

APPLICANT

Organization:

Equalitech
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Goleta, CA 93117
EIN: 81-3312119

Contact:

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Applicable Noncredit Program Area:

Adult Education (ABE, ASE, Basic Skills)
English as a Second Language/Literacy
Adults in the Workforce

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Equalitech is requesting funds to expand our existing Digital and Language Literacy Program which we launched in 2019 thanks to a grant from the Consortium. We have had a great deal of success in our first year including the following highlights:

- Developed a six-unit, self-paced, instructor-supported course, designed to introduce absolute beginners to technology as well as strengthen their English language skills.
- Enrolled 52 enrolled students in the new program.
- Expanded to four access points through our work with community partners: Goleta Valley Community Center, Casa de Los Carneros, Isla Vista Community Room and Immigrant Hope.
- Created a peer-to-peer tutoring program wherein students are encouraged to work together, allowing our more advanced students to teach newer students which helps to improve their own understanding of topics.
- Enrolled 10 students in SBCC English as a Second Language course over the summer. This was after offering language development using Lexia (a language program used by Goleta Union School District, provided through a partnership with United Way) and discovering many of our students lacked the English language foundation to benefit from Lexia.

Our first year has not been without bumps in the road, and as we look to expand the program, we have identified two major challenges that we seek to overcome. The first is managing the time of our lead instructor Dawer Canete-Perez. We know that one-on-one help is a critical component of our curriculum, as we need to ensure that our students feel supported and encouraged during the critical early stages of learning which can be scary and daunting. The

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second challenge is the time of our students. We have found committing to showing up to our access points at specific times every week is not realistic, and the main reason for students lack of engagement in the program an inability to attend sessions at our access points at specific times.

After reflecting on both our successes and challenges, we have identified three overarching goals and outcomes for the second year of the program.

	Goal	Outcome
#1	Increase student engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students engaged with our proposed e-learning curriculum for professional skills development • Students enrolled in SBCC non-credit or credit programs including ESL and GED • Students finding employment as a result of improved technical and language skills • Students engaged in our peer-to-peer tutoring services • Students employed by Equalitech as Tech Center Liaisons
#2	Scale our impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of access points from 4 to 8 over the course of the year • Setup a video conferencing tutoring program allowing our instructor to engage with students without having to travel • Convert our curriculum to an e-learning platform to allow students to engage in our content from outside our access points
#3	Partner with established local businesses and organizations that can support our mission by combining resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of learning resources that increase learner engagement and achieve the desired learning outcomes. • Development of metrics as to how students engage with the learning content which helps shape future curriculum and allows contributors to know the efficacy of the program. • Creation of additional access points throughout the community • Development of additional community partnerships for recruiting students

Finally, as outlined in our above goals, we intend to make e-learning a major component of our program in 2020. We plan to create an online video course teaching basic technology skills in both English and Spanish allowing students to continue to get the benefit of our course during times that are convenient for them. Our goal is to set up multiple access points with laptops and a printer, throughout the community where students can work on their DLLP tutorials. We will continue to provide the critical one-on-one support that we are known for via video conferencing in addition to in-person.

2. INTEGRATION

Please explain how your proposed program integrates adult education programs at SBCC and creates a transition to credit/transfer educational programs or creates a transition to the workforce (including, but not limited to, internships, jobs, pre-apprenticeships, self-employment).

In our second year, we have a number of goals for strengthening our students' transitions to educational programs or to the workforce. Among them:

- We are making a major push towards e-learning. We hope to create an environment where students are comfortable consuming content digitally and thereby reducing the barriers to entry for other credit/noncredit courses offered by SBCC and the scalability of Equalitech's services. We are also actively expanding our satellite access points with Equalitech equipment by developing relationships with other non-profits with facilities used by our target population.
- We have developed a new position called Tech Center Liaison that we intend to fully staff using graduates of our DLLP program. This part-time paid position will compensate students for overseeing the Tech Center during open lab hours, giving them ample opportunity to work with community members who need help and continue to improve their language and technical skills.
- We intend to reach out to the SBCC GED Consortium to discuss integrating GED education into our program.

For many of our patrons, the thought of joining or re-entering the workforce at an advanced age is a daunting task, but we have had success already with empowering our students to take this leap. For example, fifty-eight-year-old Teresa Cardenas started coming to the center after extensive traveling. Upon her return home, she needed a job to start earning money. Teresa credits our Lead DLLP Instructor, Dawer Perez-Cañete, with her success:

"I started living with my mom in a mobile park for elderly people where there was no access to the Internet. When I came to Goleta Valley Tech Center, I found Dawer had a wealth of computer experience and shared it with a nice and friendly attitude. He helped me to install apps on my cell phone, to organize my photos, and (most importantly) taught me how to look for work using the computer. I did not have the means to pay for the internet, for paper to print the applications, for the ink, or any other necessary part of submitting job applications. However, I came to the center three to four times a week until I finally found a good job. I thank Dawer very much for all his help. Without him, I would not have achieved my goal.

Another example is 54-year-old Juana Galindo, who just last year was depressed, had no friends and no desire to leave her house and had not worked since 2012 when she lost her job at a local flower shop due to hand injuries. Her job prospects were limited by her lack of literacy in her native Spanish as well as her inability to speak English. Juana attended an event, organized

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by Isla Vista Youth Projects and learned that our organization was offering free classes as part of our mission to improve computer literacy in the community. Juana was extremely tentative, and first came “just to observe” but now, a little over a year later, is one of the very engaged students in our Digital and Language Literacy Program for which we are requesting funds to allow for its expansion. Juana has not only improved her own life by learning skills critical for upward socioeconomic mobility in today’s digital world, but also empowers others by helping to teach her hard-earned skills to new students.

With countless other stories of success and achieving goals, it is clear that our program is about more than simply providing access to technology. A 2015 EdSurge article notes that “almost eight in ten middle-skill jobs, which are defined as those that require less than a college degree but more than a high school degree, now require basic digital literacy skills. These jobs represent 39% of the overall U.S. job market, and can often serve as a vehicle for upward economic mobility.” This is where the Digital and Language Literacy Program comes in. We are empowering a marginalized population and enabling them access to opportunities that would otherwise be out of reach.

3. JUSTIFICATION

Please justify the need of your proposed program and include research, labor market information, employer feedback, student surveys, or other relevant information and describe how funding will further your objectives. For programs that have previously received funding, please justify the need and provide a status report on your existing award(s) and remaining balance(s).

Justification

The need for training is ongoing, digital transformation is well underway and with the constant evolution in technology, the shelf-life of skills is short. Having a foundational understanding of how to use technology is no longer optional, it is a necessity to function in society. Everything, from applying for jobs to paying bills to remaining involved with the community, requires technology.

Equalitech has worked within the local community for the past year providing personalized learning to bridge the gap in digital skills, regardless of age or demographics. “Personalized learning refers to the range of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic support strategies intended to address the specific learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students.” In the realm of education and training, learning preferences are rapidly changing. People are busier than ever which means that social, mobile, and self-directed learning opportunities are critical for reaching learners. We can no longer rely on students to subscribe to a traditional method of classroom learning. Every student will learn and progress at their own pace and have different availability given their other responsibilities. As such, we believe the future of learning, and subsequently our program, is self-paced online video courses, commonly known as e-learning, supplemented with one on one instructional support. While our central location in the Goleta Valley Tech Center is an important access point, we believe that we can expand our reach by creating

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additional free satellite access points, housed in facilities throughout the community but with the ability to “call in” for support from centralized staff.

A study by IBM found that “those enrolled in e-learning courses learned more than five times as much material compared to traditional lessons...The reason for the success of e-learning appears to stem from how it presents materials. eLearners consume information in smaller, more digestible chunks, making it easier to consign things to memory and understand how concepts interact with each other.” A recent study from Georgia Tech, however, showed that lower income families are significantly less likely to utilize online learning tools, and this is contributing towards increasing the opportunity gap between lower income and higher income families. This has a significant impact on children too, as their parents are less likely to engage with additional online educational resources for their children due to a lack of perceived technical skills. Betsy DiSalvo, an assistant professor in the School of Interactive Computing, who led the study says “If we can capture these parents and give them access to these educational resources, we can help them help their children...These tools are supposed to improve learning for all children, but if they are not being used by lower-income students, they are coming to school at an even greater disadvantage.”

Computer and Internet access is critical to the quality of life for Americans today. According to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

“As information, services, and resources increasingly move online, digital inequality has come to both reflect and contribute to other persistent forms of social inequality. Disparate access to the Internet and digital devices corresponds closely with longstanding inequalities in income, education, race and ethnicity, age, immigration status, and geography...[T]he negative consequences of being underconnected are growing, and researchers and policymakers are increasingly concerned that underconnection is fueling other socioeconomic disparities.

In 2014, less than 50% of households with an annual income of less than \$25,000 had access to the Internet, with the next income tier (\$25,000 to \$49,999 annually) at a little less than 70 percent (the largest gap between any two income tiers). Furthermore, according to a recent study from Broadband Now Research, nowhere in Santa Barbara County has access to affordable broadband internet, defined as a stand-alone internet broadband speed plan that is \$60 or less (excluding introductory or promotional pricing) and broadband as speeds of at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload as defined by the FCC.

Even as these access barriers are recognized and addressed, digital knowledge and literacy plays a factor for many who do not have the experience using the technology even if they had access. Many simply do not have the ability to find, create, and use information on the Internet thus limiting their upward economic mobility. This is where we evolved from our original mission of simply providing computer access to offering comprehensive access to the plethora of digital knowledge that already exists.

Equalitech’s Digital and Language Literacy Program is empowering a marginalized population and enabling them to access to opportunities that would otherwise be out of reach. With our

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transition to e-learning, we hope to make these opportunities even more accessible and convenient.

Status Report on 2018-2019 Reward

As of November 1, 2019 we have spent approximately 62% of our budget from our first year cycle. We have \$ 23,848.50 remaining which is earmarked for salaries and rent. We have completed the majority of the activities on our Activity Chart. Please see a summary below.

Activity #	Activity Description	Status Update
1	Create course outline and materials for Basic Computer Skills & English Language Learning class including a skills evaluation and definition of completion	✔ Course outline has been completed. Students are tracked via Google classroom.
2	Targeted outreach via our existing partnerships to recruit new students to the program	✔ We have utilized our existing partnerships extensively to educate the community on our offerings. We provide continued outreach through our partnership with Isla Vista Youth Projects at their Healthy School Food Pantry on the first Thursday of every month. We have also tabled at multiple City of Goleta Events and continue to table at Computer for Families Computer Fairs.
3	We will plan to host at least 3 recruiting events with existing or new partners to educate community members on our offerings and encourage new sign-ups to the program.	✔ We have had two speaking events at the Community Action Council Head Start Program and they now actively bring families to the center to work on their technical skills. We also held recruiting events for People's Self-Help Housing at Casas De Los Carneros and for IVYP at Isla Vista Community Room which has resulted in additional access points for our program.
4	In order to accommodate more students as well as more personalized one-on-one trainings, we will move to a larger room at GVCC.	✔ We moved into a new room at GVCC on March 1st which has three separate areas for training.
5	In addition to working with our existing partnerships, we will work to recruit students via traditional	We have advertised with <i>The Independent</i> but still have around \$6K to spend on marketing. We are

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	marketing including social media and radio.	looking into advertising on Radio and Buses in Q4/Q1 2020.
6	Certificates will be given to students who complete the program.	Most of our students are continuing to work through the curriculum, and we are no longer convinced that a certificate is the correct approach. We will be continuing to evaluate this for 2020.
7	Students will be referred to SBCC Non-Credit courses.	We enrolled ten of our students in SBCC ESL classes

4. OUTREACH & MARKETING

Please describe your plans to conduct outreach and marketing to reach your target population and increase enrollments.

First and foremost, we plan to stay engaged with our current partners who allow us to table at their events, such as The City of Goleta, Isla Vista Youth Projects, and Partners in Education, while continuing to forge new relationships with like-minded organizations. Second, Equalitech continues to refine its use of social media. We recently reorganized the DLLP basic skills curriculum to explain earlier how to use platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn so that we can utilize those platforms to stay in touch with our students and help keep them motivated. Third, we will build a deeper relationship with People's Self-Help Housing who have housing facilities in Santa Barbara and Goleta. We currently teach the DLLP curriculum at one of their facilities, and with the new, flexible program we are rolling out we plan on having equipment on hand at most of their facilities; we will do the same with Isla Vista Youth Projects. Fourth, we have been holding off on radio advertising, as it is quite expensive, but we feel that after two and a half years we now have enough name recognition to make radio spots work for us effectively. Fifth, we are currently discussing collaborative advertising possibilities, such as bilingual radio ads and city bus ads with the SBCC ESL program in order to boost the number of language learners taking advantage of the program.

Finally, Equalitech would like to leverage the amazing opportunities in its own backyard to generate viral marketing opportunities as well as give our students a chance to engage with each other outside of the center. This feels especially important given the anxiety many of them feel around learning new skills. We want the program to be something they look forward to. Our manager Dawer already teaches free salsa dancing classes and invites the students to play basketball. To expand on this, we plan on having a monthly activity that utilizes the open areas around us, including the Jonny D. Wallis park, the basketball courts and beautiful new field next to the Boys and Girls club, as well our parking lot for some "getting to know each other" activities.

5. PARTNERSHIPS

Please provide 2-3 prospective CAEP Programs or Partners you plan to work with to maximize student and client participation and describe your prospective collaborative efforts; either with current CAEP programs and/or other external community entities.

One of our proudest accomplishments this year was bringing SBCC's English as a Second Language back to Old Town Goleta for the first time in almost 7 years. Through our partnership with this program, we have been providing a beginner and intermediate level class two nights per week from our Goleta Valley Community Center access point and have 10 of our students enrolled.

We also intend to reach out to the SBCC Adult High School and GED Program to discuss a path towards a GED for any of our DLLP students who might need and want this service.

As for our external collaborators, we will be looking for our new e-learning expansion model to fit well in our partnership with People's Self-Help Housing. We also continue to work closely with the Partners in Education program Computers For Families and with Isla Vista Youth Projects to reach as many community members as possible by tabling at their events and referring patrons who might use their services. Lately, the Community Action Council Head Start Program of our main access point in Goleta Valley Community Center to interested parents.

Finally, Equalitech wants to partner with one of the best and most-experienced teams creating online learning content: Madecraft. Unlike classroom-based training, you can't merely build a PowerPoint deck, along with a few materials, and rely on a facilitator to fill in the blanks. With e-learning, every single word, image, graphic, and interaction is designed, developed, reviewed, edited, and published to maximize reach and learner engagement. Put simply, creating effective video content is more than simply turning on a camera. There are two keys to creating effective online learning:

- Building with a robust instructional design
- Achieving a high-quality level of production

Madecraft is a local Santa Barbara business in the e-learning space. The company was founded by a core part of the team that built Lynda.com, the market leader in e-learning for professional skills development, which sold for \$1.5 Billion to LinkedIn. Today, from their studio on Canon Perdido St, Madecraft is building custom video and audio content products for companies, governments, universities, and nonprofits.

Madecraft creates content that engages, has clear takeaways, is the right length, and is structured for learning. They understand how to design programs that increase learner engagement and achieve the desired learning outcomes. And, they are able to provide metrics as to how students engage with the learning content which helps shape future curriculum and allows contributors to know how effective the program is.

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Beyond developing and creating content, Madecraft has a unique integrated publication network with publishers like LinkedIn Learning, Udacity, Audible, Spotify, Facebook, and many more. These companies look to Madecraft to create learning products that are featured on these sites.

What this means for our project is that this helps Equalitech create content that not only impacts our direct community, but can also be made available to the world - potentially impacting many families. We envision our students accessing our content from anywhere they have an internet connection, whether it is while they are waiting for the bus, or after putting their kids to bed in the evening.

6. SBCC NONCREDIT STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Provide your plans to integrate SBCC Noncredit Student Support Services in order to assist students in obtaining abbreviated educational plans.

We welcome the opportunity to work with SBCC Noncredit Student Support Services (NSSS). We would be happy to host NSSS at anyone of our access points to provide information to our students. Furthermore, we plan to integrate SBCC's offerings into our curriculum by showing students where they can sign up for classes online and continue to advertise course offerings at our various access points.

7. ALIGNMENT

Please describe how your program is in alignment and furthers the Consortium's goals and objectives as stated above.

Equalitech's mission statement is simple and clear with a focus on expansion of technology access and the improvement of community computer literacy, given the critical role technology plays in adult learners striving to optimize career opportunities and connect effectively with their community. These objectives are well aligned with the Consortium's goals to provide:

- Programs for immigrants eligible for educational services in citizenship, English as a second language, and workforce preparation
- Programs for adults, including but not limited to older adults that are primarily related to entry or reentry into the workforce; and
- Programs in career technical education that are short term in nature and have high employment potential.

Basic introductory computer skills is a proven community need as shown by the work of Equalitech since our opening in May 2017. In that time, Equalitech has had over 5000 patron visits and now has 52 enrolled students in the DLLP.

8. LEVERAGING FUNDS

Please describe what other funding sources, and the percentage of those funding sources, will be used to support your CAEP proposed program.

This year we have received two operational grants from the City of Goleta: the community development block grant for the third year in a row, and a newly offered Economic Development grant. We have also reached the second stage of a grant from the Fund for Santa Barbara. 100% of our funds will go towards the continuation of the DLLP as well as the operating costs of our main access point at the Goleta Valley Community Center. As of this writing, we have raised enough funds to cover basic rent and utilities at the center so those are not included in the budget. Further, we have secured donations of ChromeBooks from Goleta Union School District and the City of Goleta, as well as printers from Fidelity Investments, so we will not need to purchase additional computers or printers in order to expand to new access points.

9. DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND EQUITY

Please describe how your program will create a diverse, inclusive, and equitable educational experience for adult learners.

The Digital and Language Literacy Program is inclusive and diverse in that it is open to anyone in the community for free, and while the majority of our patrons/students tend to be Spanish speakers, we also serve patrons with a variety of other first languages, including Chinese, Vietnamese, and others. The gender breakdown of our 52 DLLP students is 43 women and 9 men with 75% being older than 35 and Spanish speakers from marginalized communities who need help learning basic computer skills. We discovered this to be especially true of the native Spanish speaking women who for both cultural and circumstantial reasons had little to no experience using computers. Many were too shy or embarrassed to ask friends or family for help; many didn't know where to start. At Equalitech, we envision a world in which every person, regardless of socioeconomic status, has the opportunity to thrive in today's technologically driven society. We believe the benefits of digital literacy are life-long and as long as we have students who want to learn, we will continue to teach.

Equalitech prides itself on providing an environment that allows our students to finally feel empowered to take charge of their learning and growth. The DLLP provides a comprehensive computer and language skills curriculum that all students can access and make their way through at a pace that suits each individual. Moreover, our new plan for multiple access points providing video tutorials, as well as continued one on one support will only serve to deepen our commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and equity in the community.

10. ACTIVITY CHART

YOUR PROGRAM/AGENCY NAME:					
Equalitech					
NO.	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION (Month/Year)	PERSON OR AGENCY RESPONSIBLE	OUTCOME
1	Reach new students	Table or speak at outreach events put on by existing partners or with new partners	Tabling with existing partners is monthly. We will conduct at least 3 outreach events with new partners over the next 6 months	Danny Dawer	Enroll new students in our Digital and Language Literacy Program. Expand awareness of our computer access points.
2	Add a component to our program	Reach out to the SBCC GED consortium partner to discuss integrating our programs	February 28, 2020	Danny	Offer GED services to any adult community member
3	Empowerment and ownership	Expand our peer-to-peer volunteer program	Ongoing	Dawer	Confident, empowered students who can now help new students effectively. Community members helping community members
4	Qualified help from community members	Expand our community volunteer program, including high school students and professional community members	Ongoing	Danny Dawer	Qualified help for tech center patrons/students as well as for help through our planned digital portal
5	Job Opportunities for Students	Hire our most advanced students as Tech Center Liaisons to oversee our main access point	Ongoing	Danny / Dawe	Provide part-time employment to our most engaged students.
6	Interest level data	Survey our existing students whose interest has waned since enrolling in the DLLP	Dec. 31, 2019	Dawer	Important data to reflect on for making growth decisions

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7	Disseminate the curriculum for the DLLP to many more community members	Create and record professional computer literacy video tutorials	Dec 31, 2019	Madecraft	Access to professionally made computer literacy video tutorials in English and Spanish for free
8	Reach more students on their own time and in a more convenient space	Outreach to community centers, churches, clubs, etc.. to create access points	Ongoing	Danny	2-3 Laptops and a printer in multiple locations around Goleta and Santa Barbara in order to provide the most access possible to community members
9	Raise awareness of SBCC Adult Extended Learning noncredit course options	Add this information to our website and to our DLLP curriculum. Post the information in our main access point at the Goleta Valley Tech Center	Dec. 31, 2019	Julie Danny	More awareness of the opportunities SBCC provides for lifelong learning and workforce readiness
10	Community members getting to know each other outside of the digital world	Physical bonding activities utilizing public community space (e.g. salsa dancing, basketball, soccer)	Monthly	Dawer Danny	Stress relief, friendships, networking, fun
11	.				

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PROPOSED BUDGET

Category	2019-2020 Budget	2019-2020 Spent	2020-2021 Proposed
1000 (Instructional Salaries)	\$ 25,740.00	\$ 17,860.00	\$ 45,000.00
Taxes for Instructional Salaries		\$ 4,791.37	\$ 9,000.00
<i>Details: Salary and Taxes for Lead Instructor / Program Manager at 45K annual salary</i>			
2000 (Noninstructional Salaries)			\$ 12,375.00
Taxes from Noninstructional Salaries			\$ 2,475.00
<i>Details: Salary and taxes for Tech Center Liaison Position -- 22.5 hours per week at \$11 per hour</i>			
3000 (Benefits from 1000, 2000)			
4000 (Instructional Supplies and Non-Instructional Supplies)			
Lexia Licenses and Training	\$ 2,500.00		
Program Marketing (Radio, newspaper, busses)	\$ 7,800.00	\$ 1,123.82	\$ 5,000.00
Auto Expenses / Travel			
Video Production*			\$ 36,400.00
<i>Details: Video production costs include production of videos in both English and Spanish, including story boarding, professional graphics and editing. A detailed cost breakdown is available upon request. Cost includes a negotiated 20% discount from Madecraft.</i>			
5000 (Consultants, Meetings, Prof. Development)	\$ 14,754.00	\$ 7,732.31	\$ 18,000.00
<i>Details: Educational Consulting fee for Danny Fitzgibbons</i>			
6000 (Capital Outlay)			
Computers	\$ 4,750.00	\$ 2,585.03	
Tables / Chairs	\$ 2,213.00	\$ 2,171.53	
Rent/Utilities	\$ 5,400.00	\$ 2,910.06	
Misc		\$ 134.38	
Total	\$ 63,157.00	\$ 39,308.50	\$ 128,250.00
Amount Remaining		\$ 23,848.50	