

MICHIGAN STATE U N I V E R S I T Y

We are excited to announce the MSU Center for Community and Economic Development will be supporting a Spring 2021 project to help bridge Michigan's digital divide, a longstanding problem made even more urgent by the COVID pandemic. The project, led by Mitchell Shapiro, an Innovation Fellow at MSU's Regional Innovation Center (REI), will develop an EDA grant proposal for an in-depth study of the feasibility and benefits of Automated Open Access (AOA) networks, a promising approach to providing high-performance future-ready broadband.

AOA networks have the potential to simultaneously address multiple challenges confronting efforts to connect homes and businesses with affordable high-performance broadband. First, by enabling multiple Internet Service Providers to compete on a single fiber network with virtually unlimited capacity, AOAs can reduce prices and improve service quality while also expanding consumer choice and value-enhancing innovation. They also provide uniquely high levels of security, privacy and ease of use, factors that are especially important as we expand our reliance on telehealth, remote learning and smart grid and smart city services. And by doing so, they open up new possibilities for funding network deployment to reflect the broad range of value they provide to support efficient and safe delivery of these essential public services.

About Project Leads:

[Merit Network](#)

Merit Network's mission is connecting organizations and building community. They provide networking, security and community services to member organizations that help make our society a better place to learn, discover, work and live – while upholding the principles of an open internet.



University Outreach and Engagement

Center for Community and Economic Development

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[Michigan Broadband Cooperative](#)

Michigan Broadband Cooperative is an all-volunteer group of western Washtenaw County residents and friends, working to bring affordable high quality, reliable, and uncapped internet access to our area. They work with all rural townships in Washtenaw and Jackson County, to assist in information gathering and to help get the ball rolling.

[MSU CCED](#)

MSU CCED The MSU Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED) is committed to developing and applying knowledge to address the needs of contemporary society. Our mission is to advance MSU's land-grant mission by creating, applying, and disseminating valued knowledge through responsive engagement, strategic partnerships, and collaborative learning. We are dedicated to empowering communities to create sustainable prosperity and an equitable economy.

For additional information, contact Jen Bruen at bruenjen@msu.edu

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