Digital Inclusion in Australia

Digital inclusion means ensuring people can use the internet and technology to improve their daily lives. This is not just a tech issue. Digital inclusion is about enabling access to everything the digital world has to offer to ensure no one is left behind.

In Australia, there is still much to be done to include everyone in the day-to-day benefits of digital. There are three main areas that need to be addressed to create a digitally inclusive nation[1]. These are:

Access
availability of the internet
and connected devices

Affordability
the financial means
to get online

Digital Ability
feeling safe and confident
using the internet

All Australians can benefit from the digital economy

The Australian economy is poised to benefit from a **$315 billion** boost in gross economic value by 2029[2]. For the nation to achieve this benefit, we need to help everyone cross the digital divide.

2.5 million Australians are not online, with many more occasional users still excluded from enjoying the everyday benefits of the internet[3].

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Digital Inclusion fast facts

Over 4 million Australians are limited users who rarely engage with the internet or use only a few apps or websites

26% of over 65s never use the internet

25% of people with disabilities never use the internet

63% of non users have no interest in the internet

35% of non users have no access to the internet.[4]

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[1] Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2018 (Telstra, RMIT, Swinburne University, Roy Morgan)
[2] Digital Innovation: Australia's $315b Opportunity (Data 61, CSIRO, 2018)
[3] Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2018
[4] Digital Inclusion: Report of Online Behaviours in Australia 2016 (Australia Post / BehaviourWorks)
[5] Home Monitoring of Chronic Disease for Aged Care (CSIRO, 2016)
[6] Digital Inclusion: Report of Online Behaviours in Australia 2016
[7] 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review (Australian Government)
[8] Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2018
[9] Australia's Tech Future - Delivering a strong, safe and inclusive digital economy (Australian Government, 2018)

What does a 100% digitally inclusive Australia look like?

Our vision is a world where everyone benefits from digital technology.

To make that world a reality, Good Things Foundation here and in the UK has spent years developing digital inclusion strategies, programs and resources to make a real impact in our communities. Our areas of focus are:

Education - Continue to deliver the Be Connected program and expand the scope to reach more people in need.

Health - CSIRO research shows that telehealth could save the health care system up to $3 billion a year[5]. My Health Record is one key to this, but its success relies on users with digital skills.

Disability - The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is changing the way that disability services are delivered, and will ensure social and economic independence and full participation for Australians with disabilities. However, 25% of people with disabilities currently do not use the internet[6]. A successful NDIS requires improved digital literacy.

Rural and Regional - Digital technology can integrate and improve agricultural production from the paddock to the plate and could potentially boost gross production in Australia by $20.3 billion[7]. But rural and regional areas experience higher digital exclusion rates than capital cities[8]. A focus on improving the digital skills of rural and regional Australians is essential.

Employment - A digitally skilled workforce is essential to Australia's continued economic growth. Increasing digitisation and automation means at least 90% of Australians will need to use some level of digital skills at work within the next five years[9]. Job seekers without digital skills and confidence are already being left behind, and that divide will grow.

> *Getting online has made it really easy for me to apply for jobs. [Be Connected] has brought me up to speed with computers, like being able to type in 'employment Townsville' and get all these results. I can now apply online as opposed to calling people and being passed around and getting nowhere. Learning how to use a computer has saved me so much time and I feel good about myself. I'm going to keep learning!*
> *- Bert Stone, Townsville, QLD*

About Good Things Foundation Australia

Good Things Foundation is a social change charity. Our vision is a world where everyone can benefit from digital. We work with partners in thousands of communities across Australia, UK and Kenya.

www.goodthingsfoundation.org.au