

**Broadband Access For All:
A Plan for Grassroots Community Broadband**
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PROBLEM: To find new jobs, access healthcare, or obtain a complete education, Americans need access to broadband Internet. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, broadband has become even more important, as our even more of our daily lives moved onto the Internet. Many Americans, particularly within remote or poor communities, do not have access to affordable broadband. In many cases, they are unattractive to private broadband investment *because* of their comparative poorness or remoteness., creating a cycle where of lack of opportunities leading to lack of motivation to invest.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: One way to bridge this digital divide is to build local broadband networks, which some communities – though not nearly enough – have started to do. To grow the spattered success of local broadband service, and assist communities with less ready access to funds and relevant expertise, we propose building an organization that engages in direct outreach to underserved communities. This organization would offer pro-bono services, working with minority communities that do not have affordable broadband access, to develop community broadband solutions. Existing organizations, such as Institute for Local Self-Reliance, provide similar assistance on a more abstract level: this organization would directly engage with underserved communities, helping with the technical, legal, and financial challenges of creating a solution that addresses the needs and opportunities of a given community. Ours is a local solution to a global problem: start with the community and the community’s needs first, to create systems built from the ground up to further equality.