

# Neighborhood Tech Help



## Guide to Staffing

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## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

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The **Neighborhood Tech Help Guide to Staffing** is intended to support the staff of a community anchor institution to plan their own NTH program by sharing best practices for hiring Program Coordinators and Tech Corps members.

We recommend that you review the Neighborhood Tech Help Program Model before reviewing this or our other resources. These staffing guidelines evolved from best practices and the experience of others across North America. We advise that you do similar comparative research to find the program model that works best for you and your community.

This document is organized to provide you with a starting point based on program development and implementation in New York City. Take what works for you and leave what doesn't.

# NTH PROGRAM MODEL OVERVIEW

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The NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) is committed to ensuring that all the households supported by the agency's rental assistance subsidies or that live in HPD-assisted affordable housing developments have free or low-cost access to the internet, as well as the skills and confidence to leverage the internet and technology to improve their socioeconomic status.

In order to support a digital shift in Section 8 processing, HPD, the Brooklyn Public Library (BPL), the New York Public Library (NYPL), and The Queens Borough Public Library (QPL) have collaborated to initiate a program called Neighborhood Tech Help (NTH)—launched officially in spring 2025—which provides Section 8 households individualized support resolving challenges in using technology and the internet.

The program supports the hiring of local young adults as part-time staff (Tech Corps members) across all three New York library systems. The Tech Corps members were trained to deliver ad-hoc technical support to a diverse range of New Yorkers in-person at centrally-located community sites.

In October 2022, the NYC Behavioral Design Team (BDT) launched a project with HPD, BPL, NYPL, and QPL to better understand and report on the behavioral barriers to engagement with the libraries' existing digital literacy programming—as well as propose several high-level design concepts that incorporate these insights—to improve the efficacy of the city's new Neighborhood Tech Help program.

Following this research, ideas42 published [a report of their insights](#) that begins with an in-depth summary of their research activities. The report supports the determination of the following pilot priorities:

- The population of New Yorkers who are least comfortable using digital tools
- The barriers these individuals face in accessing services provided by their local libraries
- The challenges they encounter in using—and acquiring skills to use—digital tools
- The specific skills and tasks people desire to learn and how to achieve them

Learn more about the initiative and how to plan your own, be sure to review the **Neighborhood Tech Help Program Model**.

# NTH STAFFING MODEL

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*Neighborhood Tech Help has two designated categories of staff: NTH Program Coordinator and the Tech Corps members.*

## TECH CORPS COORDINATORS

Each anchor institution should determine the specific job description for their Tech Corps Coordinator, but the following recommendations should be considered:

### Responsibilities

- Support the hiring of Tech Corps members
- Co-develop an implementation plan
- Lead and support community outreach efforts
  - Identify hyper-local outreach partners and provide outreach materials
  - Support scheduling of outreach events for NTH members to attend
- Train (and/or coordinate the training of) Tech Corps members
- Schedule Tech Corps members at host sites
- Communicate regularly with community partners, host sites, and supervisors (i.e., anchor institutional staff, etc.)
- Visit host sites
- Report on the performance of Tech Corps members
- Document and log progress and constraints to pivot midstream, when necessary, and capture lessons learned during the project to aid in scalability

### Qualifications

- Project and program management experience
- Supervisory experience
- Understanding the reading and writing of impact reports and evaluation metrics
- Familiarity with best practices for community engagement

## TECH CORPS MEMBERS

Hailing from the communities served by the NTH, Tech Corps members act as trusted community liaisons, customer service representatives, and problem-solvers for the targeted communities. They should be able to communicate in the primary language of the potential patrons.

The responsibilities of the Tech Corps members fall into three primary categories:

- Outreach (engagement and program awareness)
- Service Delivery (troubleshooting and problem-solving)
- Data Collection (relationship-building, goal-setting, and patron retention)

The complete job description can be found on page 4. Consider this a starting point, and feel free to add or amend this description based on your individual needs.

# TOOL: TECH CORPS JOB DESCRIPTION

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**Title:** Neighborhood Tech Corps Member

**Reports to:** The Neighborhood Tech Corps member will report to the Neighborhood Tech Help Coordinator.

**Job Overview:** Community-based Tech Corps members provide individualized assistance to residents [description of target participants] and other local community members in need of support using fundamental digital skills and/or access to affordable home internet service and internet-capable devices in order to become effective internet users. This assistance will be provided in person throughout [neighborhood].

The Tech Corps member's work is part of [Community Anchor Institution]'s efforts to build local digital literacy and equitable internet access for [target participants]. [Community Anchor Institution] is looking to hire members of the community for these roles. Tech Corps members will engage in continuous learning opportunities throughout the term of employment.

**Compensation:** Tech Corps Member is a temporary, part-time position with a salary of X

**Timeframe:** X

## Responsibilities and Duties

- Conduct outreach to local community members, including those [description of target participants], to encourage participation in tech support services
- Assess each patron's access to technology, current digital skill level, connectivity needs, and internet use priorities. If necessary,
  - Support patrons in solving specific problems related to basic digital literacy and navigation, software, or hardware functionality
  - Advise patrons on best practices related to digital safety and avoiding scams and viruses
  - Advise patrons about free or affordable home internet service options for which they may qualify and support their efforts to secure service
  - Advise patrons about sources of affordable computers or other internet connected devices for which they may qualify, and support their efforts to acquire appropriate devices and where they can get help for repair
  - Refer patrons to relevant services or organizations who can support tech needs beyond the scope of NTH

- Track each patron's progress and types of requests, keep accurate and timely records, and report outcomes as required
- Build community relationships about services through targeted outreach and one-on- one interactions
- Other relevant services

### **Critical Skills and Aptitudes**

- Ability to demonstrate basic knowledge of current technology operating systems (Windows, MacOS, Android, iOS), applications and websites (Google, Office Suite, online banking), and devices (smartphones, tablets, laptops, desktop computers), or a willingness to learn
- Ability to demonstrate positive attitude, excellent interpersonal skills, cultural sensitivity, patience, and a sense of humor in working with diverse customers, co-workers, and community
- Ability to creatively solve problems and handle stressful situations in a positive manner
- Excellent self-organization, language capacity, and cultural competency
- Excellent telephone, online, and in-person communication skills, including the ability to establish trust with patrons of varied educational and cultural backgrounds
- Ability to provide excellent customer service, establish appropriate boundaries with patrons, and to demonstrate innovation and flexibility
- Willingness to travel to residential buildings, community centers, anchor institution locations, and other facilities within a specific neighborhood
- Ability to speak [languages spoken in target community], preferred
- Desire to embrace the challenge of learning and teaching basic technological concepts related to internet services, computer and device functions, and common online services and applications
- Interest in empowering older adults, people with disabilities, immigrants, and other vulnerable populations with digital skills and confidence
- Other skills



New York  
Public  
Library



QUEENS  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

L&L

The Neighborhood Tech Help program model was co-designed by the New York City Department. of Housing Preservation and Development; social impact consultants TYTHEdesign; and Brooklyn Public Library, New York Public Library, and Queens Public Library. The project is currently being managed by the New York City Office of Technology & Innovation. Branding was developed in collaboration with L+L Studio and illustrations are by Ilya Milstein.

**TYTHE  
design**

This tool was developed by TYTHEdesign, a women-owned capacity-building firm with 15+ years of experience. TYTHE uses human-centered design, collaborative engagement, program evaluation, and insights gleaned from inclusive, mixed-method research to help clients develop resource-efficient programs that create social value.

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