

SECTION 03

The AI Readiness Gap

As artificial intelligence reshapes the global economy, the gap between who uses it and who does not is not closing. Microsoft reports it is widening.

03

12.6pp

And the gap is still widening.

No broadband. No AI. No place in the next economy.

Generative AI use among the working age population, 15 to 64.

GLOBAL USE / MICROSOFT, SEPTEMBER 2026

28.8%	Global North
16.2%	Global South
12.6pp	the gap between them
18.8%	worldwide, as of June

THE STAKES / WEF, STANFORD HAI, PEW

88%	of organizations now use AI
39%	of workers' skill sets transformed or outdated by 2030
92M	jobs displaced by 2030
170M	jobs created by 2030

Microsoft calls this "a continued widening." The North grew faster than the South again this quarter. Communities without broadband are not standing still relative to everyone else, they are falling further behind.

Closing the AI readiness gap

- 01 **Launch a national AI literacy initiative** aimed at underserved communities, so every American has a baseline understanding of AI tools, risks and opportunities.
- 02 **Require AI competency in federally funded workforce programs**, building AI readiness into the job training pipelines that already exist.
- 03 **Create public access AI labs** in libraries, community centers and HBCUs, for people who have no personal access to advanced computing.
- 04 **Fund AI readiness research** that measures preparedness at the community level and tracks adoption disparities over time.
- 05 **Incentivize private sector AI equity partnerships** through credits and grants for firms that put AI training and tools into underserved communities.

How AGI Affinity can help

We assess community AI readiness with the TSDOH Assessment Matrix, and help municipalities, workforce boards and institutions build AI strategies that fit local economic conditions. More than half of American adults still have not used an AI chatbot. That is the starting line.