



## CENTER FOR DIGITAL EQUITY | CHARTER

The Center for Digital Equity (CDE) endeavors to **co-create solutions that best serve the community** by developing a plan that encapsulates the work of the Center and across the ecosystem. We work through a collective impact strategy bringing together residents, public, and private sector partners to co-create solutions allowing every resident the opportunity to thrive in our modern culture.

The CDE focuses on five areas including:

- Policy, Advocacy, and Ecosystem Development
- Data, Analysis, and Research
- Device and Connectivity
- Digital Navigation and Technical Support
- Digital Literacy and Skilling

The CDE is housed at Queens University of Charlotte and includes an Advisory Board and a Community Council structure. This document outlines the roles and responsibilities of participating in the Community Council with its first iteration co-created with residents, public, and private sector partners.



### The Center for Digital Equity (CDE) – Community Council's Primary Responsibilities include:

- Engaging in and/or providing the space to **convene** residents, public, and private sector partners who are committed to furthering the impact.
- Acting as a **networking** group for sharing ideas and practices to help all partners increase their ability to support community needs.
- Acting as a collective **voice** across all of the opportunity industries including healthcare and workforce development.
- Being a **leader** in the Meck Hub region digital equity efforts\*
- Supporting in the **development and execution of strategy(s)** for the region in collaboration with residents, public, and private sector partners.

*\*Meck Hub region currently consists of Mecklenburg, Union, Gaston, and Cabarrus counties with possible future additions.*

## I. Meetings

**FREQUENCY:** The CDE Community Council convenes on the first Thursday of each quarter from 3:30 to 5:00 PM EST. Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed, based on partner input and tied to specific project outcomes. These meetings will rotate between virtual and hybrid formats to support accessibility and engagement.

All Council meetings are collaborative in nature, centering on project advancement, measurable outcomes, and strategic partnerships.

## II. Decision Making

CDE will inform the Community Council of any significant decision (examples of these decisions may include funding, governance etc.). In those instances, the CDE will follow the procedure below for decision making.

**QUORUM:** 51% of the Champion partners shall constitute a quorum for the formal decisions of the CDE Community Council. Any voting representative from a Champion partner, primary or alternate, qualifies as a partner being represented.

**VOTING:** Voting occurs at the Community Council Champion level and may take place at a meeting or via a virtual platform.

## III. Other Rules of Operation

- Agendas will be distributed between 1-5 business days before the meetings. Any decision items requiring a vote will be prominent in the agenda.
- Meeting notes (of significant decisions and action items) will be distributed following the meeting. All corrections to the notes should be submitted by the end of the subsequent meeting.

**NOTICE:** CDE staff will perform a regular review of partner engagement through an annual evaluative process developed by the Policy, Advocacy and Ecosystem Program Director and/or designee.

## IV. Roles and Responsibilities of a CDE Community Council

It is intended that the CDE Community Council partners leverage the experiences, expertise, and insight of key individuals committed to efforts in the region.

### Roles and Responsibilities:

- a. Resident Partners – All residents of the region who are committed to increase equitable access to and adoption of digital tools, skills, and support services.
- b. Public Sector Partners – Employees of public agencies that operate within the regional boundaries who represent their organization while participating in the CDE Community Council.
- c. Private Sector Partners – Employees of private sector companies, philanthropic organizations, nonprofits who represent their organization while participating in the CDE Community Council.

## Roles and Responsibilities of a CDE Community Council continued...

### CDE partners should:

- a. Have an understanding and be willing to continue working toward expanding access to and adoption of digital tools, skills, and support services; or otherwise ensuring that the organization represented (when applicable) has resources committed to this, apart from attending CDE meetings
- b. Understand the strategic implications and outcomes of initiatives and approaches being adopted
- c. Appreciate the significance of the initiatives for some or all major stakeholders and represent their interests
- d. Adhere to a non-solicitation value as it relates to selling or promotion of services or products at CDE Community Council meetings
- e. Assume appropriate level of responsibility for initiatives and be an advocate for broad support for the outcomes
- f. Promote partner activities and initiatives to respective communities
- g. Complete the online Engagement Form ([click here](#)).

### In practice, this means:

- a. Openly consider ideas and issues raised, supporting group consensus/decisions
- b. Vote on proposals and decisions related to partner activities and initiatives (applicable to Champion partners)
- c. Ensure project outputs meet the requirements of key stakeholders
- d. Leverage email and social media networks to promote initiatives and activities
- e. Prepare for meetings by reviewing emails, notes, and documents sent in advance

## V. Partnership

- a. Voting partnership is open to certain collaborative partners that:
  - i. Are committed to furthering access to and adoption of digital tools, skills, and support services in the region
  - ii. Agree to support the CDE's Charter
  - iii. Agree to share data on connected initiatives/activities
  - iv. Has representative(s) with capacity to meet collaboration model requirements
  - v. Join the Community Council as a Champion
- b. Process
  - i. Interested organization/resident will complete a **Partner Engagement Form**
  - ii. The organization/resident is invited to participate in an orientation
  - iii. Post-orientation organization/resident begins community council attendance and potential initiative specific support

## **VI. Convening**

- a. Convenor
  - i. The ecosystem will be convened by CDE staff (Policy, Advocacy, and Ecosystem Program Director and/or designee with support from the operations team) and shall be responsible for
  - ii. Setting the meeting location and time
  - iii. Drafting and circulating meeting invitations
  - iv. Creating an environment for active participation from all participant partners
  - v. Arranging for meeting notes to be taken and any revisions to be collected and incorporated after the subsequent meetings specific support

## **VII. Standards for Resource Allocation (Both Monetary and In-Kind)**

The CDE has a critical role in advising and optimizing the allocation of financial and in-kind labor resources from numerous commitments to investing in digital opportunities.

The approval of funding and a detailed process shall be the responsibility of the CDE Advisory Board to ensure an appropriate level of oversight between partners receiving funding and incoming investments.

Opportunities are to be shared across the ecosystem and will include an outline of the process.

## **VIII. Data**

- a. Partners of the CDE agree to collaborate on collecting and sharing data aligned with the goals of the ecosystem.
- b. Data sharing agreements ensure the work is shared across the ecosystem.
- c. Data sharing agreements can be adapted to different organizational needs and CDE can support in this process.

## **IX. Confidentiality**

Partners agree to protect sensitive information shared during CDE activities.

### **What is Confidential Information?**

- Confidential Information includes non-public data explicitly marked as confidential, such as:
- Business plans, processes, or intellectual property,
- Financial data or partner details, and
- Any other sensitive information shared in CDE discussions.

### **Confidential Information does not include:**

1. Publicly available information,
2. Information already known by the receiving party,
3. Independently developed information, or
4. Information disclosed due to legal requirements (with notice, when possible).

**Confidentiality continued...**

## How will it be used?

Partners will:

- Use Confidential Information only for CDE-related purposes,
- Not share it with third parties without permission, and
- Take reasonable steps to protect its confidentiality.

## Duration

These confidentiality obligations apply during the partnership unless otherwise stated in a data agreement.

## X. Changes

Changes to this charter will be shared broadly across the ecosystem, after advance notice of proposed changes.

////////////////////////////////////

### END OF CHARTER ###