

# CONNECTING SKID ROW

A community-engaged research initiative to understand how people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County use digital technologies.

**USC**Annenberg  
Annenberg Research Network on  
International Communication

**For people experiencing homelessness, Internet access can be the key** to securing shelter, finding a job, connecting to social services or staying in touch with friends and family.

In January 2018, the Connected Communities and Inclusive Growth (CCIG) team at USC Annenberg launched Connecting Skid Row, a **research initiative** that seeks to understand the role of digital technologies in the lives of those experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles.

## Research shows

The majority of those experiencing homelessness **own a mobile phone** and use the Internet on a regular basis.

## The project seeks

to generate actionable knowledge and provide a testbed for interventions that leverage digital technologies to alleviate homelessness

With support from the **Los Angeles Public Library**, we surveyed people experiencing homelessness to better understand their engagement with mobile phones and the Internet

Together with the **Los Angeles Community Action Network (LACAN)**, our team has prototyped a community-operated phone charging and free Wi-Fi solution for Skid Row residents.

This work to date has been generously supported by the **James H. Zumberge Research and Innovation Fund** and the **USC Price Center for Social Innovation**.

**We seek partners to help develop new initiatives and fund existing ones.**

Finding a place to charge is difficult for those experiencing homelessness

How difficult is it to find a place to charge your phone?

Chronically homeless

Repeatedly homeless

First time homeless

Never been homeless

Always difficult  
Often difficult  
Sometimes difficult  
Never difficult

Internet use is widespread among those experiencing homelessness

How often do you use the Internet?

Daily

62%

Several times a week

14%

About once a week

4%

Several times a month

5%

About once a month

2%

No use in last 3 months

13%

The Internet is a critical tool for job searching among those experiencing homelessness

In the past year, did you use the Internet to find a job?

