



## SETTING UP A DIGITAL INCLUSION PROJECT



### INTRODUCTION

These resources have been created by researching, curating and summarising the information provided by the UK's leading Digital Inclusion Charities, Organisations and Researchers. Please see the list of useful resources and websites on page 2.

Why Digital Inclusion is so important?

The [Good Things Foundation](#) states that Digital Exclusion is a social issue.

Poor digital skills and limited access to the internet can have a negative impact on a person's life. It can limit an individual's access health, social and community services, which in turn affects their physical and mental wellbeing and increases social isolation and loneliness. Digital exclusion also reduces access to jobs and education, limiting opportunities and life chances.

Not being able to get online, can also mean that individuals and families pay more for everyday essentials, including food and utilities. Furthermore, without access to the internet, banking and financial transactions become increasingly difficult, exacerbating financial exclusion and increasing the risk of experiencing poverty. And with more government services and democratic platforms moving online, people who are digitally excluded are losing the ability to be involved, heard and suitably supported.

Unsurprisingly, it's those who are already at a disadvantage – because of their age, education, income, disability, or unemployment – who are most likely to be missing out digitally. This only serves to further widen the social inequality gap.

How your organisation could help tackle the Digital Divide? Ideas to consider...

- Promoting the role of informal digital champions – friends, family and neighbours supporting one another
- Partnering with another local organisation to provide digital support to a specific population group E.g. the local church, community food project, WEA or U3A groups
- Setting up an independent volunteer digital champion project within a local community venue – e.g providing digital support at a regular time each week in the village hall, church, local school, local pub or cafe
- Establishing a digital hub – creating a permanent / semi-permanent space within the community that could provide access to tech and support

For more information about the different models of Digital Inclusion Projects and Champions visit One Digital's website <https://www.onedigitaluk.com/>

## USEFUL WEBSITES AND DOCUMENTS

- One Digital - Provides Useful information about how to set up a Digital Inclusion Project and the different types of Digital Champion <https://www.onedigitaluk.com/>
- The Good Things Foundation <https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/>
- Citizen's Online <https://www.citizenonline.org.uk/>  
 Citizen's Online Webinar – [Starting a Digital Inclusion Project](#)  
 Citizen's Online Events – [webinars about Digital Inclusion and how to get involved](#)
- The Online Centres Network – free to join and provide toolkits and handbooks on setting up a digital project and delivering digital skills <https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/resources>
- Digital Unite <https://www.digitalunite.com/>
- The Digital Poverty Alliance <https://digitalpovertyalliance.org/>
- Ability Net - free online resources and a network of volunteers help individuals with any disability, of any age, to use all kinds of digital technology. <https://abilitynet.org.uk/>
- The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations – have created a number of resources to support Digital Champions and organisations who want to support digital inclusion.  
<https://scvo.scot/support/digital/guides/digital-inclusion>  
<https://scvo.scot/support/digital/guides/digital-champions>
- The Digital Venue Toolkit  
[https://www.hwrcc.org.uk/downloads/Digital\\_Venue\\_Toolkit\\_Art\\_Digital01.pdf](https://www.hwrcc.org.uk/downloads/Digital_Venue_Toolkit_Art_Digital01.pdf)
- The Digital Inclusion Kit <https://digitalinclusionkit.org/>
- Learn My Way <https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/learn/learn-my-way/>
- Make it Click <https://makeitclick.learnmyway.com/directory>
- Digital 4 Everyone <https://digital4everyone.co.uk/>

## NEXT STEPS

So, you have gained an understanding of the Digital Inclusion agenda and why supporting your community to 'get online' is so worthwhile. You are interested in getting involved and think that your organisation might be able to do something to help. What next?

### 1. Get your organisation on board: share information and discuss developing a digital inclusion project with the other members of your team.

- Share the information you have gathered about the importance and value of digital inclusion. An informative starting place is the Good Things Foundation website pages on the Digital Divide. <https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/the-digital-divide/>
- Share the information you have gathered about the different digital project models, including Digital Hubs and Venues, and the roles of a Digital Ambassador and Digital Champion
- If your team are now on board, appoint a Digital Ambassador and Digital Focus Group to enable your organisation to continue through the following steps. Discuss roles and availability.
- Connect with the Derbyshire Digital Support network for information, advice and the sharing of best practice.

### 2. Survey your community

In order to better understand the digital needs of your community, you will need to find a way of gathering good quality feedback from local residents. A survey is a good way to do this, as it will enable you to:

- Assess the current digital skills and specific digital issues within the community you serve
- Gauge level of interest regarding the development of a digital venue and availability of digital support in the form of Digital Champions
- Gauge potential for recruiting volunteers from the community to help deliver support

Consider how you will share the survey (online, paper, over the telephone or in person) and how long it will remain open for.

### 3. Conduct a Feasibility Study

- Using the results of the survey you conducted, assess the needs of those who responded and the demand for digital support in your community. What sort of support is required or preferred, and how does this fit with the various digital project models your organisation could possibly deliver?
- Consider what the costs will be for delivering the preferred model of digital support in your community? For example, venue costs, broadband costs, equipment costs, volunteer or staff training costs, time, insurance and DBS checks, and additional sundry expenses (refreshments,

paper, printing, travel expenses). A list of organisations that can support with purchases of new and refurbished devices for your project is included at the end of this document.

- What costs would be one-offs and what would be ongoing?
- How would your own IT be supported – troubleshooting, maintenance, PAT testing?

#### 4. Identify and secure Funding and Resources

What funds does your organisation have available? Will you need to apply for external funding? If so, have a clear understanding of what costs a funder is likely to cover (e.g. equipment and hardware) and what costs they won't (e.g. ongoing costs like broadband & staff)

- Use these links to access funding search engines for charities and voluntary organisations

My Funding Central <https://www.myfundingcentral.co.uk/>

The FSI Charity Advice Hub <https://www.thefsi.org/charity-advice-hub>

The Directory for Social Change Fundraising <https://www.dsc.org.uk/category/fundraising/>

Charity Excellence Funding Finder Tool

<https://www.charityexcellence.co.uk/Home/FundingFindersResources>

- Consider researching and then applying for:

Local Authority Grants

District and Borough Council Grants

Parish Council Grants

Health and Wellbeing Grants

- Could you collaborate with partners to deliver your project, they may help with funding?

Local and National Government

NHS

Police and Crime Commissioner

Housing Associations

Charities

Businesses

- National Lottery funding
- Consider ways to fundraise from the local community too: campaigns, donations and events – targeting individuals and other organisations
- Do you have a service or trade that you can 'sell' in order to fund the project?
- Talk to your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) for advice about funding

Make sure you factor in the delay between applying for and securing funding. It is worth applying to more than one 'pot' as applications may not be initially successful, and not all funders will provide the full amount requested.

## 5. Appoint a Digital Team

Once you have secured the resources to develop a Digital Hub and/or Digital Champion project, you will need a team to support you with setting up, promoting, delivering and maintaining the project. What will your team look like, and will they need training?

- Ambassador – leads the delivery of the project as agreed by the focus group. Recruits volunteers and oversees their training, support and deployment; liaises with the focus group and Derbyshire Digital Network providing monthly / quarterly quantitative and qualitative feedback.
- Champions – to deliver the support individuals and groups require
- Venue Staff – if you are delivering from a venue, who is staffing this behind the scenes? Who will set up, are refreshments to be catered for? Who will take responsibility for booking the venue?

For more information about recruiting and training Digital Champions, please read the following documents:

- Digital Champion Recruitment Guide
- Volunteer Digital Champion Handbook
- Digital Champion Training Guide and Checklist

## 6. Purchase and install equipment

So, you've got the funding and the Digital Team is in place. Now it's time to finalise the shopping list for the equipment you will need and to find a suitable person or company to assist with the installation. It can be useful to form a business relationship with a local company that can help with maintenance and technical support.

## 8. Plan your Digital Inclusion Training Offer

In preparation for the launch of your project, decide and scope out the initial training that you will offer.

- Will you offer some basic 'get online' training, perhaps running 4-6 group sessions to share the basics of what getting online actually entails?
- Perhaps you just want to start with drop-in trouble shooting sessions and then develop a course around common themes?
- Perhaps you will link 'getting online' and teaching internet searches to a pre-existing local interest group as a way of 'tapping in' on people's interests. For example, a local gardening group, knit and natter, church coffee morning.

The Digital Champion Handbook signposts you to free resources to support learners and tutors through the Learn My Way website. You can also connect with other projects in the Derbyshire Digital Support network to find out what they do, what works and what doesn't.

## 9. Think about Data Protection, Confidentiality, Health and Safety and Risk Assessments.

When providing a digital inclusion offer to your local community, you need to consider the risks involved and how you will minimise these to keep your staff, volunteers and 'service users' safe. You may already have generic policies and resources in place, but we recommend that you consider the following if you have not already done so.

- **GDPR / Data Protection / Internet Safety training and information for staff and volunteers**
  - ✓ <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/digital-technology/data-protection-and-cybersecurity/#/>
  - ✓ <https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/data-protection-for-community-groups>
  - ✓ <https://www.digitalunite.com/technology-guides/internet-security>
- **Health and Safety**
  - ✓ <https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/health-and-safety/>
  - ✓ <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/running-a-charity/employing-managing-staff/creating-policies-procedures/health-safety/#/>
  - ✓ <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers/volunteers-and-the-law/volunteering-and-health-and-safety/#/>
- **Carrying out formal risk assessments for the venue, the equipment being used and the digital inclusion activity that you are providing**
  - ✓ <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/governance/responsibilities-for-boards/helping-your-board-meet-their-responsibilities/how-to-manage-risk/#/>
  - ✓ <https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/risk-assessments/>
- **Safeguarding training and policy**
  - ✓ <https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/safeguarding/>
  - ✓ <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/safeguarding/#/>
  - ✓ <https://digitalunite.com/sites/default/files/2021-03/HS%2034%20SafeguardingAdultsPolicy%5B57%5D-compressed.pdf>
- **How to keep your digital champion and learners safe**
  - ✓ <https://www.digitalunite.com/news-reviews/helping-others-remote-digital-champion-how-keep-you-and-your-learners-safe>
- Digital Champion Training Modules on internet safety are available on the Learn My Way Website. Please see the Digital Champion Training Guide and Checklist for more information. <https://www.learnmyway.com/subjects/online-safety/>

## 10. Awareness Raising in the community

As your project approaches its launch date, you will need to raise awareness of your 'offer' within the local community. Consider the ways in which you will promote the Digital Hub and Digital Champions.

- Plan and advertise a 'Launch Event' where you can showcase your project and kindle the community's interest and curiosity.
- How will you use social media – Twitter, Facebook, your website?
- Consider writing a 'press release' for the local newspaper or parish magazine
- Posters
- Flyers through letterboxes and to other local groups

And, as your project develops over the coming weeks and months, consider how you will maintain interest and promote the work you are doing? Can you share information about what you are offering with other local groups, or perhaps use social media and the local press to highlight success stories or ongoing need?

You could link in your offer with other national awareness raising events ([Volunteers Week](#), [Get Online Week](#), [Communities Week](#), [Lifelong Learning Week](#)), and key dates within your own community's calendar.

## 11. Evaluate your project

The role of providing digital support and skills training will be ongoing, so it will be important to review your project at regular intervals. Consider the following review questions as a starting point.

- How many people have you supported?
- What have you supported them with?
- How much time, on average, is spent with each learner?
- What has worked well?
- What has been difficult?
- What additional digital needs have been identified and what ongoing support is required?
- How many Digital Champions do you have, and what are their ongoing training and mentoring needs? Do you need to recruit more Digital Champions?
- Are the costs of delivering your project manageable and sustainable? Do you require additional funding and how will this be secured?

## ACCESSING HARDWARE FOR YOUR PROJECT

[Charity Digital Exchange](#) is a tech donation programme brought to you by [Charity Digital](#) in partnership with the not-for-profit technology capacity building organisation [TechSoup](#).

[CharityDigital](#): Has links to deals on hardware. This includes specific discounts on Lenovo hardware and additional software too.

The [Charity Excellent Framework](#) provide some useful links for accessing discounted or free devices. Here are a few of their suggestions.

1. [Green Root Tech](#) - Free refurbished computers, IT hardware, and software services for UK charities.
2. [IT for Charities](#) - list of charities/companies that dispose of and/or provide refurbished IT, not all free.
3. [Computers for Charities](#) - charity providing low cost IT
4. [ComputerAid](#) - very low cost refurbished IT for non-profits.
5. [IT Schools Africa](#) - e-learning technology to improve life opportunities for school students and local communities in Africa and the UK.
6. [Screen Share](#) - support, inform and advocate for digital inclusion for young refugees, in the UK, primarily by repurposing and providing laptops.
7. [Computers For The Disabled](#) - a charity that provides disabled people and the elderly with used laptops, iPads and iPhones.

Local Suppliers of refurbished devices include:

Aspire in Sheffield: <https://www.aspire-sheffield.co.uk/>

Pc4recycling in Matlock <https://pc4recycling.co.uk/> (

Free Computer Recycling in Derby <https://www.freecomputerrecycling.co.uk/>

Computer Recyclers UK <https://www.computerrecyclersuk.com/>

Additional schemes and suppliers

Get Online at Home <https://www.getonlineathome.org/about/get-online-at-home>

Free Computer Schemes if you are on benefits <https://www.choose.co.uk/guide/free-computer-schemes-on-benefits.html>

CPR Computer Recycling <https://www.cprcomputerrecycling.co.uk/>

<https://www.cprcomputerrecycling.co.uk/computer-recycling-residential/area/Derbyshire-Computer-Recycling/county/Derbyshire>