



making IT personal

joining the DOTs

Welcome to the fourth edition of our 'Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs' newsletter – and we're celebrating!

Since January 2011, the programme has gained a UK Adult Learners' Award, has been recognised for its contribution to UK digital inclusion, and last but not least, has exceeded its target for registered DOTs. What is more, the registrations keep on coming in as we push out into new community and workplace settings. We've also been expanding our European partner activity, working closely with NIACE and our partner ESF project DAIN. Read on...

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DOTs Scoop National Award



Ian Chowcat and Peter Stub Jorgensen, European Social Fund Director, European Commission

Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs has won an Inspiring Projects Award – sponsored by the European Social Fund – at the 20th UK Adult Learners' Week Awards in London, the largest annual celebration of adult learning in the UK supported by the UK government and a host of national partners.

The project was selected because of the dedication and commitment to learning of Digital Outreach Trainers (DOTs) who in turn have inspired thousands of people across South Yorkshire to improve their IT and other skills.

All the winners' stories will undoubtedly inspire even more people to engage in learning."

Alan Tuckett, NIACE Chief Executive, said, "The stories of our award winners once again this year, the 20th Adult Learners' Week, illustrate the overwhelmingly positive impact that learning has on people's lives. The transformation that those taking part in the Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs have experienced, is due to their dedication, persistence and ambition. I hope that adults across the country will be inspired by their story to take up learning and discover for themselves a whole new life."



DOT mentoring in action

"I am pleased that the European Social Fund is again sponsoring Adult Learners' Week - in this its 20th year", said Wendy Violentano, Head of ESF Division at the Department for Work and Pensions. "It is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs and to show how learning can help improve job prospects."

Project Director Martin Cantor highlighted what the project

has achieved: "At its core the Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs programme affirms people's natural affinity for helping other people. It gives digital champions a framework to capitalise on this spirit and on their enjoyment of technology, whether basic or advanced. For some of our Digital Outreach Trainers – or DOTs – that has literally been a life-changing experience."



"Through the scheme, I've realised how many skills I have to offer, which I took for granted before."

Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs, 2011 Award Winner

You can find out more at: <http://bit.ly/alw-awards>



(left) Project Director Martin Cantor leading a discussion in the 'Getting Online Together' workshop

DOTs Make a Mark at UK's 6th National Digital Inclusion Conference Go On:ND11

Turn to the back page for news and photos...



Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs Online

To find out more about the project visit:

www.makingITpersonal.eu

To register interest in becoming a DOT, or simply to access some free IT resources visit:

www.makingITpersonal.org.uk

DOTS exceed target

The number of DOTs recruited to the programme topped our target figure of 300, 6 months ahead of schedule. As of going to press in May, the number of registered DOTs is 453 and the number of Approved DOTs is 70.

Cultivating links in Belgium

In collaboration with NIACE and our partner project, the Digital Activists Inclusion Network (DAIN), Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs led a seminar at the REWICS 2011 Conference on Digital and Social Innovation. This major conference on digital issues for French-speaking countries is now in its 11th year and was attended by over 855 delegates.

www.rewics.be

First fully online Level 1 Literacy course in the UK

This ESF funded MITP: JtD course currently offers the opportunity to gain the important national adult Literacy qualification at Level 1 through a 10 week fully taught online course, at the end of which the national test is taken at Sheffield College. The Level 1 course was so successful that Sheffield College has now developed a fully online Level 2 course that will also be available from September 2011.



So you're a DOT - what next?

You've completed your online log to record the help you've given to friends, neighbours and relatives and gained Approved status as a Digital Outreach Trainer. You could achieve this with just five diary entries, or it may take up to 20 or more - it all depends on the content of the entries and what criteria they cover. But what next?

The Fast Forward materials, specifically developed for Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham, provide help towards Literacy and ICT qualifications at Entry Level, with additional help on Numeracy. There are now also nine Fast Forward Work Skills booklets, pitched at Level 1 and 2, to improve your chances of getting a job.

The simplest progression from Approval is to continue helping people with IT problems and completing your online diary. Once you have written an entry, your e-Mentor will give you personal, specific and detailed feedback about which criteria you have met. With the help of your e-Mentor's advice on the kind of record required, you will soon be eligible for a Level 2 qualification from the Open College Network. A Level 3 qualification is also available.

This is the special appeal of the DOT scheme: by joining, you can access a wide range of learning opportunities and qualifications at

Level 1, 2, 3 and eventually Level 4, with the e-Communications Foundation Degree at The Sheffield College which you can study entirely online - so you can even do it while you're in full-time employment if you like.

See details at:

<http://goo.gl/IXjm8>

E-Communications is the world's fastest growing industry and new jobs in this area are appearing in both the public and private sector, even in these difficult times. The Foundation degree can develop into a BA Honours degree with Sheffield Hallam University, also fully online.

A number of DOTs have already taken advantage of this opportunity while it has also worked effectively the other way, with degree students getting hands-on mentoring experience in e-Communications through the MITP:JtD scheme.

DOT Stories



Mercy Nguru

Mercy is a working mum from Sheffield who enjoys using the internet and digital technologies. By becoming a DOT, Mercy has found an easy way to consolidate and improve her IT knowledge and help other people learn more, as well as discovering a pathway to new qualifications.



Ben Fuller

Ben, a resident of Rotherham, has a long standing love of computing and is a self-diagnosed 'gadget geek'. Ben is channelling his digital enthusiasm into the DOTs scheme and finding that mentoring can lead to qualifications and personal achievement.

Read the full stories at

www.makingITpersonal.eu

Fast Forward Malta



A Maltese fishing village



'Inspire' Learning Centre for students with special needs

Our partners in Malta are adopting the Fast Forward digital literacy model used in the MITP:JtD project.

In January, two developers of the Fast Forward materials (Wendy Mayes and Val Petersen from Sheffield College) went to Malta to adapt the booklets for the local population. The essence of the Fast Forward literacy approach is strong local contextualisation so the materials needed to be tailored to Maltese needs.

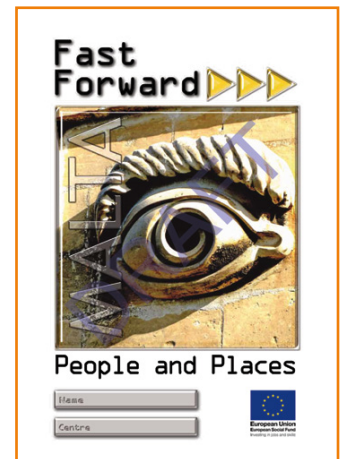
A draft version of Fast Forward Malta was presented to teachers and administrators from the Employment and Training Corporation and the Malta Communications Authority, who were delighted. They had done a lot of work themselves, suggesting Maltese people and places to feature, including local celebrities. These suggestions have been incorporated in a second draft which was

presented by Val Petersen during the latest study visit in May.

There is also interest in developing a DOT mentoring scheme for Malta. Banks may find the scheme useful, with paid employees having a specified role (and badge) so the public know who to ask for help with technology. In Malta, members of the public still like to visit banks in person so there are often long queues to make basic transactions.

The scheme may also work on an inter-generational basis with younger children as DOTs. Research in Malta has shown that the 10-12 age group is the most active in communicating their IT skills to older members of the family.

The party visited a number of community learning centres delivering Malta's 'ICT for All' initiative. The students seemed prime candidates to be DOTs and were enthusiastic about the idea.



An example of the Fast Forward Malta materials

Visit our website www.makingITpersonal.eu to read about the latest study visit to Malta with a 17-strong party of DOTs from South Yorkshire.

Learning from our European Partners

Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs is funded through the Innovation, Transnationality and Mainstreaming strand of the European Social Fund to develop and implement innovative ideas.

The funding enables us to build links with organisations with similar interests in other EU member states, in order to learn from their experience and to share good practices.

We have created two transnational links so far. One is with the European Net-Trainers Association, an organisation developing training and accreditation for online tutors in several member states. Our primary link with this group has been through Furtwangen University in Germany. An early visit provided us with a very useful expert critique of our plans for approving and

accrediting DOTs, and since then our German colleagues have put us in touch with digital inclusion projects in Germany enabling us to build new contacts and exchanges.

Our second link is with the Malta Communications Authority (MCA). Responsible for regulating telecommunications in Malta, MCA takes the lead in promoting digital inclusion across the community. Malta is a small country but one with close historical and cultural ties to the UK, and facing digital inclusion issues that are similar to ours but with intriguing differences. It is from those differences that

we have learnt to inform our approach in South Yorkshire.

For example, the size (less than ½ million) and population spread of Malta has made it relatively easy to ensure that good internet connections exist across the island, and most people have access to the internet either in their home, especially if they have school-age children, or in local community centres. Yet there is still lower usage among older people and those with lower educational attainment. This supports the view that digital inclusion is not just about lack of access to technology, it is

also about people seeing the relevance and overcoming their fears. It demonstrates to us the key role that intermediary organisations in the community can play in helping people to go online and showing them what they can gain as a result. This lesson has helped significantly with our development planning.



European Union
European Social Fund
Investing in jobs and skills

DOTs Showcased at Go On: ND11

Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs was honoured for the programme's contribution to digital inclusion in the UK at the National Digital Leaders Dinner that concluded the 6th National Digital Inclusion Conference in London on 11th-12th May.



Project Director Martin Cantor (left) received the award from the Rt Hon Francis Maude MP, Minister for the Cabinet Office, and well known celebrity Clive Anderson.

DOTs Iain Milner and Ann Depledge designed and staffed the project exhibition stand during the conference, offering Skype guitar lessons to

showcase how the internet can help people make the most of life using technology.

The innovative approaches that the project has developed raised significant interest in the 'Getting Online Together' workshop. In particular, the way in which the DOT framework adds value to the digital champions' role.

**To see more of what happened at Go On:ND11 visit:
www.nd11.co.uk**



Our exhibition stand at the conference



The Skype guitar lessons were a big hit

Adding Value to the UK Digital Champions Network

Digital champions and how to encourage more of them were major themes of Go On: ND11.

Martha Lane Fox, the UK Government's national Digital Champion who leads the Race Online 2012 campaign to get all UK citizens online, announced a new digital champion volunteer force made up of 100,000 volunteers from companies and organisations such as the Post Office, Mecca Bingo, John Lewis and the Scouts. These will form the nucleus of a new national digital champions network which anyone can join via the revamped Pass IT On website run by Race Online and UK Online Centres.

www.helppassiton.co.uk

At the same time the BBC has launched its new First Click Friends campaign to encourage digital champions who help others get online.

DOTs are our local version of digital champions for South Yorkshire and we encourage

all DOTs to join the national network from the Pass IT On website and also to join the UK Digital Champions page on Facebook. The website contains resources and suggestions which DOTs may find useful as signposts to use when they are helping people to use digital technology and the internet.

Given this national effort it would be natural to ask whether we need the Making IT Personal: Joining the DOTs scheme as well. Yet discussions at the ND11 conference highlighted the difference that having a scheme like ours can make. For one thing, though having a national framework backed by the government is very helpful, there is no substitute for local action and local networks to really make things happen - who knows better what is needed and what works in any locality than the people who live and work there?

Another benefit from the DOTs initiative is the opportunity it provides for digital champions to join an online community where they can support and learn from each other and get access to learning resources, and the chance to gain accreditation or go on courses. This level of sharing is not provided nationally and it was clear from discussions at the conference that a number of other areas are looking to the DOT forums as something they would like to copy for their own digital champions - and we will be delighted if they do so.

Lastly, while there are excellent resources provided nationally to help people get online, such as the Online Basics course run by UK Online, what really works for many people is getting help with technology face-to-face from people they know and trust - friends, neighbours, work colleagues. That is the DOT



Martha Lane Fox

approach and in following it we have blazed a trail in South Yorkshire that others are looking to follow.

Nationally the wave of digital champion activity is now really starting to build. With talk from government and others about 'digital by default', where new services might soon start to be available only online, we can expect a lot more in the months to come. With the DOT scheme we are ahead of the game in South Yorkshire and well placed to help get local people digitally engaged and online.