

Dig-IT

Dig-IT is an initiative of HelpAge Canada intended as a solution for seniors to access technology and support to build digital skills. The program is facilitated through local community partners (Care Homes, Seniors Centres, Community Centres, etc.)

SPECIFICS

Local Community Partners apply on behalf of low-income seniors to join the program. Application forms can be found on the Dig-IT website.

An organization can apply for tablets and support services in increments of 4.

Program Components:

- Tablets to be allocated to low-income seniors.
- 6 months of data and 1-year of 24/7 technical support for every senior receiving a tablet.
- Access for each senior to online courses to master the basics of their device, the internet, and key applications. The learning style is independent – the senior will progress at their own pace.
- Printed orientation package and course materials per senior to compliment the online courses.
- The support of a Digital Coach (Volunteer). A Coach will offer each senior an orientation to their tablet, assist them in registering for the online courses, and walk with them in community as they progress through the online learning program.
- The curation of a resource library (videos, lesson plans, and other tips/ tools) to support learning.
- All “graduates” who complete the program are gifted the tablets at the end of the program.

Program Duration – 6 months: The first 3 months of the program is the ‘active learning’ phase where a senior is progressing through the online learning modules with the support of a Digital Coach to master basic digital skills. The second 3 months is the ‘reinforcing phase’ where the senior integrates technology into their routine and will access the resource library to grow their skills, explore new applications, take more advanced courses, etc.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Dig-IT will achieve the following outcomes for participants:

- **Connecting to Others:** seniors will stay connected with their families, loved ones and support networks using technology. They may be introduced to new online communities. Community is nurtured through the learning process with the volunteer and cohort of fellow learners.
- **Becoming more Confident and Informed:** to reap the benefits of technology and feel comfortable to make it a part of routine, seniors must be aware of safe online practices. Privacy and security protocols should be engrained in digital literacy and online programs to ensure that seniors are protected as they impart on their digital journey.

- **Maintaining Independence:** with increased access to information, health and support services (amongst other areas), seniors may live more independently longer.
- **Enhancing Quality of Life:** seniors will have increased access to education, recreation, social and other programs, resources and opportunities that bring them happiness.
- **Empowering:** Seniors will become empowered as they build digital literacy capacity allowing them greater access to information and to participate in the decisions that affect them – giving older people a stronger voice.

PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

Partner organization agree to work with HelpAge Canada to achieve the following partnership objectives:

- Promoting the program outcomes, supporting seniors to engage wholistically with society both online and offline.
- Ongoing transparent information sharing through responsive, open, and honest communications.
- Telling the story. To build the program to a national and ongoing scope, we share the narrative of how together we can enhance the lives of seniors.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- Partner organizations identify eligible low-income seniors and apply to receive the program through a secure website provided.
- Partner organization will provide an attestation that the seniors benefiting from the program are considered low-income and need both a tablet and data.
- Participant acceptance is awarded according to funding available, fit and assessed need. HelpAge Canada reserves the right to limit acceptance to ensure its national reach with available funds in a given year.
- Partner, upon receiving notification of program award, facilitates participant intake and volunteer recruitment within 4 weeks (including administering and/or providing proof of criminal record checks).
- Partner provides a physical location at which the tablets may be delivered
- Partner designates a point of contact person to coordinate with HelpAge Canada and its intermediary in connection with the Project
- Partner provides all such assistance as may be necessary to affect the distribution and use of the tablets to clients of the LCP including:
 - collecting, inputting, and sharing all necessary data for the distribution and set up of tablets
 - providing and collecting signed individual liability waivers,
 - delivering tablets and welcome packages,
 - and completing necessary reporting/ check ins with HAC/ intermediary.
- Partner organization collaborates with HelpAge Canada to assess program effectiveness. Working with HelpAge Canada, partners will assist in gathering participant impact stories and providing impact infographics (photos, videos or other). HelpAge Canada may ask to collect some information on impacts itself, and Partner's consent to such direct collection of stories shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- Upon the completion of Dig-IT the partner organization will support in transitioning participants out of the program and in exploring their data plan options.
- HelpAge Canada will monitor the partnership relationship on an ongoing basis and encourages feedback and open communication.