DRAFT HAWAI'I DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
OPEN THRU OCTOBER 31, 2023

CLOSING THE GAP: FEDERAL SUPPORTS ≈$400M
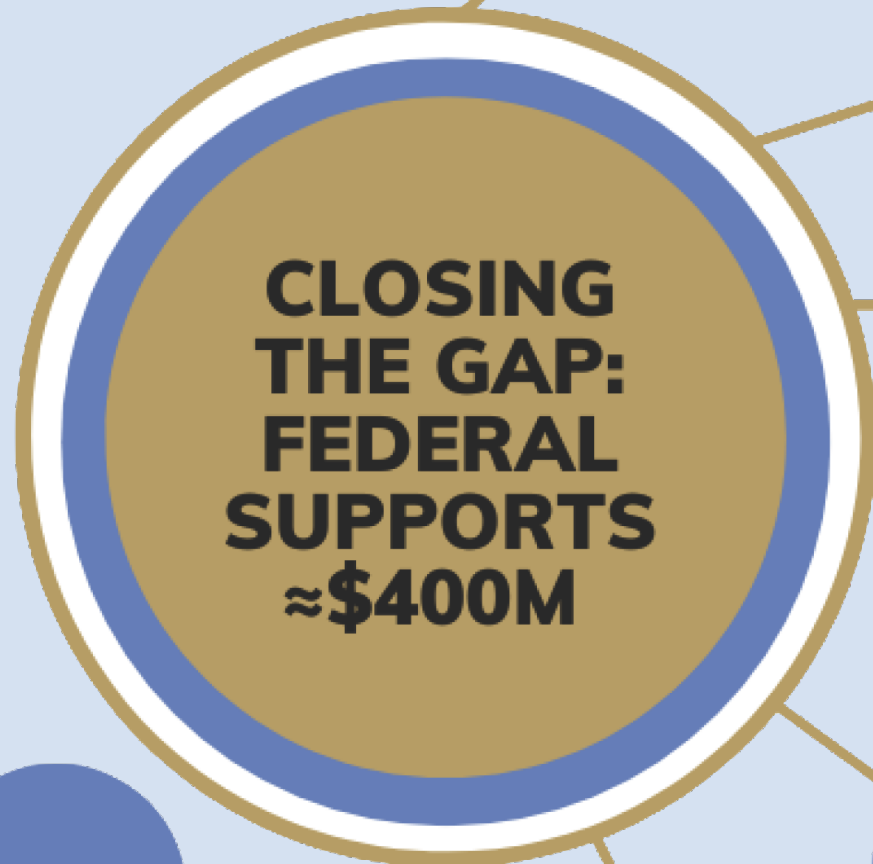
$149.5M — BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS, AND DEPLOYMENT PROGRAM — UH
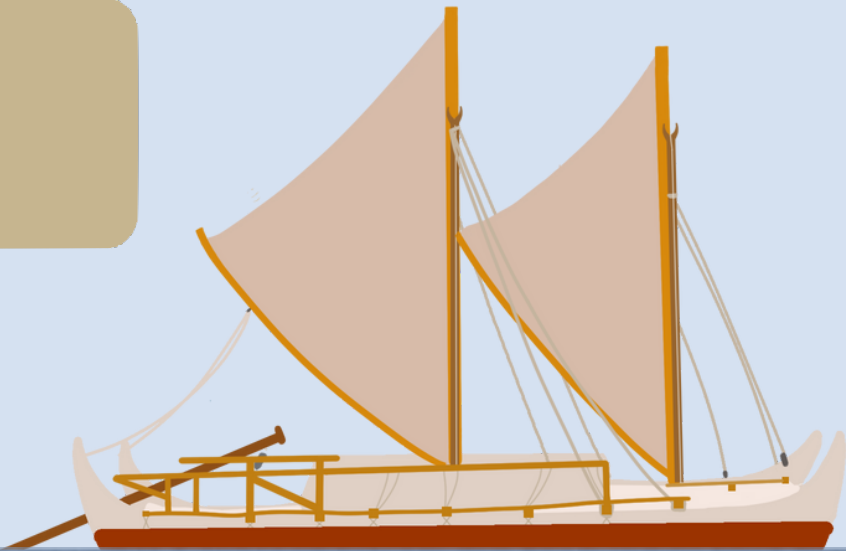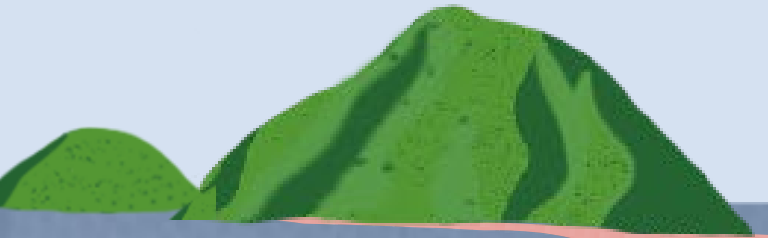
$115M — CORONAVIRUS CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND (CPF) — UH

$90M — TRIBAL BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM — DHHL

$37.4M — MIDDLE MILE GRANT PROGRAM — HAWAIIAN TELCOM

$571K — DIGITAL EQUITY ACT PLANNING AND CAPACITY PROGRAM — DBEDT

≈$1M — ACP OUTREACH GRANT PROGAM — DBEDT 'ELEPAIO SOCIAL SERVICES

$16.6M — AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM (ACP) *DIRECT TO CONSUMER

What is Digital Equity?

According to the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA), digital equity is:

A condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy and economy;

Necessary for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services."

About Hawaiʻi's Digital Equity Plan

- Once final, Hawaiʻi's Digital Equity Plan will serve as a roadmap to achieve a baseline of digital equity across the islands over the next five years.

- Let's ensure our kamaʻāina and ʻohana are not excluded from opportunities due to the digital divide - career development, socializing, healthcare, etc.

- Create conditions in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy throughout Hawaiʻi.

Covered Populations

The planning and outreach process focused on "covered populations," a broad description used by the NTIA that includes various populations within our community that are identified as having unique needs and barriers related to digital access. These covered populations include those identified by NTIA as well as those identified through our planning partners and process.

|			
Covered Households	Individuals who live in households with income below 150% of the poverty threshold	**Individuals with a Language Barrier**	Individuals with a language barrier, including individuals who are English learners and have low levels of literacy
Kūpuna (Aging Individuals)	Individuals aged 60 years or older	**Racial or Ethnic Minorities**	Individuals whose race or ethnicity is non-dominant within Hawai'i
Incarcerated Individuals	Inmates confined in a prison or a jail, other than those in a Federal correctional facility	**Rural Residents**	Any town with less than 50,000 residents and not an urbanized area next to a town with 50,000 or more residents
Veterans	Individuals who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and were honorably discharged or released		
Individuals with Disabilities	Individuals with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits life activity	**Native Hawaiians**	Individuals who trace their ancestry to those who inhabited Hawai'i prior to 1778

He waʻa he moku, he moku he waʻa.

The canoe is an island, the island is a canoe.
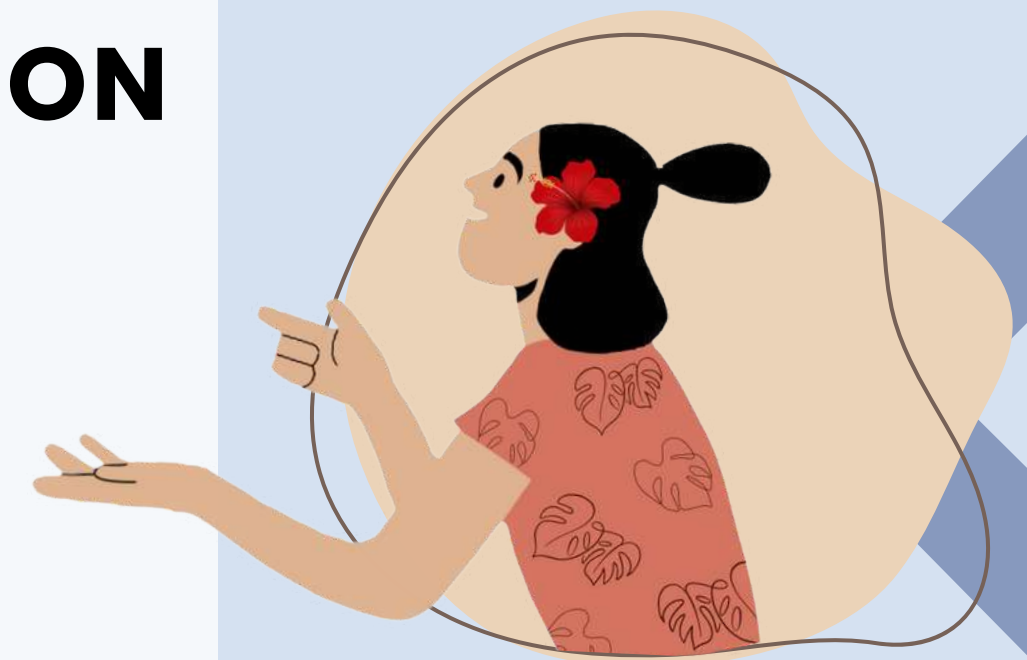
— Native Hawaiian Proverb
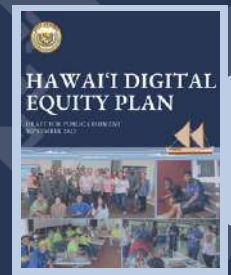
VISION

All who call Hawaiʻi home have the confidence, ability, and pathways to thrive in a digital world.

MISSION

To design and enable systems that perpetually empower our people through access to digital resources.
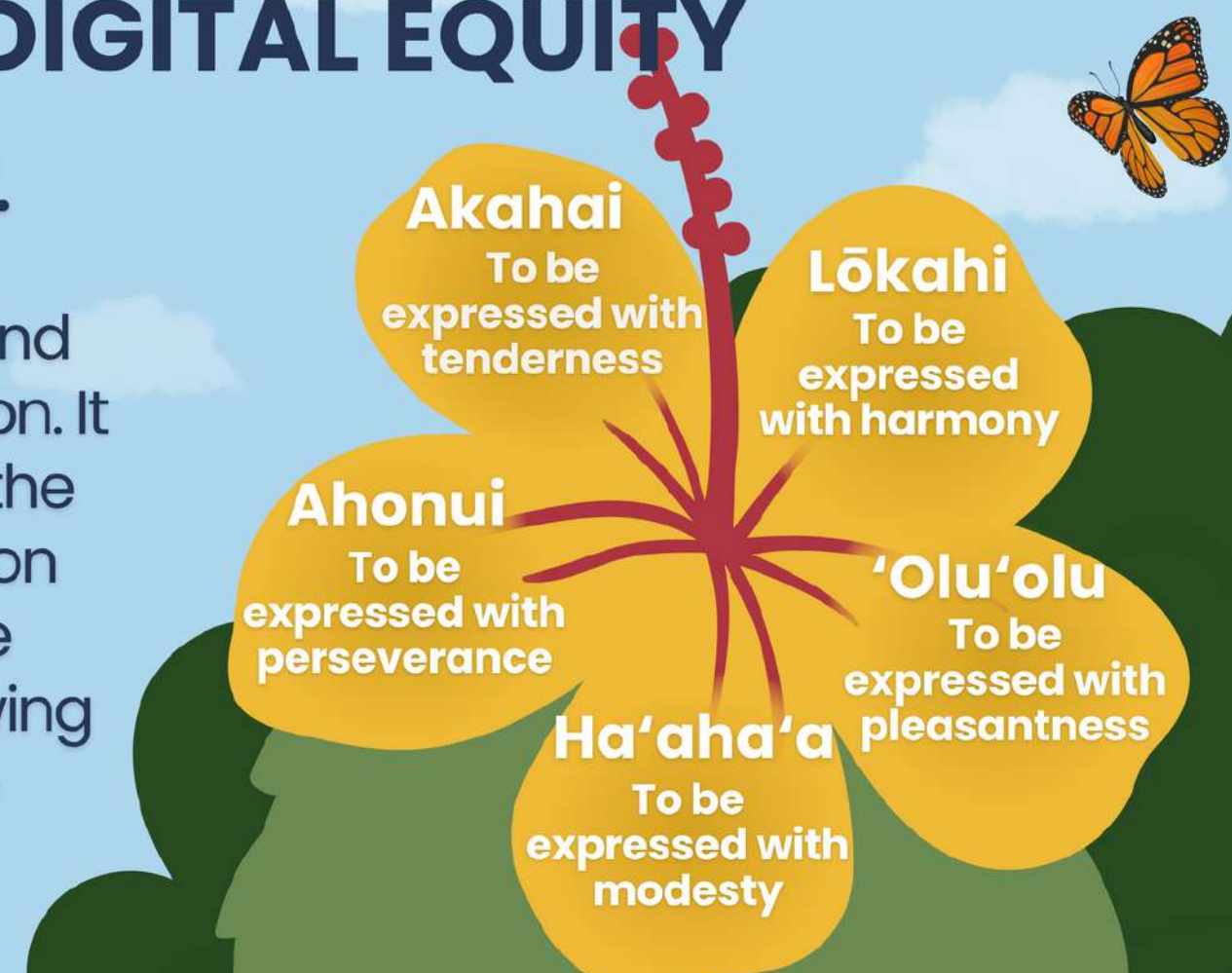
Values

- Aunty Pilahi Paki, in sharing the ALOHA acronym, represents the core values in the Native Hawaiian culture and illustrates the overarching value for the Digital Equity Plan.
- Aloha guides all of our work to engage with compassion, respect, and appreciation for one another and carry out our responsibilities to create a more equitable community. This Native Hawaiian concept is so deeply ingrained into the way of life in Hawai'i that it is enshrined as the Aloha Spirit Law: Hawai'i Revised Statute §5-7.5.

THE FOUNDATION UPON WHICH WE DELIVER DIGITAL EQUITY

[§5-7.5] "Aloha Spirit".
(a) "Aloha Spirit" is the coordination of mind and heart within each person. It brings each person to the self. In the contemplation and presence of the life force, "Aloha", the following unuhi laula loa may be used:

Akahai
To be expressed with tenderness

Lōkahi
To be expressed with harmony

Ahonui
To be expressed with perseverance

'Olu'olu
To be expressed with pleasantness

Ha'aha'a
To be expressed with modesty
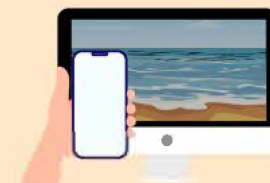
KEY ELEMENTS OF DIGITAL EQUITY

Internet
Access, Affordability, Reliable

Digital Literacy Skills
In cultural context

Devices
Laptops, Tablets, Smartphones, Hotspots

Affordability
Lifeline, Affordable Connectivity Program

Digital Navigators
Community Support Network

BUILT ON A FOUNDATION OF ALOHA

Methodology

The planning and outreach process focused on "covered populations," the NTIA identifies as having unique needs and barriers related to digital access.

Outreach Across the Islands

Kauaʻi
Focus Groups: 5
Interviews: 13

Oʻahu
Focus Groups: 17
Interviews: 15

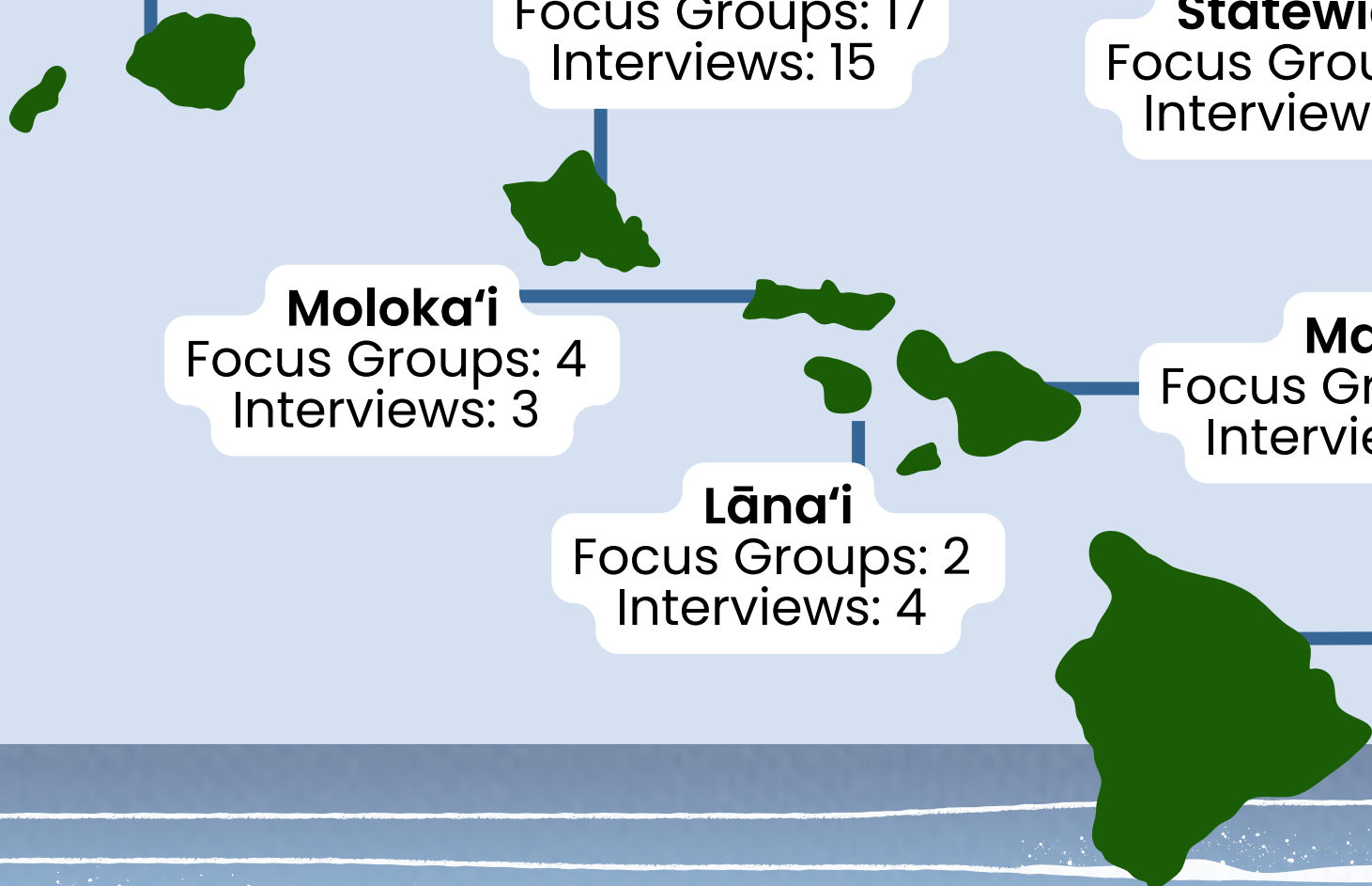**Statewide**
Focus Groups: 1
Interviews: 6

Molokaʻi
Focus Groups: 4
Interviews: 3

Maui
Focus Groups: 6
Interviews: 8

Lānaʻi
Focus Groups: 2
Interviews: 4

Hawaiʻi Island
Focus Groups: 4
Interviews: 10

TOTAL
Focus Groups: 39
Participants: 432
Interviews: 59
Interviewees: 63

Assets

To help identify and build on Hawai'i's existing resources, networks, and strengths, a Digital Equity Asset Inventory was created to include a growing list of organizations, agencies, and entities statewide that advances digital equity for one or more of Hawai'i's covered populations.

- The list is sorted by geographic reach, followed by the name of the asset
- Includes the digital equity pillar(s) addressed by each asset, as well as the covered population(s) served by each asset.
- Due to the overlap between Hawai'i's covered populations, a program that is directed at a particular population inevitably interfaces with others.
- While best efforts were made to ensure this inventory is as comprehensive as possible at the time this plan is published, we recognize that there are likely more to add.

Barriers

The range of challenges that were shared across all covered populations are:
- Some individuals don't see the relevance of digital devices and connectivity in their regular life
- There is a lack of integration of digital literacy skills
- Emotional barriers such as fear, shame, distrust, insecurity, and a lack of confidence
- The need to balance the time spent online with outdoor activities, person-to-person interaction, hands-on activities, and experiential learning
- "Everything is so Oʻahu-centric" is expressed by residents on neighbor islands
- Transportation
- Live off-grid in remote, rural areas
- No ID, SSN, or birth certificate
- Shortcomings in public outreach
- Bureaucratic roadblocks and the lack of a customer-service mindset

Are there enough devices within the household for each family member to use at the same time?
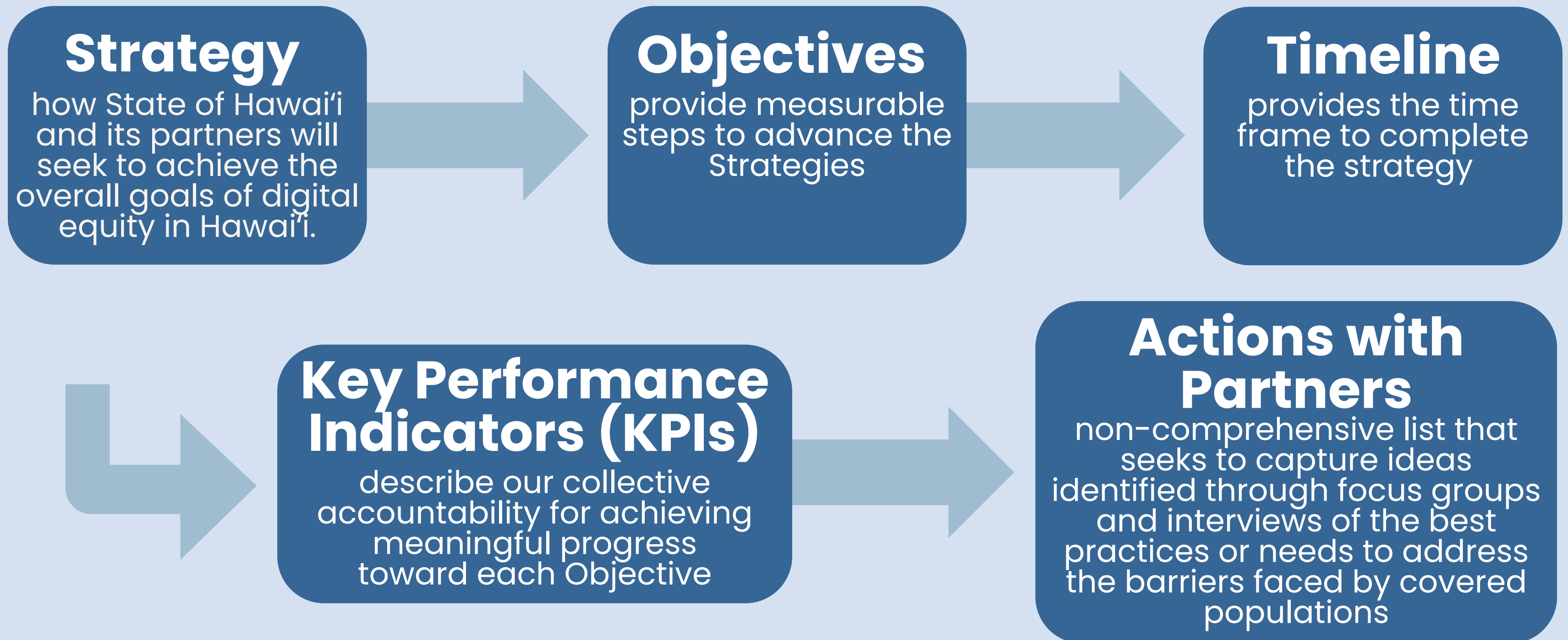
41%

59%

Aʻole (No)
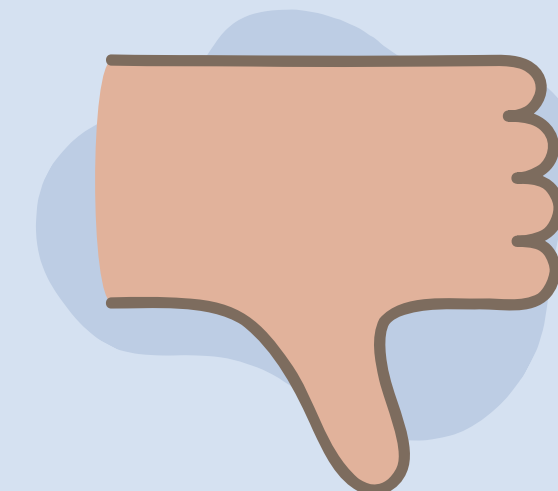
ʻAe (Yes)

Hawai'i Digital Equity Plan

Strategies | Objectives
Implementation Plan

Hawaiʻi Digital Equity Plan

How the Strategy Implementation Works

Strategy
how State of Hawaiʻi and its partners will seek to achieve the overall goals of digital equity in Hawaiʻi.

Objectives
provide measurable steps to advance the Strategies

Timeline
provides the time frame to complete the strategy

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
describe our collective accountability for achieving meaningful progress toward each Objective

Actions with Partners
non-comprehensive list that seeks to capture ideas identified through focus groups and interviews of the best practices or needs to address the barriers faced by covered populations

STRATEGIES

1. Inspire and welcome all residents to become lifelong digital learners

2. Honor the diversity of our communities with inclusive and accessible online resources

3. Make devices safe, affordable, and available for all covered populations

4. Provide broadband connectivity where Hawai'i lives, works, learns, and plays

5. Provide affordable lifelong digital literacy training and mentoring tailored to needs of covered populations
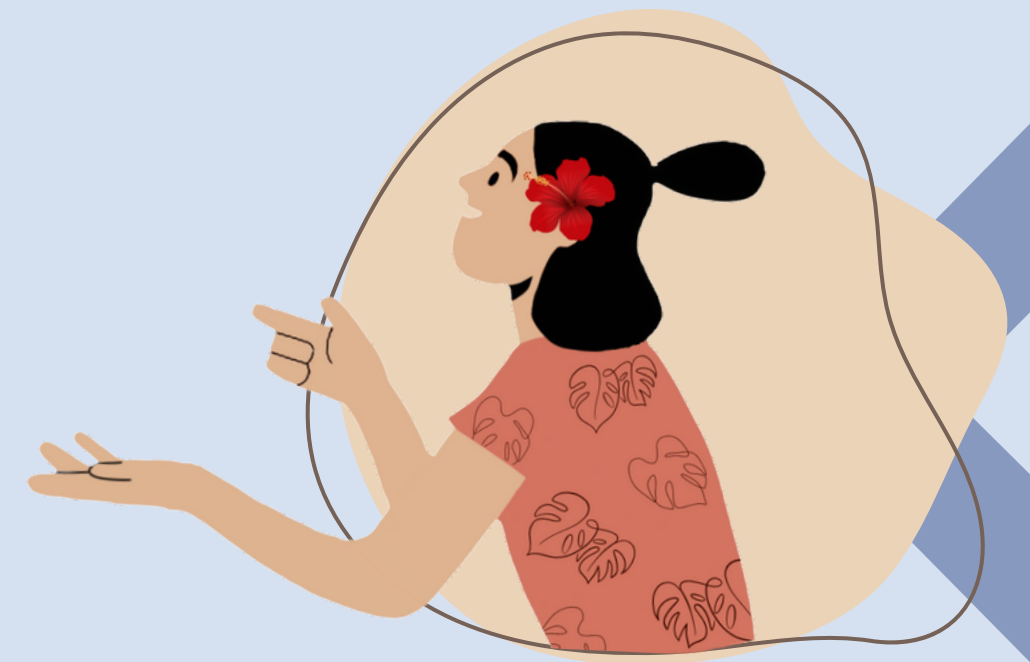
6. Create a community-based digital navigator program

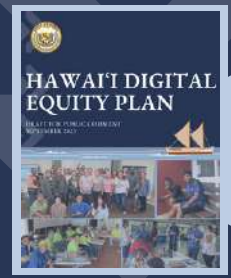7. Strengthen disaster response capabilities and community resiliency through broadband

8. Prioritize funding and investment policies that advance digital equity

9. Integrate evaluation and data collection throughout implementation to measure progress and inform strategy development

## Inspire and welcome all residents to become lifelong digital learners

Objectives

1. Establish and implement a communications campaign for covered populations to improve perceptions about the significance of digital literacy for their social, economic, and cultural well-being
2. Develop and implement training program to orient staff of public agencies on adopting digital equity in the organization's culture and applying best practices in serving new digital learners from covered populations with compassion and empathy.

Honor the diversity of our communities with inclusive and accessible online resources
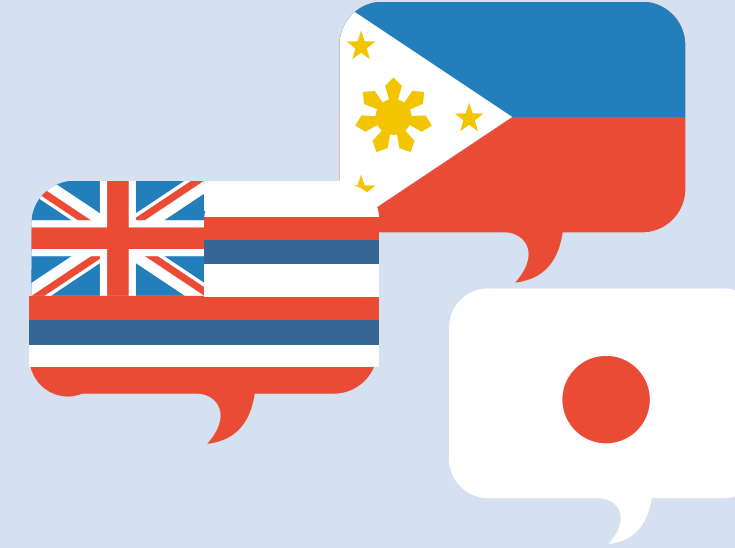
Objectives

1. Develop comprehensive policies and regulations that address issues such as net neutrality, affordable access, and fair competition
2. Develop and institute digital equity best practices for accessibility and inclusivity into online interfaces with an emphasis on mobile enabling and mobile integration for the following entities: State and County departments, service providers, community organizations, and others that provide services to members of covered populations throughout Hawai'i.
3. Integrate digital equity assets as identified in the Digital Asset Inventory into Aloha United Way 211 Helpline to make them accessible for the public.
4. Advocate for expanded access and improvements to telehealth services as a health care solution
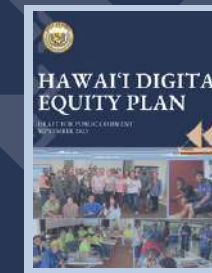
Make devices safe, affordable, and available for all covered populations

Objectives

1. Increase access to affordable devices with software, accessories, and affordable Internet service plans that meet the needs of individuals in Hawai'i's covered populations
2. Establish free or low-cost Wi-Fi and community spaces equipped with computers and printers at all public housing, publicly funded affordable housing, and transitional housing projects.
3. Make refurbished devices with basic software and cybersecurity protections available to covered populations as a low-cost option
4. Allocate public resources to provide cybersecurity and online privacy measures for covered populations.
5. Establish device service hubs that can provide free or low-cost troubleshooting, repair, ugrades, and replacements of devices for remote and rural communities with concentrations of minorities and Native Hawaiians.
6. Develop programs that enable incarcerated individuals to have access to devices while incarcerated that will allow individuals:
    - to learn digital skills to prepare them for reintegration.
    - to obtain mental health treatment and access other telehealth services so that treatments may begin and/or continue during incarceration.
    - to obtain basic ID and other resources that are needed so that individuals can access jobs and housing while persons are still incarcerated and preparing for exit.

Provide broadband connectivity where Hawaiʻi lives, works, learns, and plays

Objectives

1. Expand the network and strengthen the capabilities of Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) on every island to broaden free access to broadband for residents in all covered populations
2. Install free Wi-Fi and charging stations in public spaces with public facilities to broaden connectivity for all covered populations.
3. Establish digital resource hubs across the islands to meet residents from all covered populations where they are.
4. Collaborate with Hawaiʻi's business community and nonprofit sector to facilitate broadband connectivity for employees and clients.
5. Require internet service providers and cell phone carriers to provide a basic level of service for rural and remote communities.

Provide affordable lifelong digital literacy training and mentoring tailored to needs of covered populations

Objectives

1. Implement best practices for providing ongoing digital literacy training tailored to the culture, language, and other unique characteristics of covered populations.
2. Develop and expand cadre of digital literacy trainers and instructors with cultural, language, and experiential competencies, allowing hire based on innovation and experience vs solely educational background
3. Design and offer digital literacy training to support job seeking, entrepreneurial goals, and career pathways of covered populations.
4. Disseminate guidance and updates quarterly on privacy, safety, and cybersecurity tailored to covered populations
5. Integrate digital literacy in K-12 schools as foundational to career paths and to create cadres of students to serve in digital navigator programs, digital literacy training, and community-based digital hubs.
6. Collaborate with the Department of Public Safety and training providers with appropriate competences to provide digital literacy classes for incarcerated individuals to ensure preparedness upon exit.

Create a community-based digital navigator program

Objectives

1. Recruit and empower digital navigators from within covered populations or who understand the unique challenges faced by covered populations.
2. Build capacity among public agencies, nonprofits, and community groups across the state for existing or new staff to serve as digital navigators who are equipped to address the unique digital needs of covered populations
3. Establish a Digital Navigator Hui to foster networking, partnerships, lessons learned, and the sharing of resources between digital navigators that serve covered populations across Hawai'i.
4. Secure funding to establish and sustain statewide digital navigator program to tailor support to the individual needs of covered populations

Strengthen disaster response capabilities and community resiliency through broadband

Objectives

1. Establish and annually update best practices framework for digital equity in community resilience with a team that includes: island-based, collaborative planning teams from public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

2. Incorporate digital equity emergency response/hazard mitigation checklists to address preparedness, response, and the recovery needs of covered populations in Emergency Support Functions (ESF), the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), and all hazards mitigation planning.

Prioritize funding and investment policies that advance digital equity
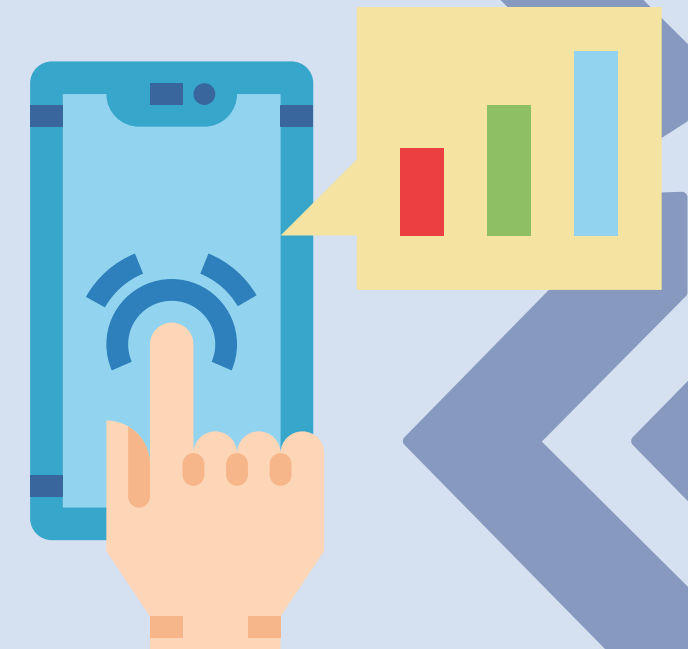
Objectives

1. Invest in scaling and capacity building of existing effective programs and models, including those identified in the asset inventory, and new promising concepts that enhance digital equity ecosystem
2. Establish and maintain multi-agency capability and strategy to pursue federal resources that support digital equity

Integrate evaluation and data collection throughout implementation to measure progress and inform strategy development
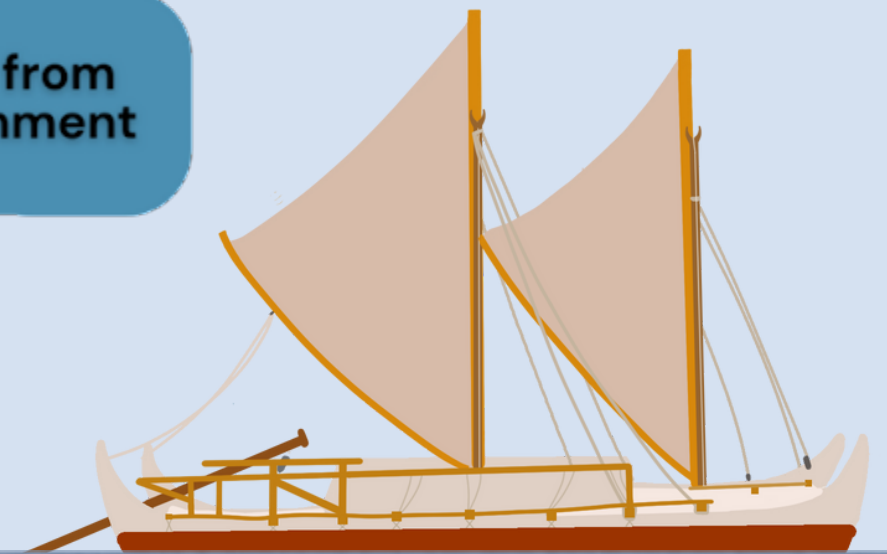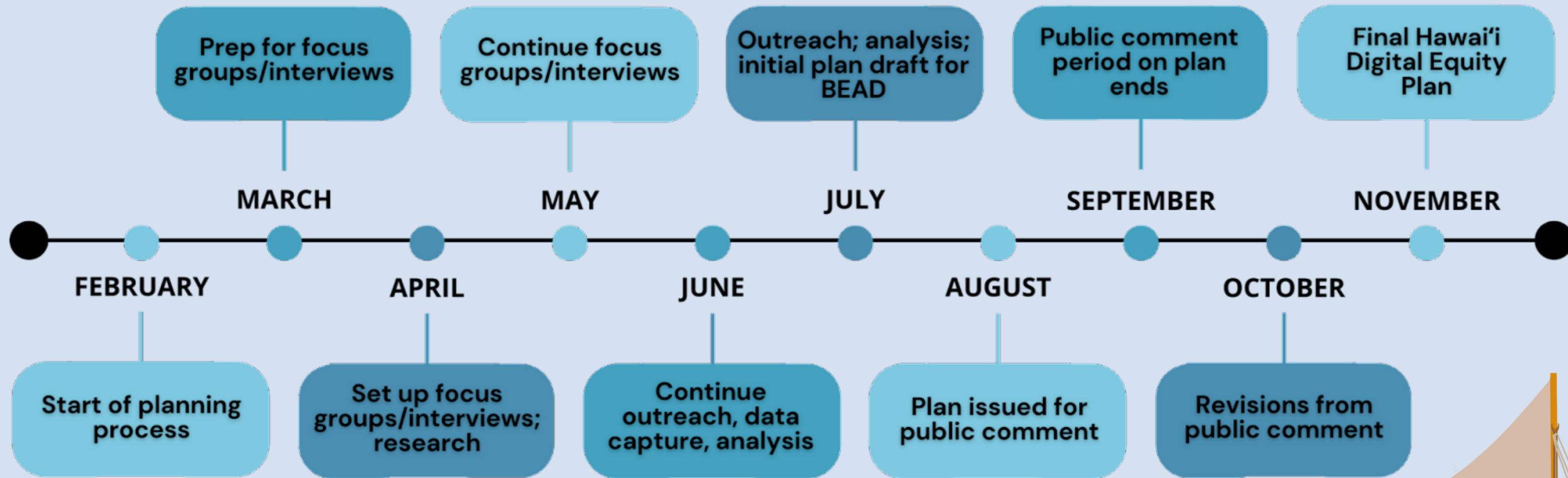
Objectives

1. Invest in qualitative and quantitative tracking studies by organizations with deep experience in Hawai'i that measure overall statewide progress on digital equity objectives and goals.
2. Develop shared tools for grantees to track outputs and facilitate data analysis to inform future improvements.
3. Conduct annual review of State's Digital Equity Implementation Plan using data from Objectives 9.1 and 9.2 to improve each of the other Objectives
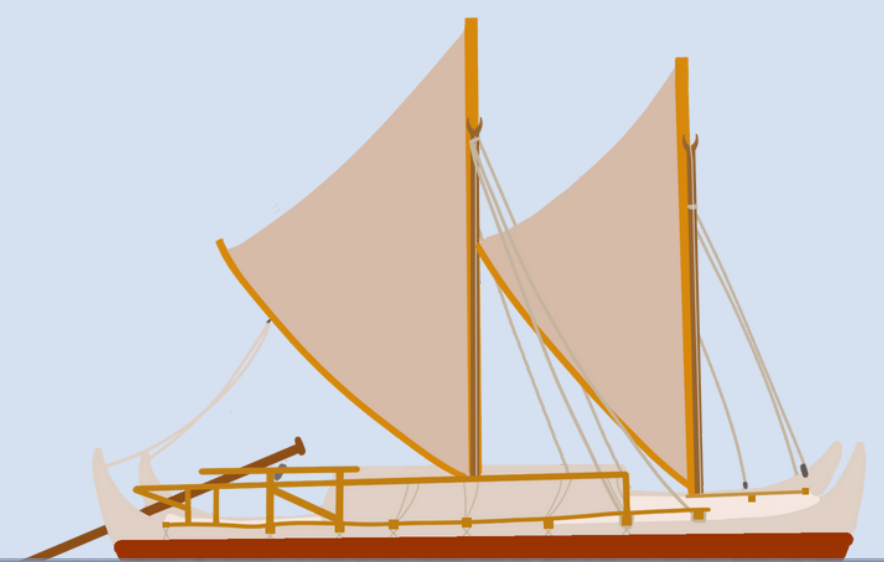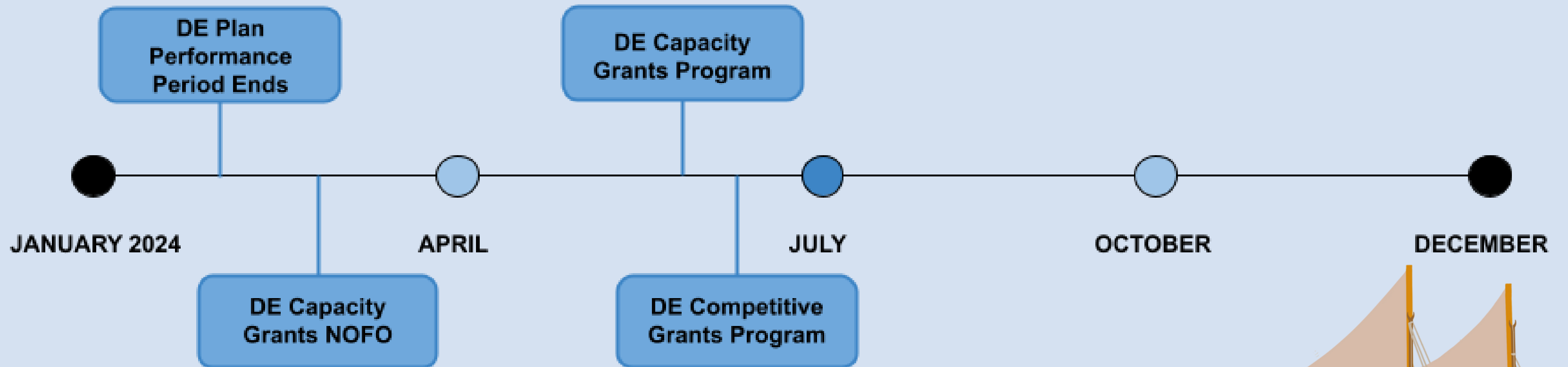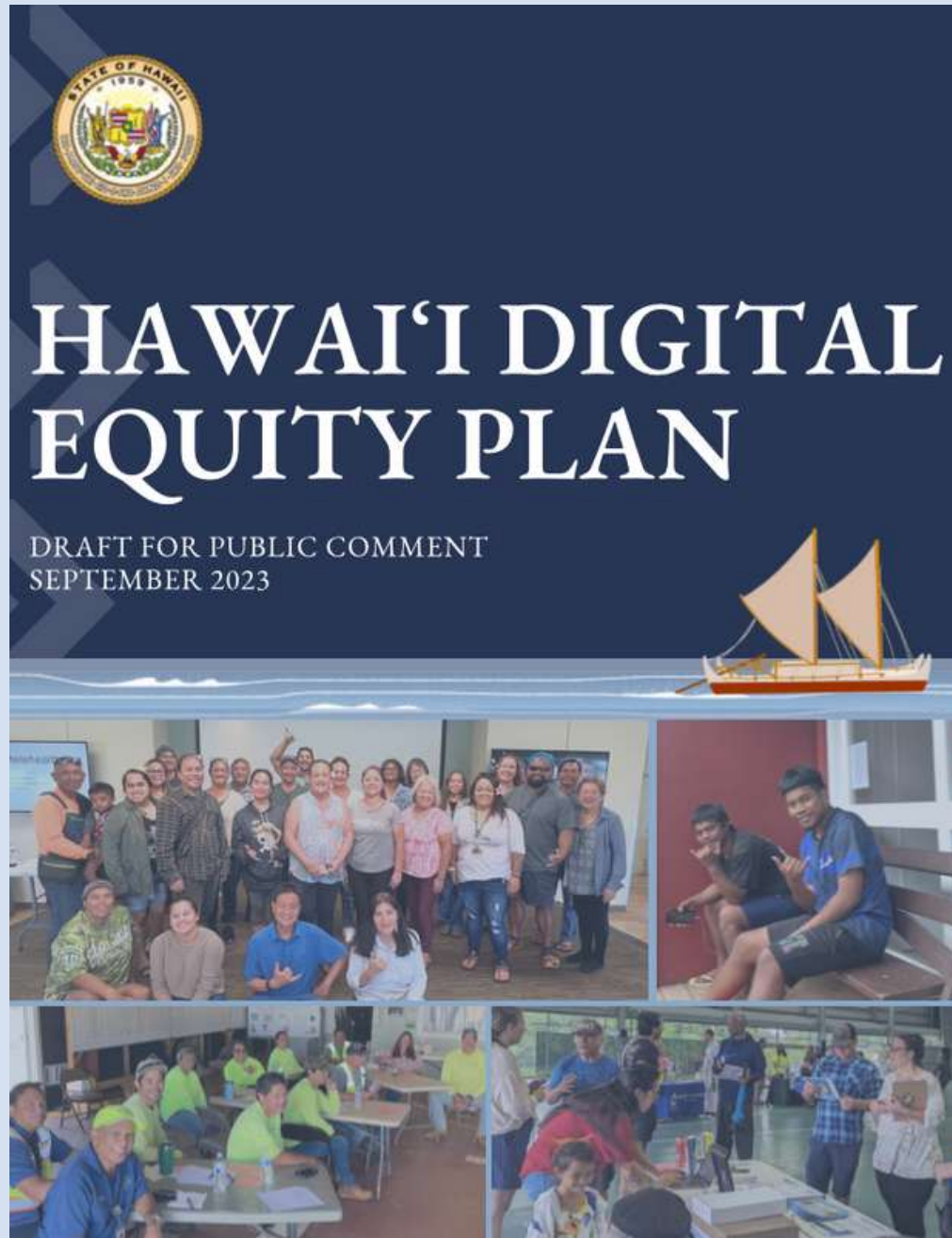
Digital Equity Timeline
2023

Prep for focus groups/interviews

Continue focus groups/interviews

Outreach; analysis; initial plan draft for BEAD

Public comment period on plan ends

Final Hawaiʻi Digital Equity Plan

MARCH

MAY

JULY

SEPTEMBER

NOVEMBER

FEBRUARY

APRIL

JUNE

AUGUST

OCTOBER

Start of planning process

Set up focus groups/interviews; research

Continue outreach, data capture, analysis

Plan issued for public comment

Revisions from public comment

Digital Equity Timeline
2024

DE Plan Performance Period Ends

DE Capacity Grants Program

DE Capacity Grants NOFO

DE Competitive Grants Program

JANUARY 2024 — APRIL — JULY — OCTOBER — DECEMBER

Hawai‘i Digital Equity Plan

Read the full plan here: **broadband.hawaii.gov/ digitalequityplan**
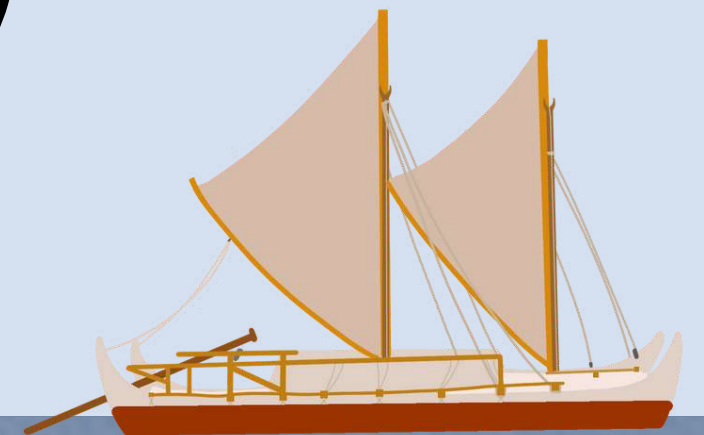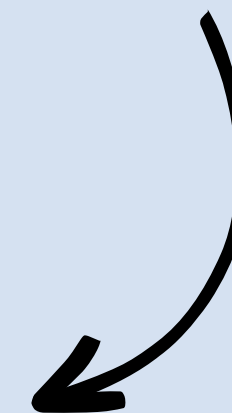
Hawai'i Digital Equity Plan

Share your mana'o on the Plan by October 31.

Scan the QR code or visit
bit.ly/hidepcomments
to share your comments or feedback.
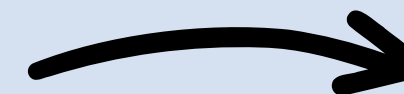
Mahalo!

The Final Hawaiʻi Digital Equity Plan will be released by the end of 2023.
Don't forget to scan the QR code or visit broadband.hawaii.gov/digitalequityplan to read the full Draft Hawaiʻi Digital Equity Plan.