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190968

Emergency Ordinance

***Authorize the Director of the Office for Community Technology to execute Digital Inclusion Fund grant agreement with Free Geek in amount not to exceed \$87,500 for FY 2022-23**

Passed

The City of Portland ordains:

Section 1. The Council finds:

1. On June 8, 2022, Council Approved an allocation of \$250,000 to the Digital Inclusion Fund (Ordinance 190868).
2. The Digital Inclusion Fund is made possible through an annual allocation from the City's general fund and is a mechanism for City investment in community-led digital adoption strategies designed to support populations disproportionately affected by the digital divide.
3. Thirty percent (30%) of the resources annually are intended to support small businesses, and seventy percent (70%) of the resources annually are intended to support the needs of individuals and the community at large.
4. On March 22, 2022, under the direction of diverse community leaders, the Office for Community Technology launched a grant initiative that requested grant applications from community-based organizations for projects that sustain existing or innovate new digital training and support services to meet the needs of people disproportionately affected by the digital divide.
5. The goals of the Community Digital Navigator Pilot Grant Opportunity are 1) To build or scale Digital Navigator programs to ensure people, including Black, Indigenous, People of Color, People with Disabilities, and Seniors, are able to use digital technology and the internet, and are building foundational digital skills to achieve economic, health, and social wellbeing; 2) To ensure trusted community-based organizations are building capacity—by sustaining existing services or innovating new services—to serve the digital adoption needs of people disproportionately affected by the digital divide; and 3) To learn about persistent digital adoption barriers and to document the types of services and supports people affected by the digital divide need that could be supported by the Digital Inclusion Fund.
6. On April 18, 2022, a Digital Inclusion Fund Grant Selection Committee comprised of diverse community members evaluated the 10 grant applications received and independently scored each proposal and deliberated to determine funding selections.

Introduced by

[Commissioner Carmen Rubio](#)

Bureau

[Office for Community Technology](#)

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Requested Agenda Type

Consent

7. On June 2, 2022, based on Selection Committee recommendations, City Council authorized the Director of the Office for Community Technology to enter into grant agreements with Rosewood Initiative, AfroVillage-NECN, and the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber using FY21-22 Digital Inclusion Fund funding (Ordinance 190859).
8. At the time of Selection Committee deliberation, the Committee agreed that an effective Community Digital Navigator Pilot program would significantly benefit if additional funding were available to support the application submitted by Free Geek.
9. The Free Geek application was a top scoring application and, according to the Selection Committee, presented a unique opportunity for the City to partner with a longstanding community-based organization experienced in providing digital inclusion programming. Free Geek presented in its application that it is poised to scale its Digital Navigator program and documented community demand for increased services. Therefore, the Selection Committee recommended that the Office for Community Technology seek authorization in the new fiscal year to award FY22-23 Digital Inclusion Fund resources to support the Free Geek grant application.
10. City grantmaking policies require the Office for Community Technology to seek authorization to award funds to selected Digital Inclusion Fund grantees per fiscal year.
11. The City Attorney's Office has approved the grant agreement template attached as Exhibit A.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Council directs:

- A. The Director of the Office for Community Technology to execute a grant agreement in a form substantially similar to the agreement attached as Exhibit A with Free Geek. The total amount of grant funding authorized by this Ordinance shall not exceed \$87,500.
- B. Amendments to the grant agreements, including Scope of Work and grant agreement funding amount, may be executed by the Director of the Office for Community Technology or the Director's designee, provided the amendments do not increase the fiscal risk to the City.
- C. In the event the Office for Community Technology is unable to execute a grant agreement with Free Geek, the Office for Community Technology is hereby authorized to execute a substantially similar grant agreement with a qualifying grant applicant recommended by the Grant Selection Committee provided that the grant is equal to or less than \$87,500.

Section 2. The Council declares an emergency exists because a delay in funding could result in harmful delay in the provision of no-charge services to Black, Indigenous and communities of color by these organizations through these agreements; therefore, this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage by the Council.

Documents and Exhibits

 [Exhibit A](#) (41.34 Kb)

An ordinance when passed by the Council shall be signed by the Auditor. It shall be carefully filed and preserved in the custody of the Auditor (City Charter Chapter 2 Article 1 Section 2-122)

Passed by Council

August 24, 2022

Auditor of the City of Portland

Mary Hull Caballero

Impact Statement

Purpose of Proposed Legislation and Background Information

This Ordinance authorizes the Director of the Office for Community Technology (OCT) to execute a Digital Inclusion Fund Grant Agreement with Free Geek in an amount not to exceed \$87,500.

The goals of the Digital Inclusion Fund are: 1) To ensure people, including Black, Indigenous, People of Color, People with Disabilities, and Seniors, and small and emerging BIPOC businesses are able to use digital technology and the Internet, and are able to build foundational digital skills to achieve economic, health, and social wellbeing; 2) To ensure trusted community-based organizations are building capacity—by sustaining existing services or innovating new services—to serve the digital adoption needs of people disproportionately affected by the digital divide; and 3) To learn about persistent digital adoption barriers and to document the types of services and supports people affected by the digital divide need that could potentially be supported by the Digital Inclusion Fund.

In March 2022, under direction from community leaders, OCT launched the Community Digital Navigator grant opportunity. In April 2022, OCT convened a Digital Inclusion Fund Selection Committee comprised of diverse individuals from the community with lived or work experience with the digital divide to evaluate the grant applications received.

The Selection Committee recommended FY21-22 Digital Inclusion Fund grants be awarded to The Rosewood Initiative, AfroVillage-NECN, and the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber.

The Selection Committee further recommended that OCT utilize FY22-23 Digital Inclusion Fund resources to fund the Free Geek application.

Together the four grantees, Rosewood, AfroVillage-NECN, Hispanic Metro Chamber, and Free Geek, create a network of Digital Navigators throughout the City. The collective geographical reach represents an ability to deliver comprehensive digital navigation programming ensuring people experiencing barriers to digital inclusion are able to use digital technology and the internet and are building foundational digital skills to achieve future economic, health, and social wellbeing.

Incorporating Free Geek into the inaugural Pilot year cohort ensures an effective pilot program. Free Geek brings significant experience in delivering digital navigation services and will be a leading contributor to the pilot year Digital Navigator community of practice.

Financial and Budgetary Impacts

This legislation has no financial and/or budgetary impacts. A grant award to Free Geek under the Community Digital Navigator Pilot Program is supported by the annual general fund allocation to the Digital Inclusion Fund. There are sufficient FY22-23 funds available to support this grant.

Community Impacts and Community Involvement

The Community Digital Navigator Pilot Grant Opportunity, an inaugural funding opportunity supported by the Office for Community Technology Digital Inclusion Fund, was designed to help build capacity in community-based organizations that center and understand the needs of people, particularly Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), People with Disabilities, and Seniors, that experience digital inequities.

Under the guidance of the communities most impacted by the digital divide, OCT developed the Community Digital Navigator Pilot Grant Opportunity, which is intended to serve community at-large and is focused on creating a network of community-led digital training support programs (called "Digital Navigators") throughout Portland.

Digital Navigators are people in the community who become experts in navigating internet service and computing device options, and who are able to provide culturally-responsive digital skills training and technical support. The Digital Navigator model addresses multiple layers of becoming digitally included and supports tailoring services to the needs and goals of each individual served. Digital Navigators help people connect and participate in today's digital economy and society.

100% Renewable Goal

This action does not increase or decrease the City's energy use.

Agenda Items

716 Consent Agenda in [August 24, 2022 Council Agenda](#)

Passed

Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty Absent

Commissioner Mingus Mapps Yea

Commissioner Carmen Rubio Yea

Commissioner Dan Ryan Yea

Mayor Ted Wheeler Yea