

# Charlotte Mecklenburg Library selected for Google Fiber's new Digital Inclusion Fellowship

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**Charlotte, NC** — Today, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library announced that it has been selected as a participant for Google Fiber's first-ever Digital Inclusion Fellowship. As one of two organizations in Charlotte chosen to participate in the fellowship – the Urban League of Central Carolinas is the other – the Library has demonstrated that it has the expertise, skill and commitment to take on the challenge of narrowing the digital divide in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community.

The web can open doors for people by providing access to jobs, education, social services and more. Yet, more than 60 million people across the United States aren't connected to the Internet. Locally, 19% of Mecklenburg County residents don't have Internet access at home. To bring these people online, it's important to demonstrate the value of the Internet and teach people the skills they need to use it effectively.

Through the Digital Inclusion Fellowship, the Library will collaborate with Google Fiber and the Nonprofit Technology Network (NTEN) to create programs that will bring the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community a step closer to bridging the digital divide. The fellow will embed within the Library for one year, building a new digital literacy and awareness program from the ground up.

The Library is uniquely situated to help address the digital divide. The fellow will develop and deploy a training curriculum, in a "train-the-trainer" model, to address the skills requirements of the community and encourage greater adoption of home access to high-speed Internet. The training will use several facets of Library resources, including technology programming and the staff who provide it, online training resources such as Universal Class and Lynda.com and meeting rooms and computer labs.

"This Digital Inclusion Fellowship will benefit the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community by giving people access to the resources and skills they need to better their lives, through the combined efforts of

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, our fellow, Google Fiber and the Nonprofit Technology Network over the next year," says Frank Blair, the Library's Director of Technology & Operations.

"We're looking for emerging local leaders who are passionate about helping people in their community," said Andrew Bentley, Google Fiber's Digital Inclusion Program Manager. "Through the Digital Inclusion Fellowship, these leaders will have the chance to work with organizations that are committed to getting more people online. We're excited about the projects that Charlotte Mecklenburg Library and their fellows will lead, and the impact they'll have on closing the digital divide in Charlotte."

Anyone interested in becoming a fellow should apply by June 10, 2015 through the Nonprofit Technology Network (NTEN) at [nten.org/community/dif](http://nten.org/community/dif).

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