

# Digital Infrastructure

## Discussion Guide



### Let's review

At the start of each discussion, review the conversation ground rules for returning and new members alike to set the stage for active participation by all. You may want to use a timer as you go around the room. And don't forget to decide who will take notes and post a discussion recap.

- **Be open and curious:** Everyone has a unique perspective, so be prepared to hear a different point of view. Listen first, and focus on the facts.
- **Be respectful and engaged:** Be sure that everyone has a chance to speak before adding a second comment or perspective. Encourage each other's participation.
- **Be focused and concise:** Keep the conversation centered on the issue and the brief.

**The "Table-it" Rule:** If the group has gone off-topic but the area is of interest, the group can table the conversation and save it for another time to be addressed in a different manner.

### Let's begin

Each member is invited to give a short two-three minute reaction to the brief answering the following questions.

- What lens did you wear when reviewing this brief (e.g. professional, parent)?
- What did you find most interesting or surprising from reading the brief?
- What do you most care about / would like to investigate more regarding this issue?

### Let's discuss

- How many times a day do you rely on our digital infrastructure? In a national emergency if the Internet went down, how would you get news and information?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how important is it that the U.S. be on the leading edge of digital infrastructure?
- What role should the government have in developing new technology or providing access to the digital infrastructure and economy?
- How safe is your personal data? Do you think privacy standards are adequate or not?

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### Let's spread the word

Pick 2-3 facts that your circle feels best highlights the current state of this topic to develop your talking points on the issue.

- The Internet connects almost 4 billion people, more than half of the world's population ([World Economic Forum](#)).
- Almost 25 million Americans (8%) lack broadband connectivity; 19 million of these Americans live in rural areas, where just  $\frac{2}{3}$  of communities have access to mobile and fixed broadband ([NTIA: Closing the Rural Broadband Gap](#)).
- In 2018, the US ranked 20th worldwide in broadband speed ([The Guardian](#)).
- In 2015, worldwide e-commerce sales amounted to over \$25 trillion ([UNCTAD](#))
- Cyberattacks have increased by more than 100 percent since 2015 ([Reuters](#)).
- Approximately 765 million people were affected by data breaches between April and June of 2018 ([USA Today](#)).
- Between 2013 and 2017, Alphabet, Microsoft, and Apple together filed over 300 health care patents ([Stanford Medicine](#)).
- Other:

### Let's act

- Who can post a recap of this discussion?
- How does digital infrastructure affect our community? Is this an issue we'd like to learn more about? If so, who could serve as point people?
- What organizations, legislators or journalists could we contact to ask questions, learn more and get engaged?
  - [Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation](#)
  - [House Science, Space, and Technology Committee](#)
  - [The State Science and Technology Institute](#) is a national nonprofit organization that offers services, information, and support for technology innovation.
  - [Women in Technology](#) advances women in technology by providing support, leadership development, education, and networking and mentoring opportunities around the Washington, D.C./Maryland/Virginia metro region.

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- [R Street Institute](#) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan public policy organization that conducts research and advocacy on a number of issues, including technology, innovation, and cybersecurity.