



Verizon Innovative Learning Seeking Districts for Cohort Four

Program Overview and Application Requirements

Program Overview

Since 2013, Digital Promise has been partnering with the Verizon Foundation to provide every student in middle schools across the country with a tablet and a 2-year Verizon Wireless monthly 5 GB LTE data plan as part of the Verizon Innovative Learning initiative. This initiative is designed to bridge learning gaps for our students and communities in greatest need. We are currently seeking 25 schools for our fourth cohort of Verizon Innovative Learning schools. This cohort will run from Spring 2017 through June 2019. You may submit up to five schools to be considered for participation; our goal is to work with three schools per district.

Through Verizon Innovative Learning, students are taught to use these powerful tools responsibly, and teachers receive comprehensive, ongoing professional development on how to effectively use mobile technology to improve learning. The Verizon Innovative Learning initiative currently includes 46 middle schools, nearly 27,000 students, and 2,100 teachers across the country.

Why is Digital Promise involved?

A third of lower income households with children don't have access to high-speed internet at home.¹ This inequality only furthers the homework gap and can put low income students at a learning disadvantage. By giving students access to content, resources, and expertise in and out of school, we help underserved students develop the tools and confidence they need to become tomorrow's innovators. More specifically, we hope we can ignite these students' interest in the STEM careers and catapult their desire to become inventors, creators, and problem solvers in their communities.

Why is Verizon involved?

With the recent growth in STEM-skilled jobs, and the underrepresentation of minorities in these fields, it's clear we need to do more to level the playing field for students from minority and underserved communities. Verizon Innovative Learning, the education initiative of the Verizon Foundation, seeks to develop

¹Households With School-Age Children That Do Not Have Broadband Access, Pew Research Center, Analysis of 2013 American Community Survey, April 2015. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/04/20/the-numbers-behind-the-broadband-homework-gap/>

measurable STEM education programs that provide students with technology and hands-on learning to help build the confidence they need to become tomorrow's creators.

How do students benefit?

Equipping middle school students in underserved communities with access to technology, STEM learning opportunities, and leadership skills empowers them to explore all the possibilities for building bright futures for themselves, their families, and the world.

In the last two years, results of the initiative have shown that 67% of teachers believe their students were more engaged, 53% of teachers felt that interactions between students were more positive, and 41% of students completed hands-on projects using technology on at least a weekly basis.

Selected districts will receive:

1. An iOS tablet for each student and each teacher in the project (which will become the property of the district at the end of the project). A case is also included for each tablet.
2. A Verizon 5 GB per month data plan for each tablet (for learning outside of school).
3. \$25K per year, per school to support a full-time dedicated VIL coach in each school.
4. Support for documentation of project outcomes, student learning, and best practices.
5. Ongoing professional learning opportunities for all teachers involved in the project, including structured goal-setting, collaboration across the project, virtual and in-person workshops, and convenings for selected participants.
6. Ongoing project planning and implementation support for both professional learning and IT/device management.
7. Opportunities to integrate STEM concepts into professional development and student learning.
8. Knowledge sharing across over 50 VIL schools.

Application Requirements

Round One Requirements

To apply to become a member of Cohort 4, please fill out the Declaration of Interest forms below.

Fill out ***both*** of the surveys below by Friday, October 28th.

- Declaration of Interest [District Profile Survey](#)
- Declaration of Interest [School Profile Survey](#) (fill out for each school you would like to be considered, up to 5)

Materials from Round One are evaluated to determine if the district will move to Round Two.

Round Two Requirements

If selected to move on to Round Two, applicants will complete the following:

1. Program Overview webinars*

Program Overview webinars are scheduled to provide information about all of the components and requirements that make up the program as well as give you an opportunity to ask questions. They will take place between November 9-18. As part of the application process, a representative from your district is required to attend at least one 45 minute webinar from each of the 4 categories listed below. We will follow up soon after you are notified that you've moved on to Round Two with webinar invitations and suggested participants for each.

Overview of Verizon Innovative Learning Program Goals and Partnership Model

November 9 at 10:00am ET

November 9 at 1:00pm ET

Overview of Verizon Innovative Learning Research Component

November 9 at 2:00pm ET

November 16 at 4:00pm ET

Overview of Verizon Innovative Learning IT Readiness

November 10 at 12:00pm ET

November 16 at 10:00am ET

Overview of Verizon Innovative Learning Branding and PR

November 10 at 1:00pm ET

November 16 at 2:00pm ET

2. Application*

If selected to move on to Round Two, you will receive the application. This application will be due by 11:59 pm PST on Wednesday, November 30, 2016. Questions about the application may be submitted to dps@digitalpromise.org through November 22.

3. Identification of Dates for Onboarding Visit

We will make a final decision on your application by Wednesday, December 7. Should your district be selected to be part of Cohort Four, we will need prompt identification of dates for onboarding visits with your district and school leadership, as well as dates to meet and work with teachers within each school selected for the project.

**The application does not need to be submitted prior to participation in all four mandatory webinars*

Round Two Applications are evaluated on the following criteria:

Potential for Impact (40% of score)

- Committed and stable district and school leadership
- Ability to articulate district's vision, particularly about transformative learning powered by technology

- Existing technology infrastructure and IT support structures
- Ability to address challenges inherent in implementing change
- Strong community and family partnerships

Evidence of and Planning for Innovative Learning Environments (30% of score)

- Physical, curricular, or conceptual innovations around learning environments
- Dedicated time and resources for professional learning to support innovation
- Focus on STEM for all students (e.g., problem-solving mindsets, maker spaces, coding opportunities)

Commitment (30% of score)

- Commitment to create new and innovative learning opportunities for students
- Commitment to dedicate time and resources towards professional learning activities
- Commitment to provide additional funding for salary and benefits to employ a full-time instructional coach in each school (Verizon Innovative Learning schools receive \$25K per year to support this position)
- Commitment to ensure IT needs are supported
- Commitment to participate in all research, documentation, reflection, and sharing efforts

Timeline for district selection

- September 30th: Round One (Declaration of Interest) opens
- October 28th: Round One (Declaration of Interest) closes
- November 7th: Districts moving to Round Two notified. Begin the application process
- November 9th – 18th: Round Two participates in required program overview webinars. Interviews with Digital Promise.
- November 30th: Round Two (Application) closes
- December 7th: Selected districts are notified

Requirements for consideration

- Approximately 600 students per school (Flexible - this is the average we seek across all 25 schools)
- Minimum 65% free and reduced lunch within school
- Students must be able to transport devices safely between home and school
- Robust wireless infrastructure by August 2017 (100Mbps per 100 students)
- 100% wireless connectivity throughout the school including one access point per classroom
- There must be a strong signal strength for Verizon's [4G LTE network access](#) throughout school community (3G is unacceptable)
- Unanimous support from district leadership, school leadership, and teaching staff

Selected districts will commit to participate in the following:

Public Relations and Branding

1. Districts must be willing to display school-based signage indicating they are part of the Verizon Innovative Learning initiative. Examples from the 2016-2017 school year follow (see image to right as an example).
2. Districts must be willing to use provided Verizon Innovative Learning branded device cases (see image to right as an example).
3. Districts must be willing to participate in efforts to showcase and document the student, staff, and administrator experience at selected schools including, but not limited to:
 - a. Hosting school-wide celebrations as part of student tablet distribution
 - b. News and PR at student tablet distribution events
 - c. Interviews with Verizon Marketing and Public Relations teams



Research & Data Collection

1. Districts must be willing to routinely complete surveys and participate in aggregate data collection used to monitor the success of the program.

Device Maintenance and Network

1. Districts must implement mobile device management (MDM) for student devices and ensure that all devices are appropriately filtered at school and away from school.
2. Districts are also expected to routinely care for device maintenance and work with the appropriate parties to report device issues and damages in a timely manner.

Professional Development

1. Districts must support teacher participation in virtual and in-person workshops and convenings as well as engage with full-time dedicated VIL coach at each school.

Financial Support for Instructional Coach Position

1. The school or district will need to dedicate any additional funding to augment the stipend that is provided to employ a full-time instructional coach in each school.

Ultimately, the Verizon Innovative Learning initiative seeks to bolster school districts' capacity to address the needs of their students by providing technology as well as full support for implementation. Our hope is that we can also ignite these students' interest in the STEM careers and catapult their desire to become creators, inventors, and problem solvers in their communities.

To learn more about this initiative, [visit this link](#).

Please direct any questions to dps@digitalpromise.org.

Note: While we are seeking applications now, the program is subject to final approval by the funder. Your application materials will be confidential to Digital Promise.

About Digital Promise

Digital Promise is an independent, bipartisan 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization authorized by Congress to spur innovation in education. Through its work with educators, technologists, researchers, and leading thinkers, Digital Promise supports comprehensive research and development to benefit lifelong learners and provide Americans with the knowledge and skills needed to compete in the global economy.

About Verizon Foundation

This project is made possible through the generous support of the Verizon Foundation. The Verizon Foundation is focused on accelerating social change by using advanced technology and financial resources to solve pressing problems in education, healthcare and energy. Through this pioneering model, Verizon's philanthropy is going beyond charitable contributions to deliver innovative technology solutions to transform lives. Verizon's education programs focus on improving student engagement and achievement in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), with particular emphasis on underserved communities. We recognize that creating individualized instruction is the way to cultivate achievement, and view mobile technology – paired with professional development for teachers on the effective integration of mobile technology in the classroom – as a powerful tool to foster those environments. For more information, visit <http://www.verizon.com/about/responsibility/>. To get the latest news, follow the Verizon Foundation (@VerizonGiving) on Twitter (www.twitter.com/VerizonGiving).