Digiplace4all
Peer support for digital skills & inclusion in education and employment
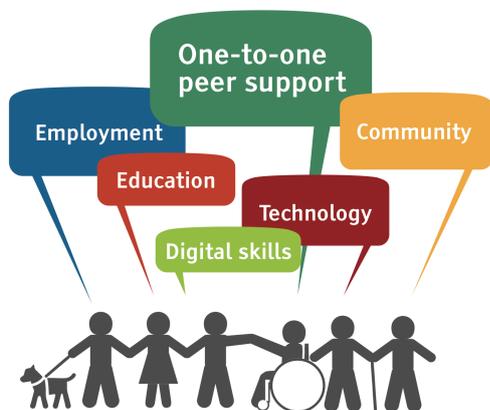
A community of people with disabilities, educators and employers

Aims of DigiPlace4all

- help people with disabilities develop the digital skills necessary for entering mainstream employment and education

- help employers and educators make their workplaces and learning environments more digitally accessible.

> DigiPlace4all: an online peer support community, sustained by Digital Inclusion Champions, helping people with disabilities build the digital literacy skills needed to transition from VET training to mainstream education & employment.

Why an online peer support community?

- People with disabilities face significant barriers accessing digital literacy skills training essential for employment and education. The delivery of digital literacy solely through centre-based training is becoming un-scalable and unsustainable, due to massive increase in the demand for digital skills and rapid changes in online and mobile technologies. People with disabilities naturally turn to their peers for support.

- Employers and educators face significant challenges in learning how to create digitally inclusive workplaces and learning environments that provide the technological adaptations and training necessary to recruit and retain disabled staff and students. Employers and educators can support each other by sharing knowledge and good practice.

- DigiPlace4all is based on a peer support model, where community members can request and offer support in digital skills development and digital inclusion practice on a one-to-one basis between peers.

- Peer support is widely recognized as a valuable form of informal support between people who share similar goals and challenges. The innovation within this initiative is to adopt a peer support model in the context of sharing information and support to positively impact digital literacy, educational and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Evidence base for the design of DigiPlace4all

Requirements gathering for DigiPlace4all took place in four countries:

🇮🇪 Ireland 🇧🇪 Belgium 🇵🇱 Poland 🇧🇬 Bulgaria

Interviews and focus groups with 241 people: Technology users with disabilities, Voluntary Education and Training (VET) centres, digital skills trainers, mainstream educators, employers, NGOs, agencies, policy advisers.

Important findings: All stakeholders desire more communication and collaboration with their peers in relation to digital inclusion and skills. All stakeholders want online access to up to date information created by their peers, not by 'experts'. People with disabilities need help from people who understand their specific needs, abilities, devices and assistive functions. Mainstream and mobile technologies are as important to people with disabilities as specialised assistive technologies.

How does peer support work in DigiPlace4all?

- A person with a disability who has successfully entered or remained in further education or full time employment can use their experience to offer support to another similar person with the same goal, helping them to negotiate the digital challenges associated with their disability.

- Support could range from general advice and encouragement to assistance in learning specific skills, such as how to create a PowerPoint presentation using specific assistive technology.

- A lecturer, trainer or employer with experience in creating an accessible learning or working environment can offer practical one-to-one support to another who is working to achieve the same level of inclusion.

Get and give one-to-one support

Join us! Get support from someone like you. Develop your digital skills. Offer your knowledge and skills to support others.

Create and share

Contribute! Share your knowledge and experiences. Discuss mainstream and assistive technologies, funding, training opportunities for digital skills and other related topics.

Support in Education

Include! Make education inclusive for people with disabilities and specific learning difficulties. Education-focused information and discussion on using technologies in accessible ways.

Support in employment

Employ! Make your workplace inclusive for people with disabilities. Employment-focused information and discussion on using technologies in accessible ways.

Access DigiPlace4all and contact us

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* Ireland version. Also available in Belgium (be.digiplace4all.eu), Poland (pl.digiplace4all.eu), Bulgaria (bg.digiplace4all.eu).