this advisory group is to ensure an adequate level of diversity with enabling the advisory group to deliver timely recommendations and other strategic deliverables.

Roles

CoC members will have accountability and expertise in one or more of the following areas

- Strategic development and policy review
- Community engagement
- Smart City design, technology, and application architecture related to digital equity
- Social impacts of equity and inclusion
- Understanding and adherence to City of Calgary governance and best practices

Community members with subject matter expertise in one or more of the following areas

- Implementation of social impact programming
- Accessible technology
- Inclusive policy design
- Social advocacy

Responsibilities

- The main responsibility for all advisory members is to provide their perspective on a community focused Digital Equity Strategy to be written and enabled by CoC
- Organizations on the panel will act as a conduit between the community members it supports, The City of Calgary and the other organizations offering supports to reducing the digital divide
- The Advisory panel will provide input into design of a community based Digital Equity Strategy written by The City of Calgary.
- When appropriate, the advisory panel will provide strategic advice in the development of strategy principles, actions and recommendations

Meeting Structure

Following September 2022, advisory panel meetings will be held on a quarterly basis for approximately 90min. Meeting date and time will be set at the preceding meeting.

Quorum

Quorum will be considered met when 50% of membership is in attendance. For organizations with more than one individual listed in schedule 1, attendance is considered met when one individual is present. If this cannot be met, the meeting will be rescheduled.

Decision-making

Whenever possible, the advisory panel will use a consensus model for making decisions related to advisory panel business. Decisions will be considered final when advisory members:

- Have had the opportunity to review options and provide feedback
- Can understand the results of the decision

When a formal decision is required, a majority vote will take place. Where consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote of 50% plus one of members present will be required. For organizations with more than one individual listed in schedule 1, votes will be allotted based on organization.

Information sharing and communications

The Digital Equity team or a designate will distribute an agenda including the following items at least one week prior to each meeting:

- Existing Business
 - Outstanding items and tasks for previous meeting(s)
 - Updates on assigned tasks
- New Business
 - Items brought forward for recommendations or input
 - Presentations on pilot projects
 - Feedback on prior recommendations

Accountability

The Digital Equity Team and subsequent advisory group are accountable to The City of Calgary through the executive sponsors Jan Bradley, Director, Chief Information Technology Officer, Information Technology and Melanie Hulsker, Director, Community Strategies

Definition of key terms

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): Refers to the technology tools and the process that enables those tools to connect, store, create, and exchange information. This is inclusive of computers and the software, middleware, storage, data, and audiovisual supports used with them as well as telecommunications inclusive of devices, telephone lines, and wireless signals.

Digital: Digital refers to the use of computer technologies, such as internet platforms, social media, mobile and other technology devices etc.

Digital Divide: The digital divide refers to the disparity in access to information and information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a result of affordability, accessibility, and digital literacy between society's 'have' and 'have not' groups.

Digital Equity: Digital equity can be defined as a situation in which all individuals and communities have the necessary access to ICT to enhance participation in cultural and civic activities, employment, access to digital learning, connection to family and friends, and access to essential benefits and services.

Digital Literacy: Digital literacy refers to the skills and abilities required to navigate a society where digital technologies, such as internet platforms, social media, mobile devices etc., facilitate communication and access to participation in cultural and civic activities, employment, learning, social networks, and essential services.

Digital Normalcy: Digital normalcy is the normalization of digital technologies in all aspects of people's lives.

Broadband Internet: Refers to wide bandwidth data transmissions on multiple signals over a variety of frequencies resulting in fast, reliable, stable internet service. In Canada, the minimum standard speed as set by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunication Commission is 50 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload.

Approval signatures



Sylvain Mayer, Manager IT, for

December 9, 2022

Jan Bradley
Director, Chief Information Technology Officer
Information Technology

Date



Melanie Hulsker
Director
Community Strategies

December 8, 2022

Date