



Digital inclusion is about making sure everyone can make full use of digital technologies so they can enjoy the social and economic benefits it provides.

Our shared goals:

- 🔍 To ensure **no Tasmanian is left offline** ... ✕ | 🎤

- 🔍 Improve **digital ability** ...
- 🔍 Tackle **digital affordability** ...
- 🔍 Invest in **digital access** ...

Tasmania is the most digitally disadvantaged state in the country and consistently scores the lowest or near-lowest in the Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII).¹ As the first state to see the full rollout of the *nbn* network, Tasmania should be making the most of the opportunities that digital technology brings.

Many Tasmanians are, but for more than 65,000 of us the benefits are out of reach. Some don't have access to affordable internet, while others don't have the skills or confidence to use and make the most of digital technologies and access. Moreover, online services are not always designed with the specific needs of Tasmanian users in mind, many of whom only access the internet via their mobile device and often have poor connection and/or low bandwidth.²

The Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Council's (PESRAC) Final Report identified digital infrastructure (recommendation number 10) and digital inclusion (recommendations 34 and 35) as priority areas for action to address the digital divide in Tasmania and to boost Tasmania's long-term recovery from the pandemic. The Final Report found:

- 🔍 Coverage gaps in digital infrastructure means that many Tasmanians, particularly those in our regions, are being left behind in a world where life is increasingly being lived online; and
- 🔍 Many Tasmanians cannot participate in the digital world because of poor digital literacy, appropriate equipment or affordable online access.³

¹ [Australian Digital Inclusion Index](#) 2021.

² TasCOSS 2019, [Understanding Digital Inclusion in Tasmania](#).

³ [Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Council Final Report](#) 2021, recommendations number 10, 34 and 35.



2021 STATE ELECTION JOINT STATEMENT ON DIGITAL INCLUSION



The undersigned therefore seek the following commitment from all candidates and parties:

To improve Tasmania's ADII score across all indices to at least the national average by 2025.

This will partly be achieved by endorsing and appropriately funding PESRAC recommendations number 10, 34 and 35 with clear timelines and reporting against progress. It will also require commitments to:

Digital ability

- Invest in community-based digital literacy initiatives, possibly along the lines of the 26TEN Communities model.
- Renew focus in Tasmanian schools and TasTAFE on digital literacy and lifelong learning of digital skills.

Digital affordability

- Introduce a telecommunications concession along the lines of the energy concession.
- Work with telecommunications companies to introduce low cost plans for mobile and broadband.
- Work with telecommunications companies to unmeter access to government, emergency and essential services websites.

Digital access

- Create a 'Community Connect' infrastructure fund to invest in infrastructure extension to regional and rural Tasmania to ensure more Tasmanians have access to reliable, high speed internet.
- Provide devices and dongles/data (where required) to all State Government school students from upper primary through to Year 12.
- Establish a grants program for community service organisations to allow service users to access devices.
- Invest in digitising key government services so they are tested by and accessible to all Tasmanians.

