

Opportunities for learning and support for your digital endeavours. April 2021

This download features some of the existing opportunities accessible by third sector organisations in the UK. It isn't exhaustive – there will be opportunities we have missed; if you could tell us about more, or have any updates, we'd love to include them. You can contact Tot Foster at tot.foster@open.ac.uk

1. OpenLearn

Let's start at home! <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/>

The Open University's OpenLearn platform offers a large number of free courses on digital skills of varying lengths and complexity. You can learn everything from basic coding to cyber security. It even offers a Digital Skills pathway

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/sites/www.open.edu.openlearn/files/digital-pathways-19.pdf>

Courses on OpenLearn include a number from the Centre for Voluntary Sector Leadership <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education-development/free-leadership-courses-the-voluntary-sector>.

2. Massive Open Online Courses - MOOCS

There are a large number of free MOOCS available on a range of digital skills; everything from using spreadsheets more effectively to courses on social innovation. A few of these are tailored to the sector. Most MOOCS involve 2 to 4 hours learning a week over a period of 2 to 6 weeks. MOOCS usually have 'runs'; i.e. listed dates when you start. This has the disadvantage that you can't necessarily do the MOOC of your choice whenever you want, but on the other hand this type of learning has the huge advantage that you are undertaking the course with a group of peers.

The Futurelearn platform is huge. There are always a range of digital skills courses available. These might include Digital Skills for Work and Life, Web Analytics, Social Media and Digital Marketing. At this moment there are courses on Fundraising and Low-Budget Video Production. <https://www.futurelearn.com/>

Coursera and EdX have a wide variety of courses, mostly from US institutions. For example there is a current course on EdX called 'Business and Impact Planning for Social Enterprises'.

The software manufacturers platform OpenSAP has a course on Leadership in Digital Transformation but this is not specific to the voluntary sector.

3. Other courses

TechSoup offers a large number of short free or low-cost courses on the effective use of software and platforms, and also educational materials to help get the most from remote working in the pandemic. <https://techsoup-eu.course.tc/>

Charity Digital offers a range of free webinars and events <https://charitydigital.org.uk/webinars/webinars>

Free basic courses on specific digital skills for the workplace are available through the national careers website <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/find-a-course/the-skills-toolkit>. Specifically for young people's digital skills development is Idea <https://idea.org.uk/>.

Digital Leaders <https://digileaders.com/about/> offers information, advice, workshops, webinars, events, networking and resources to promote digital transformation across all sectors.

When it comes to course specific to the voluntary sector there's low cost e-learning modules and webinars from the FSI <https://www.thefsi.org/>, or courses for which bursaries are available such as Clore Social Leadership <https://cloresocialleadership.org.uk/> See also CAST's current and previous courses which include learning a collaborative approach to developing digital services <https://www.wearecast.org.uk/nonprofits>.

Some areas of the country have local low-cost face-to-face courses on a variety of digital aspects for small charities eg for the London area <https://superhighways.org.uk/training-advice-and-technical/>, or for Teeside see <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/free-digital-skills-training-for-voluntary-sector-professionals.html>

4. Corporate providers of free digital training:

There are also a large number of resources and courses available from private companies:

Accenture	eg Digital Marketing and Social Media
Acumen Academy	Some free courses such as Fundraising Essentials
Alison	eg Core IT Skills and Data Science
Barclays Digital Eagles	Free basic online resources and some live online learning sessions
eBay	'charity connect' charity shopping online course
Rolls Royce Digital Academy	offers links to a variety of partners courses and supplies some training materials eg on using LinkedIn
Google	eg Fundamentals of Digital Marketing
IBM	eg Analytics and AI Learning – some courses free
Khan Academy	eg Online Data Security and Email, SMS, and Social Media
UKLearns	eg Developing a Digital Marketing Strategy and Digital Marketing
Vision2Learn	provision of a range of workplace courses free to certain categories of learner
SANS Institute	free organisational cyber security beginner's course

[Cisco Networking Academy](#) free introductory cyber security course

5. Support for digital projects:

Finally there are some sources of support if you are planning to undergo digital transformation or embark on innovative digital projects. There are a number of national opportunities which provide funding, and/or digital experts for larger organisations in the sector, along with some associated training or mentoring.

Digital innovation:

Public money funds digital innovation hubs. These are not sector specific but many projects originating from these hubs have an aspect of social mission.

See <https://www.nesta.org.uk/project/digital-social-innovation/> for a report of digital social innovation in Europe 2013 to 2019 <https://digitalsocial.eu/about-the-project>

Digital transformation:

Supported online learning in digital transformation for all sizes of organisation <https://www.wearecast.org.uk/programmes/design-hops>

Data dives and coding weekends:

For example <https://www.datakind.org/datadive>

Vocational Education:

Funding and mentoring for developing digital vocational education which is not sector specific but which often has aspects of social mission <https://ufi.co.uk/> VochTech grants

Other useful information:

Maybe you don't want to sign up for a course but just want some information – if so here's some useful resources:

- Charity Digital Code of Practice - guidelines for effective and responsible utilisation of digital in the sector
<https://charitydigitalcode.org/>
You could also check out: <https://digitalprinciples.org/advocacy-toolkit/> or <https://betterdigital.services/principles/>
- NCVO's Digital Maturity Matrix helps you assess your own organisations digital status <https://tools.ncvo.org.uk/digitalmaturitymatrix>.
Other tools to check your organisation's digital maturity include:
<https://www.digitalskillsaccelerator.eu/radar/>,
<https://digitalmaturity.org/assessment/>
<https://www.dataorchard.org.uk/data-maturity-assessment-tool>
- Digital leadership101 – resources for charity digital leadership
<https://superhighways.org.uk/training-advice-and-technical/digital-leadership/>

- Advice for small charities, funders and support organisations based on qualitative research.
<https://www.ivar.org.uk/our-research/imaginable-usable-tech/>
- Making Digital Work – the Charity Commission’s advice for charity boards
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-digital-work-12-questions-for-trustees-to-consider>
- Charity Social Media Toolkit - tips on using social media
<https://www.skillsplatform.org/charitysocialmediatoolkit/>
- FilmKit – CharityComms guide to producing video content
<https://www.charitycomms.org.uk/filmkit>
- Cyber Security Hub – Charity Digital’s collation of resources for security
https://charitydigital.org.uk/cyber-security?mc_cid=07336e2fa1&mc_eid=c27ace1ac6

For meet-ups see local branches of NetSquared, a project of Tech Soup;

<https://www.techsoupeurope.org/netsquared-local-tech4good-meetups/>

Or CAST’s peer meet-ups: <https://www.wearecast.org.uk/programmes/coffee-connections>