



Digital Skills Festival

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Digital Skills and Training | Learning, Teaching and Web Services | Information Services Group

The University of Edinburgh

This presentation will...

Provide further evidence of the impact of The University of Edinburgh's Digital Skills Festival, highlighted against the following judging criteria:

1. Demonstrates a clear relationship with identified staff, academic or organisational development needs.
2. Provides a significant contribution to developing excellent practice.
3. Shows evidence of collaboration either within or external to the institution.
4. Shows quantitative and/or qualitative evidence of impact.
5. Demonstrates a measurable return on investment/expectation (financial or otherwise).
6. Offers transferable learning for other organisations.
7. Gives evidence of innovating practice with or without the use of technological developments.





1

Demonstrates a clear relationship with identified staff, academic or organisational development needs.

Introduction to the Digital Skills Festival

This short video (4m 04s) was created to welcome staff and students to the first Digital Skills Festival at The University of Edinburgh. It features Jenni Houston, Head of Digital Skills and Training, explaining what the Festival is, who it's for and what it set out to achieve. The content is also covered throughout this slide presentation. Click on the thumbnail, or copy and paste the URL into your browser, to view the video using the University's Media Hopper Create service.



https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/1_0lmjk7is

What is the Digital Skills Festival?

- Free to attend to all staff and students, the first Digital Skills Festival took place between Monday 24th May and Friday 28th May 2021.
- A week long event of online presentations, workshops and courses, delivered by speakers from within and outside of the University.
- Bringing together experts from within and outside of the University to share good practice, explore new skills and celebrate all things digital.
- Each day of the festival had an overarching digital capability theme, corresponding to the Jisc Digital Capability Framework, and the University of Edinburgh's Digital Skills Framework.
- The Festival has its own website: <https://digitalskillsfestival.ed.ac.uk/> and the University's event booking system, familiar to all staff and students, was used to manage bookings.



Rationale behind the Festival

Our staff and students have a range of development needs to thrive in their variety of roles, and the university offers many learning resources to build these capabilities. Despite best efforts regarding promotion, staff and students sometimes find digital skills development resources relatively late in their university journeys, and provide feedback on our training and development efforts along the lines of: “This is brilliant, but I wish I had known about this before now.”

The rationale behind the Festival was twofold:

- To **raise the profile of digital skills development** within staff and student communities, and help individuals understand what this means for them through a number of events focusing on different digital capabilities.
- To **raise awareness of the various digital skills development resources** available within (and outside of) the University and **encourage engagement** with them.

These Festival goals aligned with and supported many university strategies and programmes, including Digital Transformation, Curriculum Transformation and Hybrid Working – more on this in section 5.



Rationale behind the Festival

While the Festival brought together many digital skills development providers and resources, the programme also included a number of one-off events, exploring **lived experience** and **unusual ways to learn and apply digital skills**. This fulfilled the third, less formal but equally important, objective of the Festival, which was to combat digital fatigue, have fun and **celebrate all things digital**.

Some of the one-off events included:

- Creating your own digital escape room
- Teaching Data/AI Ethics in various disciplinary contexts
- How to manage your online identity
- Effective networking on LinkedIn
- Code dojo



Timing of the Festival

The Festival was timed to take place during the last week of May, after the final exams, to maximise opportunities for attendance across the staff and student audiences.

By May 2021 students and staff were also reasonably comfortable with remote studying and working, so an event exploring digital skills and capability development in a fun and interactive way felt appropriate at this time.

Facilitators and audiences were able to share good practice and lessons learned from the shift to online working and studying, and more experimental topics encouraged new approaches to digital to alleviate digital fatigue.



2



Digital
Skills
Festival

Provides a significant contribution to developing excellent practice.

Developing excellent practice

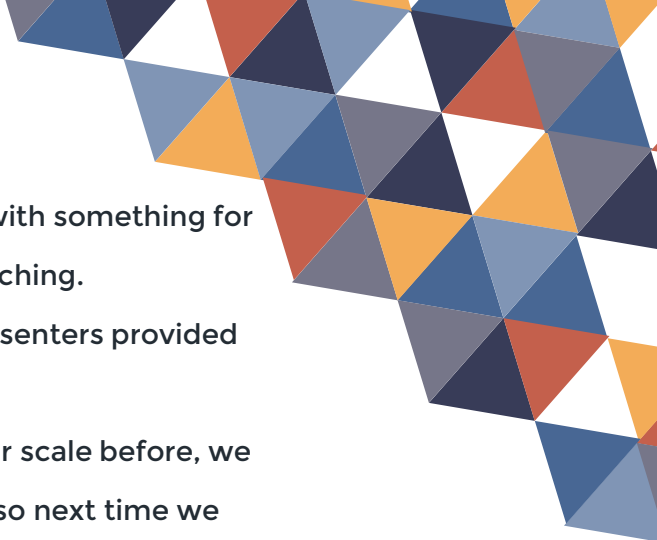
We interpreted this section as showing how the Digital Skills Festival provides a significant contribution to developing excellent practice in the sphere of skills development – or, essentially, **what made this a good learning event?**

- **Defined objectives linked to organisational strategy and projects** – from the beginning, we knew what we wanted the event to achieve and planned accordingly to ensure we delivered.
- **Student-driven concept** – we brought to life ideas from our students and shaped and promoted the event in ways that would appeal to them, as well as members of staff.
- **Alignment with existing development framework** – events were categorised on the website according to the six digital capabilities that form the basis of the university's Digital Skills Framework (based on the Jisc digital capability framework), enabling the audience to understand how events aligned with the different skills they were seeking to develop.
- **Variety of learning options** – through necessity the Festival was delivered entirely online, but events were offered in a range of formats to appeal to all, and session recordings and supporting materials were made available for further study or consolidation afterwards.



Developing excellent practice

- **Variety of topics** covered to appeal to a broad audience – relevant programme with something for everyone ranging from office productivity to digital safety, to coding, and to teaching.
- **Delivered by specialists** – high quality learning events delivered by engaging presenters provided the audience with the opportunity to interact with experts in their field.
- **Team innovation and experimentation** – having never run an event of this type or scale before, we approached it with open minds. Trying things out enabled us to learn as we go, so next time we will do it better.
- **Team dedication** – the team was determined that the Festival would be a great event, worked collaboratively and put everything into it to make it a success. Attitude was exceptionally positive.
- **Dedicated website** – so that participants could find everything about the Festival all in one place, we designed a website specifically for the event. It was well thought-out, accessible, visually appealing and provided event and speaker information, bookings and session recordings and materials. We were really proud of what we achieved, especially as we created it ourselves, and illustrate this as an example of outstanding 'excellent practice' at the end of this section.



Developing excellent practice

- **Communication and promotion** – we used all channels at our disposal to promote the Festival as broadly as possible, including institution-wide staff and student e-newsletters, a social media campaign (highlighted at the end of this section), and cascade through Heads of College and School and Professional Services Groups.
- **Senior leadership support** – we highlighted to our CIO and Director what we were doing and how the Festival aligned with strategic projects, and they fully endorsed the Festival. We kept them informed throughout and provided them with content for communications to make it easy for them to show support.
- **Support from other learning providers** – we made sure that learning providers including HR, the Institute for Academic Development, Academic Support Librarians and the Students' Association were fully briefed on the Festival and supportive of it.

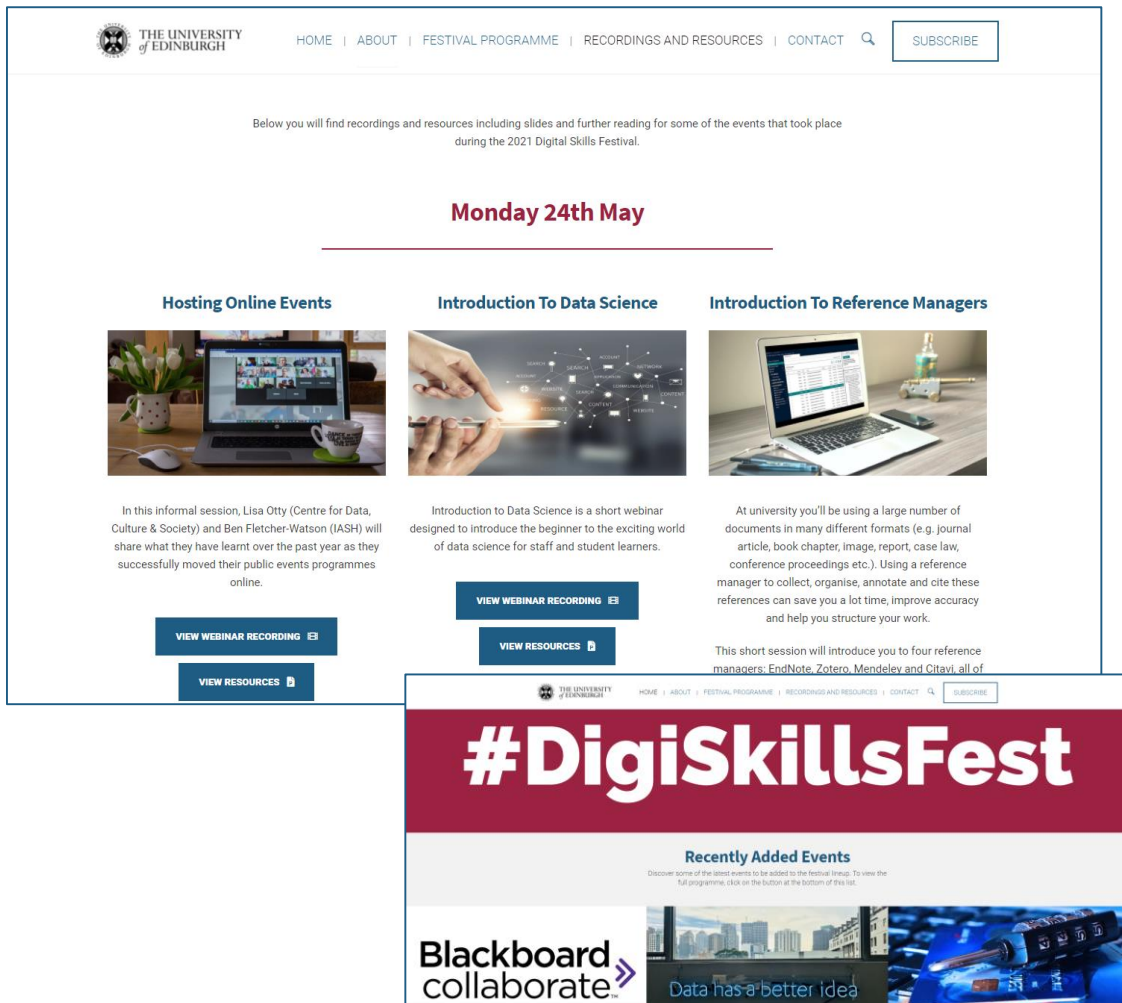


Website

<https://digitalskillsfestival.ed.ac.uk>

We created a dedicated Digital Skills Festival website using WordPress, as it offered the functionality and flexibility that we needed.

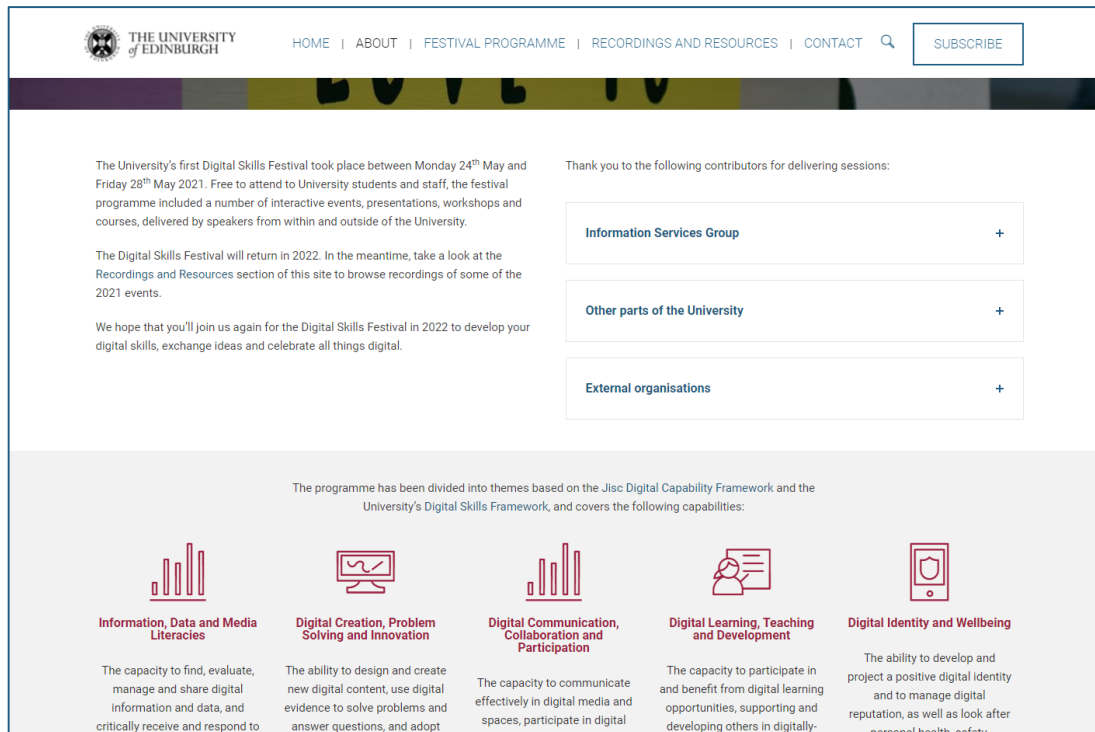
- The website was created following the University's accessibility guidelines.
- It is optimised for mobile devices as well as desktop computers.
- It allows for Search Engine Optimisation to help drive traffic to the site and events.



Website Features

The Digital Skills Festival website is the 'one stop shop' for all Festival related information. We wanted to make the user experience as seamless as possible. The website allows users to:

- Find out more about the Festival
- Search for events
- View events by date
- View events by digital capability
- Access session recordings and related materials throughout the year
- Contact the Digital Skills Team and follow us on social media
- Subscribe to our newsletter



Social media campaign

The Festival had its own hashtag **#digiskillsfest**, which was used to promote the event before, during and after the Festival:



UoE Digital Skills @UoEDigSkills · May 17

Only one week left to go until our Digital Skills Festival kicks off! 🎉 Have you booked on to any sessions yet?

50+ sessions, all free. Open to UoE students & staff.

Places are filling up fast:

📅 digitalskillsfestival.ed.ac.uk

#DigSkillsFest



UoE Digital Skills @UoEDigSkills · May 18

This week is the Campaign for Learning's 'Learning at Work Week'. You can find out more below & don't forget, we have lots of resources for developing your [#DigitalSkills](#) at work, including 50+ sessions at our upcoming [#DigSkillsFest](#)!

Learning at Work Week

campaign-for-learning.org.uk

Learning at Work Week

Learning at Work Week 2022 - takes place from 16 - 22nd May on the theme Learning Uncovered! Join us to celebrate lifelong learning at ...



UoE Digital Skills @UoEDigSkills · May 24

Welcome to our very first Digital Skills Festival! 🎉

We have 58 free online events running this week, in a wide range of [#DigitalSkills](#) topics. Free for UoE staff & students.

Find out more about the [#DigSkillsFest](#) from our Head of Department, Jenni 📢



media.ed.ac.uk

Welcome to the 2021 Digital Skills Festival

A short overview of the Digital Skills F by Jenni Houston, Head of Digital Skill

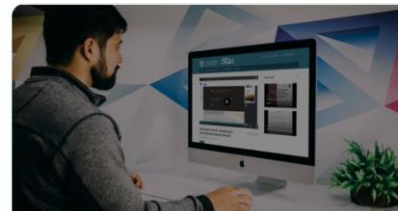


UoE Digital Skills @UoEDigSkills · Aug 27

Did you miss our first ever [#DigSkillsFest](#) earlier this year? Or maybe you'd like a little re-cap?

We have a selection of Festival recordings and resources available now via our website.

Take a look 📺📢



UoE IC Team @tweelearning · 7 Jun

A 60 min video of our [#DigSkillsFest](#) '[#Sketchpad](#) [#ColouringBook](#) Workshop' is available. PowerPoint and handbook are included in the attachments tab. All materials have a [#CreativeCommons](#) Attribution licence ([#CCBY](#)).



media.ed.ac.uk

Sketchpad Colouring Book Workshop

RecordingThis workshop from 25th May 2021 was part of the Digital Skills Festival at the University o...

the University of E...
ts have aired as

3



Digital
Skills
Festival

**Shows evidence of
collaboration either
within or external to the
institution.**

Collaborative effort

One of the aims of the Festival was to bring together digital skills training providers, experts, and people with first hand experience of using new digital tools, from within and outside of the University.

In the end, the Festival was a truly collaborative effort. The programme consisted of speakers from the University's **Information Services Group** (speakers came from 12 different teams), the **Edinburgh Futures Institute**, the **Usher Institute**, the **Business School**, the **Edinburgh Centre for Data, Culture and Society**, the **School of Philosophy, Psychology & Language Sciences**, and the **Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies**. External speakers came from the **Empower Project**, **Clarivate**, **Jisc** and **8 Million Stories**.



Internal collaboration

Internal speakers ranged from students to academics and professional services staff, and came from departments and Schools across the University, contributing to the programme with interesting topics that were either one-off presentations, or usually only available to specific audiences. Through communications and support, we ensured that we established a sense of community amongst the presenters so that they felt motivated and part of something unique.

Examples of presentations are:

- **Edinburgh Business School** – Effective Networking on LinkedIn; You, me, and data
- **Edinburgh Futures Institute** – Teaching Data/AI Ethics in Various Disciplinary Contexts
- **Edinburgh Centre for Data, Culture & Society with The Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities** – Hosting Online Events
- **Digital Learning Applications and Media** – Sketchpad Colouring Book Workshop; DIY Film School
- **uCreate Makerspace** – Introduction to Electronics; Introduction to Displaying 3D content online
- **The Usher Institute** – Create Your Own Digital Escape Room
- **School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences** – Code Dojo
- **Online Course Production Service**: How to create an online course: Readability test
- **Information Security**: How hackers attack; Securing digital events and meetings



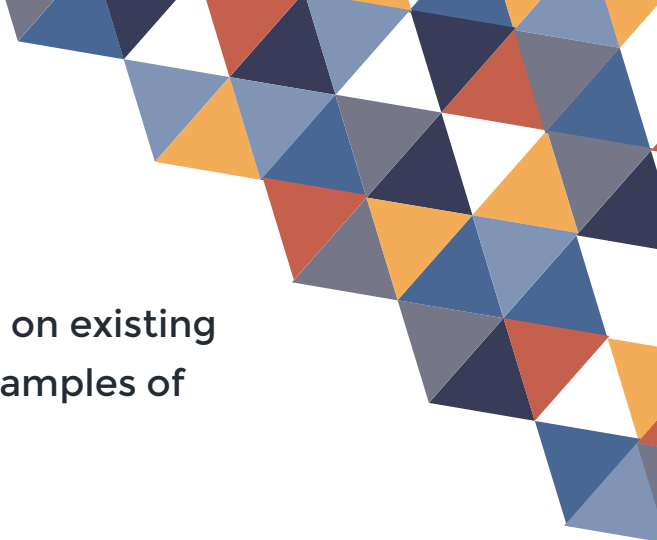
External collaboration

External contributors were considered and approached based on existing relationships and their suitability for a skills-focused event. Examples of events run by external contributors included:

- **Clarivate** – Managing your references using EndNote
- **Clarivate** – Web of Science: Trusted Discovery
- **8 Million Stories** – Accessibility tools for digital design
- **The Empower Project** – Digital self-care: Being a woman online
- **Jisc** – Building Digital Capability

Descriptions of all internal and external sessions can be found on the Digital Skills Festival website, under the ‘Festival Programme’ section:

<https://digitalskillsfestival.ed.ac.uk/festival-programme/>



Team collaboration

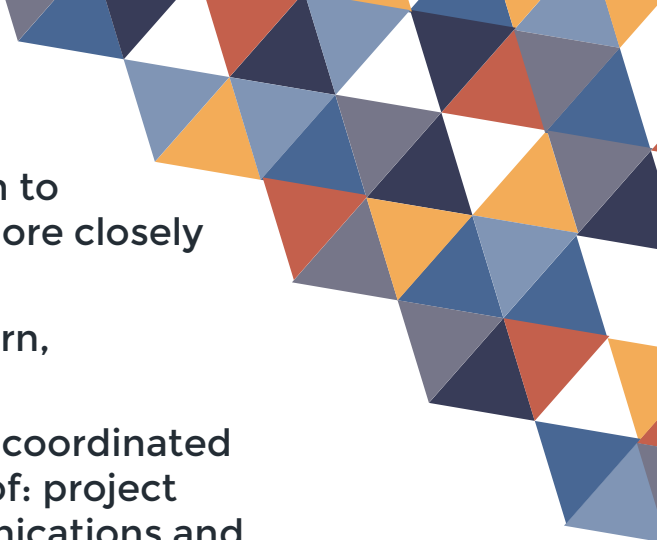
The Festival was a rare chance for the entire Digital Skills team to collaborate on one project and allowed us to work together more closely than we'd had chance to do during lockdown.

The idea originally came from a Digital Champion student intern, demonstrating the benefit of co-working with students.

To deliver the event we took a 'divide and conquer' approach, coordinated through MS Planner, with team members taking on the roles of: project manager, event organiser, website developer, liaison, communications and promotion, presenter support, video subtitling and production – and, of course, event delivery.

On reflection after the Festival, there was a strong sense of shared achievement and team building – we all felt like we were in it together and had supported each other through what proved to be quite a challenge, but an enjoyable one.

Outside our team we had support and endorsement from other training providers and senior leaders through inclusion of the Festival in their regular newsletters and communications with their peers, alongside promotional articles in the main staff and student e-newsletters.



Cross-departmental promotion

The Festival hashtag **#digiskillsfest** was used by other departments and individuals within the University to promote the event:



Jen Harris @hesperianlass · May 13

Working @EdinburghUni and not sure where to start with increasing your research computing power? Come along to our session More Power! as part of the **#DigiSkillsFest** Tues 25 May 1300 edin.ac/3t8GSI2



Researchers@Ed @ResearchersAtEd · May 20

Digital Skills Festival, 24-28 May. The festival includes a number of interactive events, presentations, workshops and courses, delivered by speakers from within and outside of the University. **#DigiSkillsFest** digitalskillsfestival.ed.ac.uk @UoEDigiSkills



InformaticsEdinburgh @InfAtEd · May 21

Digital Skills festival delivered by @UoEDigiSkills starts Monday and runs till Friday. All events will be held online. Check their website: digitalskillsfestival.ed.ac.uk

#DigiSkillsFest #digital #university #education #edtech #events #workshops



University of Edinburgh's Centre for Open Learning @Uo... · May 14

The University's first Digital Skills Festival is free for all colleagues and students and includes a number of interactive events, workshops and courses - delivered by speakers from within and outside of @EdinburghUni.



Book your place 🗳️ **#DigiSkillsFest**



EdUniLibrary&Museums @EdUniLibraries · May 21

Digital Skills Festival starts on Monday! There is an excellent programme of more than 60 events during the week. Find Library related events at: edin.ac/3yt9CZC **#DigiSkillsFest**





4

Show quantitative and/or qualitative evidence of impact.

Attendance

The objectives of the Festival were to **raise the profile of digital skills development** within staff and student communities, **encourage broader engagement** with our services, and to offer a **fun and engaging event** across a range of innovative topics. To achieve this, we aimed to bring the Festival to the attention of as many staff and students as possible, have a week full of events, and ensure high attendance numbers.

Altogether **57** events were run across the Festival week, ranging between six and 16 events per day. The Festival attracted **1,037 attendees** from all of the University's Colleges and support groups – around **25% of the annual attendee reach of the Digital Skills Programme** (our regular webinar programme) – and was thus considered a great success.

By comparison, the THE Digital Universities Week ran a week earlier with 2,500 delegates from across the UK. The event focussed on digital transformation and brought together universities and EdTech providers.



“

**“Technology is always
changing so it would be
good to keep the festival
going each year.”** *Attendee Feedback*



Qualitative Evidence of Impact

Feedback questionnaires were sent to all attendees and presenters after the festival, and the response from both groups was overwhelmingly positive.

The average **overall rating for the sessions from Festival attendees was 4.8/5**. Many of the highest rated sessions were ones that run regularly as part of the Digital Skills Programme, indicating that we are focusing on relevant topics and delivering quality training throughout the year. Some examples include:

- Information Security: Hacking Humans
- Getting Started with Microsoft Teams
- Adobe Spark: Create social graphics and webpages in minutes



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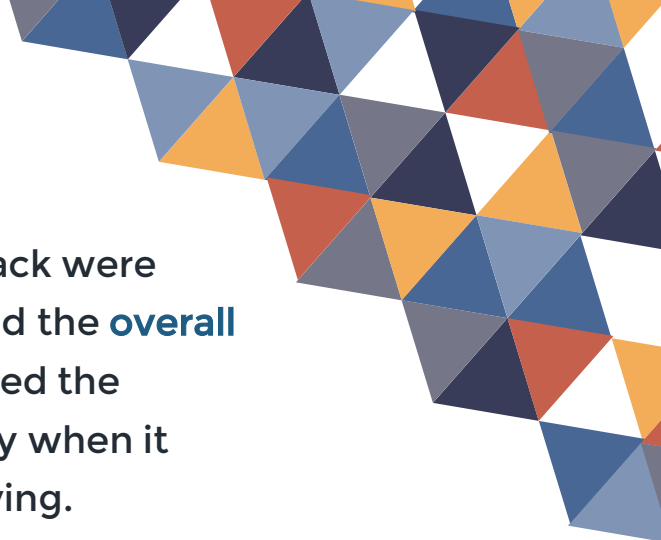
**“I am really enjoying the
Digital Skills Festival, it’s a
brilliant idea and it’s really
easy for staff to sign up and
attend.”** *Attendee Feedback*



Qualitative Evidence of Impact

Some of the general themes arising from the attendee feedback were **sharing good practice**, the **opportunity to listen to experts**, and the **overall experience of attending the Festival**. The attendees appreciated the sharing of good practice, based on lived experience, especially when it came to topics related to remote or hybrid working and studying.

Attendees provided positive feedback about the overall Festival experience, and more than one attendee suggested that the Festival should become an annual event. Some attendees also indicated that the experience had made them aware of the digital skills development resources that are available outside of the Festival - raising awareness of these resources was one of the aims of the Festival.



“

“The opportunities in the Digital Skills Festival were tremendous and I’m thankful for the opportunity to hear from people who have expertise in these platforms! Even if I get one tip from each, I consider myself that I have gained. Thank you!.” *Attendee Feedback*



Qualitative Evidence of Impact

From the presenters, the feedback was similarly positive. The **average rating for the overall experience of delivering a session as part of the Digital Skills Festival was 4.6/5**. Presenters commented favourably on the diversity of the events offered throughout the Festival, as it allowed them to include their own ideas into the programme and reach new audiences.

When asked if presenters would be willing to contribute to the Digital Skills Festival again, **100% of the respondents indicated 'Yes'**.

The attendance numbers and positive feedback from both attendees and presenters have ensured that the Festival will become an annual event.



“

“I thought the range of topics was really impressive and made me think what a great place to work and be involved with. The Skills Festival was a great advert for not only the Digital Skills Team, but the University as a whole.” *Presenter Feedback*



Website Engagement

The website was the main source of information about the Festival, with links to the booking system to attend sessions, as well as additional resources. Since its launch in May 2021, the website has received plenty of traffic, indicating high levels of interest in the event:

- Total page views: **19,061**

Of which:

- Homepage views: **3,845**
- Festival Programme views: **4,853**

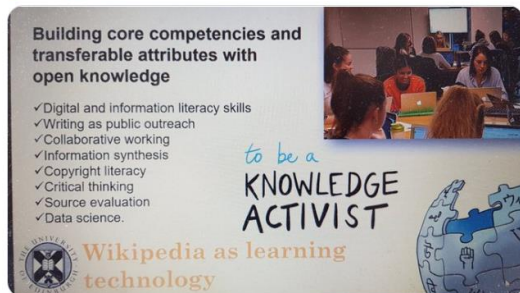
Most visitors accessed the website through a direct link (from promotional materials) and via social media.




Social Media Response

The **#digiskillsfest** hashtag was actively used on social media, and highlighted inspired participants and appreciative presenters:

 **Stella Wisdom** @miss_wisdom · May 24
Being inspired hearing examples of how working with [@Wikipedia](#) supports & enables knowledge activism. Great talk by [@emcandre](#) at [#DigiSkillsFest](#) @EdinburghUni



 **Sara Day Thomson** 🌐 @sdaythomson · May 24
I just delivered my first Intro to [#webarchiving](#) for the [#LibraryBitesize](#) series / [#digiskillsfest](#) @EdUniLibraries! It was wonderful to see the range of interest, from undergrads to Library services staff! Watch it here -> media.ed.ac.uk/media/Library+... 🌐 📺

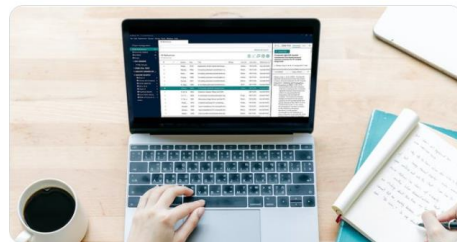


media.ed.ac.uk
Library Bitesize: Introduction to Web Archives
Presenter: Sara Day Thomson, Digital Archivist,
Centre for Research Collections What happens to ...

 **Tracey Madden** @traceymadden · Jun 2
We loved taking part; thanks for all your efforts organising this! [#DigiSkillsFest](#)



 **Catherine Koppe** @carassi · May 19
Interested in using EndNote to gather, manage & cite references? Learn from a Clarivate EndNote expert
[@EndNoteNews](#) 3pm Mon 24 May UoE staff & students book here 📅
digitalskillsfestival.ed.ac.uk/managing-your-... part of [@UoEDigiSkills](#) Digital Skills Festival [#DigiSkillsFest](#)



#DigiSkillsFest

Presenter reflection

The Festival offered a chance for specialists to present for the first time, as described in a blog post by one of our undergraduates on a student internship with the Interactive Content team, Marta Christiansen. In her blog, Marta reflects on how the experience also helped her develop her own digital skills by improving her knowledge of Microsoft Teams. Read Marta's blog post in full at <https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/colouring-books/post-workshop-reflections/>



UoE IC Team @tweelearning · Jun 7

UG student Marta reflects on her [#DigSkillsFest](#) [#Sketchpad](#) workshops. Sharing thoughts on facilitating for the very first time and the artworks created by students.

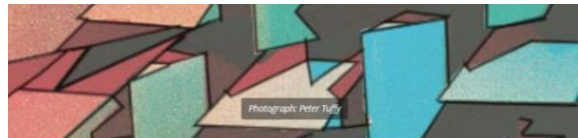
blogs.ed.ac.uk/colouring-book...

[#ColouringBook](#) [#StudentExperienceGrants](#) [#WeHaveGreatStuff](#) [#UKOER](#)
[#DigitalSkills](#)

“

“We did have some technical problems – we thought we were smart when creating a Teams team for the meeting, but we really weren’t since this resulted in the participants not being able to chat with us. It was unfortunate in the moment but we fixed [it], and we the presenters of the workshop also advanced our digital skills which is what the Digital Skills Festival was all about.”

Marta Christiansen, Festival Presenter



31ST MAY 2021 / 1 COMMENT

POST-WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

Reading Time: 3 minutes

Welcome back. It finally feels like summer, and I hope you enjoyed the lovely weather this past weekend as much as I did. In this post, I share some reflections on the two workshops we held last week as well as some of the drawings they resulted in.

It was my first time facilitating a workshop which was daunting, and the online format didn't make it less so. Of course, the worst fear was about attendance – would anybody show up? Luckily, a few people did and the feedback has been positive, so that was a relief. I gave an introduction to the colouring book project and a whirlwind live demonstration of Sketchpad, the free browser-based tool I use for the drawings. The most difficult part of Sketchpad is to master making curved

5

**Digital
Skills
Festival**



**Demonstrates a
measurable return on
investment/expectation
(financial or otherwise).**

ROI – the challenge of proving value

Isolating the effects of training is particularly difficult for a Festival offering one-off learning events across a diverse range of topics to a broad audience. It is not practical to compare pre-training and post-training performance, or to measure longer-term behavioural change – which realistically will probably be small as a result of attending one webinar. Online feedback questionnaires were used to assess to level 2 of the Kirkpatrick model (reaction and learning), but beyond that behaviour change and impact are more of a challenge to measure.

The aims of the Festival were to raise the profile of digital skills development within staff and student communities, encourage broader engagement with our services, and to offer a fun and engaging event across a range of innovative topics. Our hope was that attendance would spark interest in a particular topic and serve as a stepping stone into deeper skills development, or simply quell an immediate curiosity about a subject.

Rather than trying to prove a financial return on the investment of our time and efforts (we delivered this without budget), it makes more sense to focus on how the Digital Skills team met the University's expectations of what we are here to achieve.



ROI – Why are we here?

The aim of the Digital Skills team is to develop the digital skills of our staff and students to enable them to effectively study, work and undertake research. We do this through regular offerings such as the Digital Skills Programme of webinars and LinkedIn Learning; but we also make a contribution (arguably a more valuable one) through positioning ourselves at the heart of key University strategies and projects. The Digital Skills Festival aligned with and added value to several of these:

1. **University Strategy 2030** (<https://www.ed.ac.uk/about/strategy-2030>)
 - The Festival supports two key Strategy 2030 values. Offering skills development opportunities to staff and students aligns with being ‘a place of transformation and of self-improvement’. It also helps us to ‘achieve excellence in all that we do’ – in a digital world, how can we truly excel without digital skills and capabilities?



ROI – Why are we here?

2. Digital Transformation Programme

- The development of organisational and individual digital capabilities underpins the university's Digital Transformation Programme as we improve and transform our systems, processes and ways of working. 'Skills' is one of the four pillars on which our digital environment is being built, and the Digital Skills Festival made a clear contribution to this by offering an array of events to develop the skills of our students, researchers, teaching and support staff.

3. Hybrid Working Programme (<https://www.ed.ac.uk/hybrid-working>)

- The Hybrid Working Programme was established to support colleagues to transition to a new, more sustainable way of working. Supporting staff to develop the skills to thrive in a hybrid environment is an essential part of this. Many Festival events developed skills for hybrid working and teaching including: Introduction to Zoom; Getting Started With Teams; Hosting Online Events; How to Facilitate Highly Interactive Online Workshops.

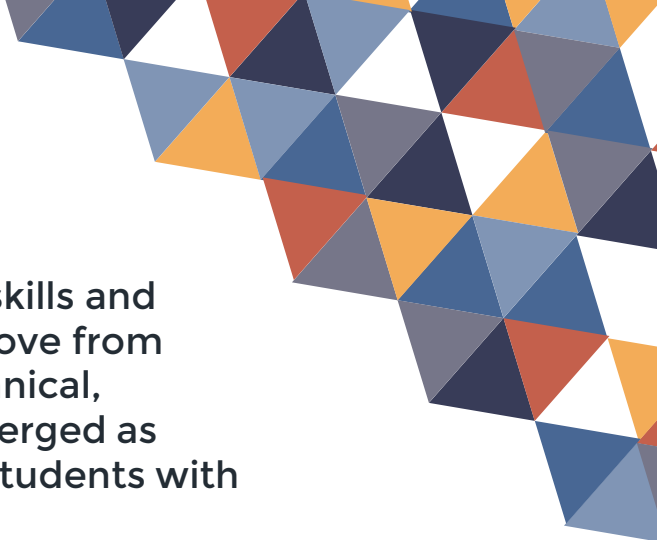


ROI – Why are we here?

4. Curriculum Transformation Programme

- The Future Skills workstream has been reviewing the skills and attributes that will serve our graduates well as they move from university into employment. Alongside a range of technical, interpersonal and business skills, digital skills have emerged as being fundamental to success. The Festival provided students with opportunities to develop such skills.

So, while difficult to quantify, we are confident that not only did we meet our own objectives for the Festival but we also evidenced value by making clear contributions to university strategies and projects.



6



Digital
Skills
Festival

**Offers transferable
learning for other
organisations.**

Key Learning Points

The key learning points from the first Digital Skills Festival include the importance of fostering good relationships, forward planning and promotion, considerations between online and hybrid events, and support for contributors who require it. We have already shared our experiences with our Academic Liaison Librarian team so they can benefit from them when running their upcoming Dissertation Festival. Some of the tips we shared with them that may also be useful for organisations that are considering running similar events are:

1. Collaboration and good relationships

- As the organisational and promotional window for the Festival was relatively short (around three months), we leveraged existing relationships within and outside of the University to ensure that the programme would be varied, interesting and fun. We value our collaborators and foster good relationships internally and externally. Our collaborators' enthusiasm to participate was an essential contributor to the Festival's success, and a key takeaway for future events of this kind.



Key Learning Points

2. Forward Planning and Promotion

- As we start to organise the next Festival, we aim to give ourselves more time to plan and promote the event. Some of the improvement suggestions gathered from attendees indicated that they hadn't heard about the Festival until right before it began, and thus couldn't attend all of the sessions they had wanted to attend. By allowing ourselves more time to plan and promote the Festival, we hope to ensure an even wider variety of events and experts, and a large and happy audience, all the while putting less pressure on our own resources as we allow more time for organisation.



Key Learning Points

3. Choosing an Online Delivery Platform

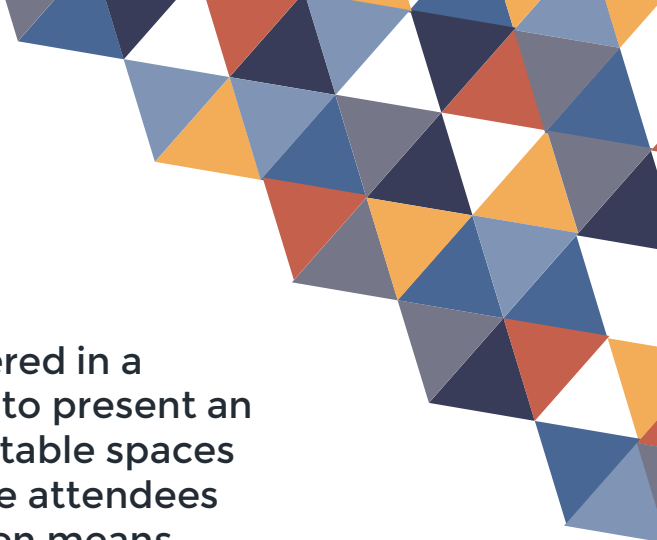
- To make things as easy as possible for the presenters, we opted to give them the choice of which platform they would use to deliver their sessions. We knew presenters would be more familiar with some platforms than others, and may already have their presentations designed for and set up within a certain platform. In reality, we found that this made things less efficient for ourselves as we had to set events up and moderate sessions in a variety of different ways. We agreed that next time we would either host all events on the same platform, or allow extra time and resource to set up and manage events across multiple platforms.



Key Learning Points

4. Hybrid Events

- Any future iteration of the Festival is likely to be delivered in a hybrid format, rather than entirely online. This is likely to present an extra set of organisational challenges, from finding suitable spaces at appropriate times to audience numbers. While some attendees indicated a preference for classroom learning, this often means that spaces on the session are more limited than in a corresponding online event. During the first Digital Skills Festival we aimed to record as many events as possible and make them available for those who could not attend. In a hybrid environment, this is likely to be even more important.



Key Learning Points

5. Support for Contributors

- Our experience from the first Festival indicates that presenters and contributors require different levels of support, based on their experience with event delivery. This can range from advice on delivering secure online events to having a moderator present during the session. We produced a variety of guidance, support documentation and PowerPoint templates for the Festival presenters, and ensured that there was a moderator from the Digital Skills and Training team at hand to introduce the session and help with any issues upon request. Having gone through this exercise will stand us in good stead for future events of this kind.



7



Digital
Skills
Festival

**Gives evidence of
innovating practice with
or without the use of
technological
developments.**

Innovating Practice

The Digital Skills Festival delivered a lot of 'firsts':

Online First

First time an event of this type was delivered entirely online.

Team First

First time the team delivered a week-long focused event.

Audience First

First time staff and students could focus on digital skills development over one condensed week.

University First

First large scale festival organised and run by a single team.

Tutor First

For some, first time presenting; for others, first time presenting online, or being part of a skills festival.

Events First

Some sessions were created for the festival and delivered for the first time.

Student First

First large scale event idea initiated by a Digital Skills student intern.

Website First

First time we developed a medium-sized website using WordPress.

Video First

First time we curated, subtitled and published a video collection within tight timescales.

Guest First

First time we had external guest speakers in an event organised by the team.

Multi-Platform First

First time an event was run using multiple online platforms; Teams, Zoom, Collaborate, Discord, depending on presenter preference.

Summary

This presentation has evidenced that the Digital Skills Festival fulfils the seven judging criteria as follows:

1. The Festival addressed the organisation's need for staff and students to better understand what 'digital skills' are in relation to their roles, be proactive in planning their development, and be able to find and use skills development resources. It did this by raising awareness of available resources and highlighting the various aspects of 'digital skills' with a fun and engaging event.
2. The Festival was a successful learning event, and set many examples of excellent practice including alignment with university strategy and existing development frameworks, breadth and depth of offering, web presence, communications, innovation and leadership support.
3. The Festival was a truly collaborative effort within our team and between professional services staff, academics and students from various University departments and Schools, as well as external organisations.



Summary

4. Impact was evidenced through high attendance levels and website engagement, successful social media promotion and overwhelmingly positive feedback from both attendees and presenters.
5. The Festival met the University's expectations of the purpose of the Digital Skills team by aligning with and contributing to several University strategies and projects.
6. Many learning points were identified that will be useful for other organisations considering running similar events, including taking a collaborative approach, the importance of good planning, and providing presenter support.
7. The Festival delivered multiple 'firsts' within the University and was the first week-long digital skills focussed event, evidencing innovative practice.

The Digital Skills Festival proved both beneficial and enjoyable for our staff and student participants, our presenters and the Digital Skills team and we look forward to running the second iteration of the Festival in 2022.

