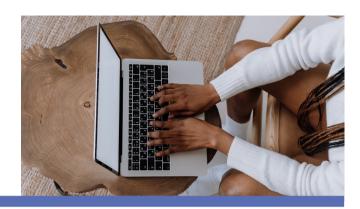# Digital Equity Research Center

ABOUT US

The Digital Equity Research Center engages in community-based and participatory research to inform digital equity practice and policy at the local, state, and national levels.

Our Vision

The Digital Equity Research Center, established in 2022, imagines a more just and equitable world where everyone has access to the social and community supports and technological skills needed to advance freedom and self-determination.

"My hope is that our Center will serve as a hub for community-based and participatory approaches to digital equity at a time when our federal government plans to award billions of dollars in funding to support digital equity in communities nationwide"

Dr. Colin Rhinesmith
Founder & Director

ABOUT OUR WORK

The Digital Equity Research Center, based at the Metropolitan New York Library Council (METRO), is an applied research center that assumes digital inequality research must include analyses of economic injustice, systemic racism, and other structural inequalities in order to understand and address the root causes of the digital divide. Our research uses critical theoretical insights along with participatory research methods to ensure those most impacted by the digital divide are included, whenever possible, in interventions to advance digital equity and social, economic, and racial justice.

We partner with academic institutions, community-based organizations, and philanthropy to produce high-quality, applied research to inform digital equity practice and policy at the local, state, and national levels.

RESEARCH AREAS

Our work is focused on the following three research areas:

- **Meaningful broadband adoption** Our research deeply considers the human-to-human, rather than simply the human-to-computer, interactions in community settings
- **Digital equity ecosystems** Our research seeks to understand how coalitions in the U.S. have worked to advance healthy digital equity ecosystems, as well as what measurement frameworks and tools they might need to be more effective in measuring the outcomes and impacts of their work
- **Public libraries and digital equity** Our work supports the understanding of existing and novel uses of public library spaces to address people's unequal access to technology and to each another

Community-based and **participatory action** research to inform digital equity practice and policy.

National Digital Inclusion Alliance
Collaborating on NDIA's State Implementation Guide.

Tech Goes Home
Understanding how digital inclusion organizations articulate success and how a theory of change helps them to evaluate their programs.

Economic Action Maryland
Investigating the digital equity and justice challenges facing Maryland residents, as well as opportunities and policy recommendations to address these challenges.

Centri Tech Foundation
Evaluating the Digital Integrators Pilot Program, which launched in 2022 to foster community-led innovations in digital equity.

METROPOLITAN NEW YORK LIBRARY COUNCIL

The Digital Equity Research Center is based at the Metropolitan New York LIbrary Council (METRO).

METRO works to create a sustainable culture of creativity, collaboration, and open exchange for libraries, archives, museums, and cultural institutions in the Metropolitan New York region and around the world.

We accomplish our mission through leadership, grantmaking, resource sharing, professional learning, research, technology services, creative practice, and more.

WAYS TO WORK WITH US

CO-DESIGN A PROJECT
We partner with community-based organizations to co-design research projects from start to finish.

HIRE US
Have a short-term research project in mind? We are able to take on a limited number of client-based projects each year.

COLLABORATE
Working at a non-profit, iSchool, or research center? Let's collaborate on impactful programs, events, or initiatives in response to digital equity challenges.

To learn more, visit the Digital Equity Research Center at www.dercenter.org