

Subj: **NVC 011614 Digital Tools for Adult Learners**  
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 From: [lmclendon@naepdc.org](mailto:lmclendon@naepdc.org)

***NAEPDC***  
*News, Views, and Clues*  
 January 16, 2014

**Digital Tools for Adult Learners**

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Dear Partner,

At a White House summit today to expand college opportunity, the Joyce Foundation will [announce a new \\$1.4 million investment](#) in digital tools for adult learners. The investment represents a new focus for the Employment Program as we explore the potential educational technologies have to teach underprepared adults successfully, quickly and at a lower cost than current skills training programs and technologies allow.

35 million adults lack basic reading and math skills and increasingly important problem-solving and communications skills employers need. And, less than 3 million of those adults are enrolled in an adult education program. Capitalizing on common technology, such as smartphones, digital learning tools can reach individuals who currently aren't being served.

Digital learning grants were awarded to:

- [MIT Media Lab](#) to develop several new education technology prototypes over the next two years based on extensive input from employers and educators.
- [Digital Promise](#) to lead a national conversation about opportunities to accelerate adult learning through use of digital tools and advancements in learning sciences and will facilitate partnerships for doing so.
- [EdSurge](#) to help educational institutions and others navigate technology options by cataloguing and spotlighting promising education technology tools for adult learners, and reporting on developments in this market to help educators, technology firms and investors engage in a more informed way.

Together with our grantees, the Joyce Foundation is committed to raising awareness about the potential of digital learning tools, fostering collaboration between workforce and technology leaders, developing proof points that these technologies are effective, and building a community of

developers, instructors and institutions interested in this work to accelerate learning about how to design, build and deploy these technologies most effectively.

I'm looking forward to working with these grantees and others in the field who are exploring new avenues to deliver critical education services to adults who need new skills for today's job market.

Sincerely,

Whitney Smith  
Program Director, Employment  
The Joyce Foundation

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The Joyce Foundation 321 North Clark Street, Suite 1500 Chicago, Illinois 60654

Phone: (312) 782-2464 | Fax: (312) 595-1350

[www.joycefdn.org](http://www.joycefdn.org)

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Keep up the good work. Let me know when we can help.

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*Dr. Lennox L. McLendon, Executive Director*

[lmclendon@naepdc.org](mailto:lmclendon@naepdc.org)

[www.naepdc.org](http://www.naepdc.org)

202.624.5250

202.624.1497 FAX