



Promoting Digital Inclusion with the Arts and Cultural Sector and Beyond



**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Digital delivery has the potential to enhance inclusion within the arts and cultural sector through providing opportunities for people to enjoy content and experiences that they would not be able to access in person. It also provides the opportunity to maximise the social benefits of engaging with arts and culture.

With increasing amounts of arts and cultural activity now taking place online, it's an important time to consider how online arts and cultural experiences can be designed to be equally accessible and enriching for all.

This worksheet is designed to support arts and cultural organisations which want to make their online delivery more inclusive.

If you're inspired to make change, but don't know where to start, check out our list of considerations below.

We don't expect you to be able to address all of these considerations. Instead, the questions below are designed to act as a prompt to help you identify: your areas of strength, areas where your digital delivery could be made more inclusive, where to turn for support, and what else your organisation can do to support a more digitally inclusive society.



What do you need to consider to ensure your online delivery is digitally inclusive?

It's important to design online activities and experiences to be equally accessible and enriching for all (no matter the level of digital access, digital skills or digital motivation / confidence of audiences or participants).

In order to achieve this some useful things to consider are:

- Is the activity / experience being advertised through offline channels, and through the online channels that limited users are more likely to use (such as social and entertainment media)?
- Is practical support required for people who do not have an internet connection or device (e.g. distribution of devices or data dongles)?
- Is the activity / experience enriching for everyone irrespective of their device or internet speed?
- Is there a way to provide a lower cost (or free) way for people in financially vulnerable situations to engage online?
- Do any adjustments need to be made to improve the accessibility of online content e.g. for people with lower levels of literacy, people with disabilities or impairments, and people who have English as a second language?
- Is digital skills training required in order for people to engage?
- Is support required to help people to see how the experience is of value to them, and to encourage them to continue participating?
- Is the experience / activity designed to take account of the resources and support that someone has at home?
- Are there any safeguarding concerns related to delivering this experience / activity online?
- Have you consulted with people in your local community about the barriers they face in accessing your activities / experiences online and the best ways to address these barriers?

How can you build your organisation's capacity to deliver inclusive online activities and experiences?

It is critical that arts and cultural organisations recognise how digital delivery can be used to promote equal access to arts and culture, and to make a strategic commitment to putting digitally inclusive practices into practice.

When reviewing how to build your organisation's capacity to deliver inclusive online activities and experiences some useful things to consider are:

- Is digital inclusion being considered as part of your organisational strategy?
- How can a combination of face-to-face and digital delivery be used to maximise and diversify the number of people who are able to access your activities / experiences?
- Have you assessed your organisation's digital capabilities by using tools such as Arts Council England's '[Digital Culture Compass](#)'?
- Is any training required to improve your staff's / volunteers' digital skills, or their ability to deliver digitally inclusive activities and experiences?
- Have you taken advantage of the digital training and support offered by Arts Council England's Digital Culture Network?
- Have you explored funding opportunities outside the arts and cultural sector which could support you to enhance your digital capabilities?

Who could you work with to build your organisation's capacity to deliver inclusive online activities and experiences?

Partnership working is likely to be very useful in helping you to build your capacity to deliver inclusive digital experiences.

When identifying potential partners, it is useful to ask:

- Have you identified your local Online Centres?
- What digital inclusion support is provided through your local library?
- Can you work with other arts and cultural organisations in your area to share resources or expertise?
- Are there any charities, community organisations or connectors in your area that can:
 - Help you to understand the digital needs and capabilities of your community
 - Provide training to your staff / volunteers to enhance their digital skills and / or ability to deliver digitally inclusive activities and experiences
 - Promote your activities / experiences offline
 - Provide devices and / or data for your audience members / participants without internet access
 - Support your audience / participants to get online
 - Support your audience / participants to engage with your activity
- Provide free access to technology and data / WiFi on their premises
- Can you work with local organisations (such as local authorities, health and care services, housing associations, local charities and local community organisations) on a 'social prescribing' basis to reach a wider audience?

What else could you do to support digital inclusion in your community?

In addition to building your organisation's capacity to deliver inclusive online activities and experiences, you may also want to consider how your organisation can help to promote digital inclusion more widely. By doing so, more people in your community will not only be able to access arts and culture online, but the activities you design and deliver can provide a valuable hook for people to go on and become more digitally confident in other areas of life, whilst providing the opportunity to build connections with other organisations who recognise digital inclusion as a priority and the need to collaborate to create lasting change.

Some things you and your organisation may want to think about are:

- Are there any organisations in your local area which you could partner with to apply for place-based funding for digital inclusion initiatives?
- Are there charities and community organisations in your local area that you can refer or sign-post people to if they require additional digital support?
- Do you have equipment such as tablets, phones and laptops that could be shared or donated to people without internet access in your community?
- Could you offer a space and / or equipment for people to engage with online activity within your building?
- Could you provide access to free WiFi for people in your community?
- Could you provide a space in your building for people to improve their digital skills? Could you partner with a digital skills provider to facilitate this?
- Could your staff / volunteers contribute their time and expertise to help people in your community to develop their digital skills?