



LOTI Digital Inclusion Case Study - Research Brief

About LOTI

The London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI) was established to help its members (17 London boroughs, the GLA and London Councils) to collaborate on projects that bring the best of digital, data and innovation to improve public services and outcomes for Londoners. Read more about our work at: <https://loti.london/>

Context

Digital exclusion - where residents are unable or unwilling to access and use online tools, information and services - has long been an issue of concern for London boroughs. The Covid period has increased the extent and severity of this problem. Virtually every aspect of life is now expected to be conducted online, from work to socialising, and from education to shopping. Those who are not online are more disadvantaged than ever.

Digital exclusion presents itself in many different ways. Someone may be excluded because of one or more of the following factors:

- Lack of a device (or *enough* devices if shared with others)
- Lack of connectivity - e.g. through access to wifi or a mobile data allowance
- Lack of digital skills and/or confidence in using digital tools

Other forms of exclusion may also be exacerbated online:

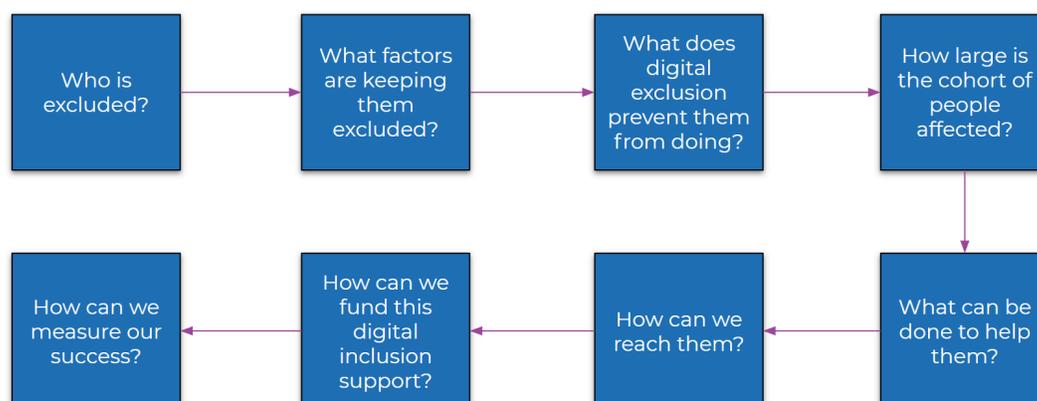
- Those in economic hardship or the unbanked may have reduced options for benefitting from paid online content
- Language barriers hinder the use of online services
- Different physical and mental disabilities can hinder online engagement

The challenge for boroughs

Addressing these problems can be complex. Boroughs face at least four types of challenge, relating to:

- **Information:** Boroughs sometimes struggle to know who is digitally excluded; what factors keep them excluded; what that exclusion prevents them from doing; and the size of the affected cohort.
- **Communication:** Even if they have answers to these questions, they may struggle to know how to reach or communicate with those excluded individuals and cohorts.
- **Solution:** Once they know who they are trying to help, they may not know what can be done to help and how to fund any digital inclusion initiatives.
- **Measurement:** Lastly, it can be hard to effectively measure the improvements of digital inclusion initiatives in order to justify further investment.

Key questions boroughs have about digital exclusion




What we want to do

LOTI wishes to commission research to help identify practical examples of initiatives that tackle digital exclusion / promote digital inclusion. With our policy of sharing and reusing wherever possible, we have already published examples of seven initiatives being practised by boroughs themselves ([see our website](#)). We now wish to make available even more examples, taken from case studies around the world, that can inspire and inform boroughs' activities.

WP 1 - Web Research and Case Study Creation	
Duration	4 Days
Deadline	16 November
Objective	To provide LOTI boroughs with a clear and actionable set of examples of digital inclusion initiatives to inspire and inform their work.
Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct web research to identify examples of initiatives by local, state or city governments that promote digital inclusion / tackle digital exclusion. • We are particularly interested in finding examples of initiatives that speak to the four categories of challenge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Information: help boroughs understand who is digitally

	<p>excluded; what factors keep them excluded; what that exclusion prevents them from doing; and the size of the affected cohort. <i>Example solutions might involve using data in innovative ways (e.g. using data from broadband providers to spot which households are not connected).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communication: help boroughs reach or communicate with those excluded individuals and cohorts. <i>(E.g. via voluntary organisations, community and faith groups, schools or doctors.)</i> ○ Solution: help boroughs understand what can be done to help and how to fund any digital inclusion initiatives. <i>Common solutions are likely to entail measures to provide devices, data allowances, free wifi or skills training. We would like to see specifics. On funding, this could perhaps be done by negotiating with mobile operators, or using the Social Value clause of large contracts to pay for devices. What else?</i> ○ Measurement: help boroughs see how to measure the improvements of digital inclusion initiatives in order to justify further investment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To make them actionable, each example should be written up into the common case study template shown below.
Deliverable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Google Doc or Word document outlining casestudies relevant to the task description above, recording using the template shown below. ● The document should end with a conclusion outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any overall themes / lessons ○ Notes on the quality / limitations of the sources discovered ○ Details of the research methodology used, e.g. which sources and search terms were used. <p>Please note, all LOTI research is published openly on our website.</p>
Interaction with LOTI	<p>The researcher should check in with a member of the LOTI team after 1 day (8 hours) of research to review the casestudies they have found by that point to check the work is proceeding constructively.</p>

Common Template for Recording Digital Inclusion Case Studies

Fields marked with * should be completed for all casestudies.

Basic Information

Summary in a sentence*

E.g. "Using the social value clause in large contracts to pay for devices for isolated elderly"

Which organisation(s) were involved in the trial?

E.g. "Camden Council working with Age UK"

Where did this take place?

E.g. Barcelona

Who were the users / the cohort being supported?*

E.g. "Elderly individuals living alone and known to adult social care"

What user need / problem was addressed?*

E.g. "The primary need was to help tackle social isolation and associated poor mental health in this cohort"

What did the initiative do?*

(Be specific! What happened, what was used, when did it take place, how many people were involved, etc.) *E.g. "Camden Council used a platform called [Social Value Exchange](#) to enable Age UK to specify the types of devices it would like to purchase for the elderly cohort. The platform invited bidders wishing to respond to a tender to create a new housing development to pay for tablet devices equivalent to 10% of the total contract value. 400 devices were purchased and given to 350 elderly people known to adult social care. Social workers teamed up with members of Age UK's digital team to train users on how to get online using the devices and connect with at least once member of their friends or family..."*

Results & Evidence

What was the impact of the initiative?

E.g. "60% of the target user group used the devices at least once a day over more than a month. Survey data on their well being showed they felt more connected with their friends and family..."

What lessons were learned?

E.g. What worked well / what would they do differently next time?

What happened as a result of the trial?

E.g. was it discontinued, scaled up, etc.

Cost and Investment case

What was the total cost of the initiative and how was it funded?

Further Information

Please provide links to more detailed information

Example sources:

- <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/making-digital-real-case-studies-of-how-to-help-the-final-fifth-get-online/>
- <http://www.citizensonline.org.uk/category/case-studies/>
- <https://www.totaltele.com/507315/Congratulations-to-the-winners-of-the-Connected-Britain-Awards-2020>