

From: [Peter Waite](#)
To: [NBRARfc2016](#)
Subject: National Broadband Research Agenda
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On behalf of ProLiteracy, the nation's largest not for profit literacy organization, I am pleased to make the following comments regarding the National Broadband Research Agenda. ProLiteracy represents a network of over 1000 member organizations in all 50 states and in 15 countries worldwide. Our members serve over 250,000 low skilled adult seeking to advance their basic skills in US.

Many of these students have limited access to broadband technology and are consequently limited in their capability to take advantage of more efficient instruction. This limitation has resulted in a many prospective students not being able to access quality instruction and supplemental resources that are readily available on technology platforms.

We would like to make the following specific comments relative to the development of a National Broadband Research Agenda.

1. The agenda should include specific projects that address the degree to which low level learners are able to access broadband technology for adult literacy instruction and supplemental resources.
2. Research should attempt to determine the extent of accessibility to broadband for low level learners and their families. This should include both direct access and access via secondary organizations such as literacy programs, libraries or other community services.
3. The agenda should build on the data gained from the national BTOP grants with particular attention to at risk and low literate populations.
4. The research agenda should incorporate review and recommendations associated with new innovations that will require significant broadband connectivity. These innovations include such projects as the new XPrize competition that will be focused on increasing direct to student capacity requiring high speed broadband connectivity.
5. The research agenda should focus on key barriers to broadband access for at risk and low literate populations. It would be important to identify specific strategies that could be utilized to overcome major barriers for these populations.
6. Research conducted on behalf of low literate populations should engage actual target populations for direct survey and assessment. Programs serving these populations should also be consulted.
7. The agency should attempt to solicit additional direct input from at risk populations to ensure accurate assessment of key barriers and potential solutions.
8. The research agenda should attempt to identify potential commercial opportunities that would bring additional resources into the field and fully explore business ventures that would be commercially viable.
9. The agency should include input from local, state and regional consortia who are involved with at risk populations and who might most benefit from expanded broadband access and related innovations.
10. The agency should consider a more formal and permanent vehicle for field input on the

ongoing agenda and resulting activities to ensure better input, guidance and feedback on proposed research, projects and dissemination.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the suggested development of a national research agenda and look forward to ongoing dialogue that will benefit the adult literacy community and our constituents.

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