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Organization: The City of Philadelphia

Project Name: Philadelphia Freedom Rings

Project Type: Public Computer Center

State: Pennsylvania

Federal Award: \$6,362,129

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The **City of Philadelphia** is working to close the digital divide by establishing a network of public computer centers to serve the city's most economically vulnerable residents. The Philadelphia Freedom Rings project plans to create or enhance 77 of these centers, with the goal of providing access for an additional 13,000 residents on a weekly basis. Most of the centers will be located in neighborhoods with the least access to broadband and in greatest need of economic development, specifically neighborhoods in North, West, and South Philadelphia where the child poverty rate can reach 40% and fewer than half the homes have Internet access. The project plans to provide broadband education, awareness, training, access, and equipment by way of these centers located in 19 recreation centers, 10 homeless shelters, 15 affordable housing sites, libraries, and community-based organizations working with high-risk populations, thus driving broadband demand, local economic growth, and job creation.

Philadelphia Freedom Rings proposes to:

- Increase the capacity at 26 existing public computer centers and create 51 new centers, including four mobile computing units. By upgrading 65 workstations and installing 764 new workstations, the project plans to more than triple the number of workstations available to the public.
- Provide instructor-lead and self-paced training in basic computer use, multimedia content development, job search and resume building, and improved access to government and community services.
- Expand city-wide service to at-risk youth, the homeless, people with disabilities, and the elderly.

ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY

Established in 1993 as the Mayor's Office of Information Services, the City of Philadelphia's Division of Technology, which will serve as fiscal agent for the grant, provides guidance and support for all the city's information technology systems and investment, including the implementation of large scale city technology projects. The Division is tasked with identifying the most effective approach for implementing new information technology directions throughout city government and improving the value of the city's technology assets and the return on the city's technology investments.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- Philadelphia FIGHT
- Free Library of Philadelphia
- Media Mobilizing Project
- People's Emergency Center
- Philadelphia OIC
- Philadelphia Department of Recreation

Data provided in the project description is based on information supplied by the applicant. An executive summary of this application can be found on www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa.

For press-related inquiries, contact 202-482-7002 or press@ntia.doc.gov. For the general public, contact BTOP@ntia.doc.gov.

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