

Connected Students — Removing Affordability Barriers to Home Internet in Shepparton

Digital Inclusion · Good practice · Australia

Quality score: 72/100

Evidence strength: Observational / pre–post

Summary

Telstra gave 100 low-income Shepparton households a free laptop, router and two years of unlimited mobile broadband. An RMIT-led study of 183 participants found the trial isolated affordability as a distinct access barrier, though funded kits ended when the pilot closed.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Innovation level	3/5
Sustainability (ongoing)	0/1
Evaluation evidence	1/1
Demonstrated reach	1/1
Documented learning	1/1

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-07-22

[Telstra, with evaluation by RMIT University's Australian Digital Inclusion Index team](#) — accessed 2026-07-22

[Australian Digital Inclusion Index: Connected Students project](#) — accessed 2026-07-22

[Telstra: Shepparton families benefit from ground-breaking digital trial](#) — accessed 2026-07-22

[Springer: How to Make Affordability-Focused Digital Inclusion Interventions More Effective — Lessons from the Connected Students Program](#) — accessed 2026-07-22

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