

Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme

Working to support digitally excluded Londoners who have been left particularly vulnerable during the Covid pandemic.

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What's Digital Exclusion and why does it need to be tackled?

Digital exclusion has long been an issue of concern for London boroughs. The Covid period has increased the extent and severity of this problem. As a result of the pandemic, 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 may have reduced options for benefitting from some online content
- Unbanked individuals struggle to transact online
- Language barriers hinder the use of online services
- Different physical and mental disabilities can hinder online engagement

Addressing these problems can be complex. Information about which cohorts experience one or more of these issues can be hard to find. Boroughs often lack resources to help all those in need, while central government support has been limited. Even where resources are available, knowing how to reach specific individuals within a cohort can be difficult.

In response to these challenges, the London Recovery Board's Digital Access for All Mission has set a goal for:

“Every Londoner to have access to good connectivity, basic digital skills and the device or support they need to be online by 2025.”

As part of this mission, the GLA and LOTI are launching The Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme (DIIP).

Working with partners in the public, third and private sectors, our goal is to use innovation methods to discover, design, develop and scale initiatives that support digitally excluded Londoners who have been left particularly vulnerable during the Covid pandemic.

This work is expected to start in June 2021 and last for 2 years.

Headline desired outcomes

The Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme aims to deliver positive outcomes for London residents, public sector and VCS staff and the wider community of organisations who support digitally excluded people.

Here's what we want to be different by the end of this work in 2 years' time:

- ★ **For residents:** A “minimum access package” that provides a menu of options to meet individuals' essential device, data and skills needs will be available to all digitally excluded Londoners.
- ★ **For public servants / VCS:** Practitioners who work with digitally excluded Londoners will be easily able to access quality information, resources, services and peer support on digital inclusion to aid their users. The evidence base on what works - and the range of mature interventions that can be scaled - will be more extensive.
- ★ **For corporates:** The evidence base on the exact need in London will be more easily accessible and understood. There will be greater awareness about the impact of moving to online-only channels on digitally excluded Londoners.

The Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme aims to deliver more specific outcomes in three core areas:

Understanding needs

How can we identify the people and places that are digitally excluded and understand what they need?

Innovating in supply

How can we maximise the provision of devices, data, skills training, funding and other sources of digital inclusion support?

Connecting people with the help they need

How can we get the right support to the right people at the right time?

Understanding needs

How can we identify the people and places that are digitally excluded and understand what they need?

We wish to:

- ★ Develop a deep understanding of the specific digitally excluded groups in London and have better insights on their needs. The aim is to focus on those who have been left particularly vulnerable during the Covid pandemic.
- ★ Identify the highest priority groups based on practitioner insights and spot geographic hotspots for particular aspects of digital exclusion, quantifying the level of need.
- ★ Have these insights available perennially, not just as a moment in time snapshot.
- ★ Understand more about those who are partially digitally excluded (e.g. those who can afford pay-as-you-go for part of the month, have only very slow connections or share device) - and the gap between what they have and what's required to meet their real needs.

Innovating in supply

How can we maximise the provision of devices, data, skills training, funding and other sources of digital inclusion support?

We wish to:

Devices:

- ★ Maximise the number of devices that are available to digitally excluded Londoners, for example by increasing the volume of upcycling of retired corporate devices, and enhancing the use of Social Value and other contract provisions to fund the purchase of devices.

Data & connectivity

- ★ Explore innovative models for providing connectivity to digital excluded Londoners - e.g free wifi / reuse of council offices / libraries.

Skills

- ★ Making existing skills training provision more easily accessible to practitioners working with digitally excluded Londoners.

Connecting people with the help they need

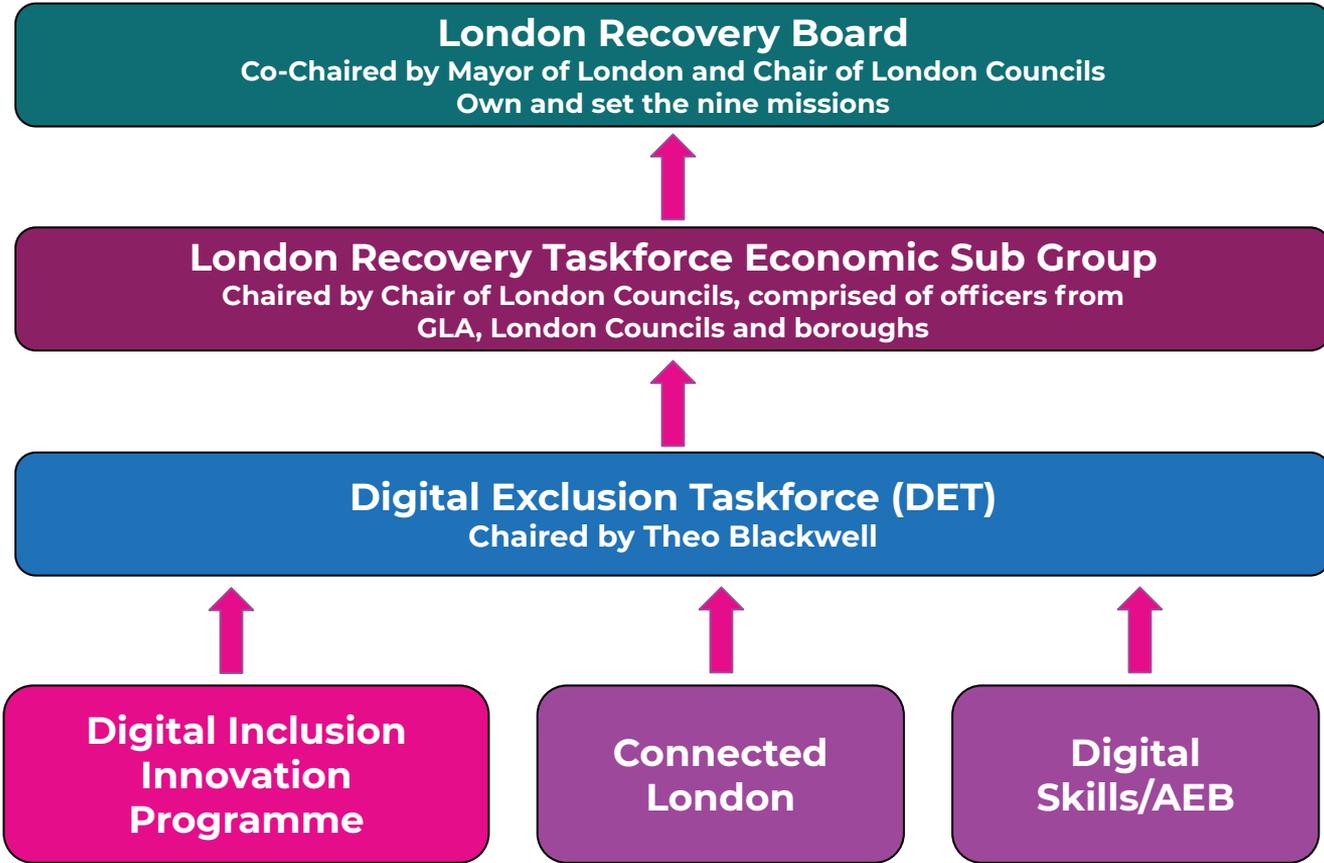
*How can we get the
right support to the
right people at the right
time?*

We wish to:

- ★ Identify which groups are most able to be supported by different sources, e.g. from corporate philanthropy vs VCS vs council services.
- ★ Develop sustainable service models that meet the digital inclusion needs of specific communities.
- ★ Take the weight off front line practitioners by equipping them with the digital inclusion skills and resources they need to train or support their end users.

The **Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme** isn't the only piece of work that aims to fulfil the Mission's goals. Two other initiatives - Connected London and Digital Skills - are already underway and are well funded. We will therefore **not** focus on connectivity infrastructure issues or developing skills programmes that are already covered by these.

Initiative	Digital Inclusion Innovation Programme	Connected London	Digital Skills/AEB
Key Focus	Working with partners in the public, third and private sectors, to use innovation methods to discover, design, develop and scale initiatives that support digitally excluded Londoners who have been left particularly vulnerable during the Covid pandemic.	Removing barriers to commercial rollout of full-fibre. Funding local govt to support rollout and grant-fund activity to tackle not-spots where investment is unlikely.	Using Adult Education Budget to fund free digital skills training. Work with FE/private sector to match skills to employer needs, increase uptake and standards.
Funding	£1.36 million	£41 million	£100 millions
Start & duration	Starts June 2021, lasts 2 years	Started August 2017 - ongoing	Started 2019 - ongoing



- Digital Exclusion Taskforce:
- Theo Blackwell - GLA (CHAIR)
 - John Davies – BT
 - Thomas Leighton – Vodafone
 - John Jackson – LGfL
 - Name TBC - Age UK
 - Stephen King - London Councils
 - Chris Ashworth – Nominet
 - Lucy Dunn – West London Alliance
 - Opama Khan – Croydon
 - Christine Goodall – HEAR Equality
 - Lauren White – Newham, Havering

Working Principles

We're conscious that a vast amount of amazing work has already been done by boroughs, VCS and private sector organisations in our three areas of interest.

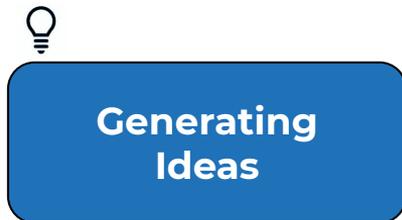
As we seek to design and deliver specific projects as part of this Programme, we will focus on projects that:

- ✓ Aim to achieve outcomes that will substantially benefit digitally excluded Londoners
- ✓ Clearly add value to what already exists
- ✓ Build on and create strong evidence through effective design and evaluation
- ✓ Have a credible route to large-scale adoption and financial sustainability

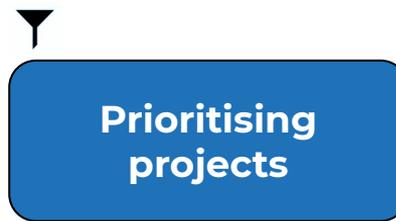
The early stages of this work will focus on the following four steps:



Understand what's already been / being done to tackle digital exclusion in London so we can build on, and complement existing work.



Take inspiration from global best practice and knowledge of opportunities and barriers in London's existing work to generate ideas bank of potential project ideas.

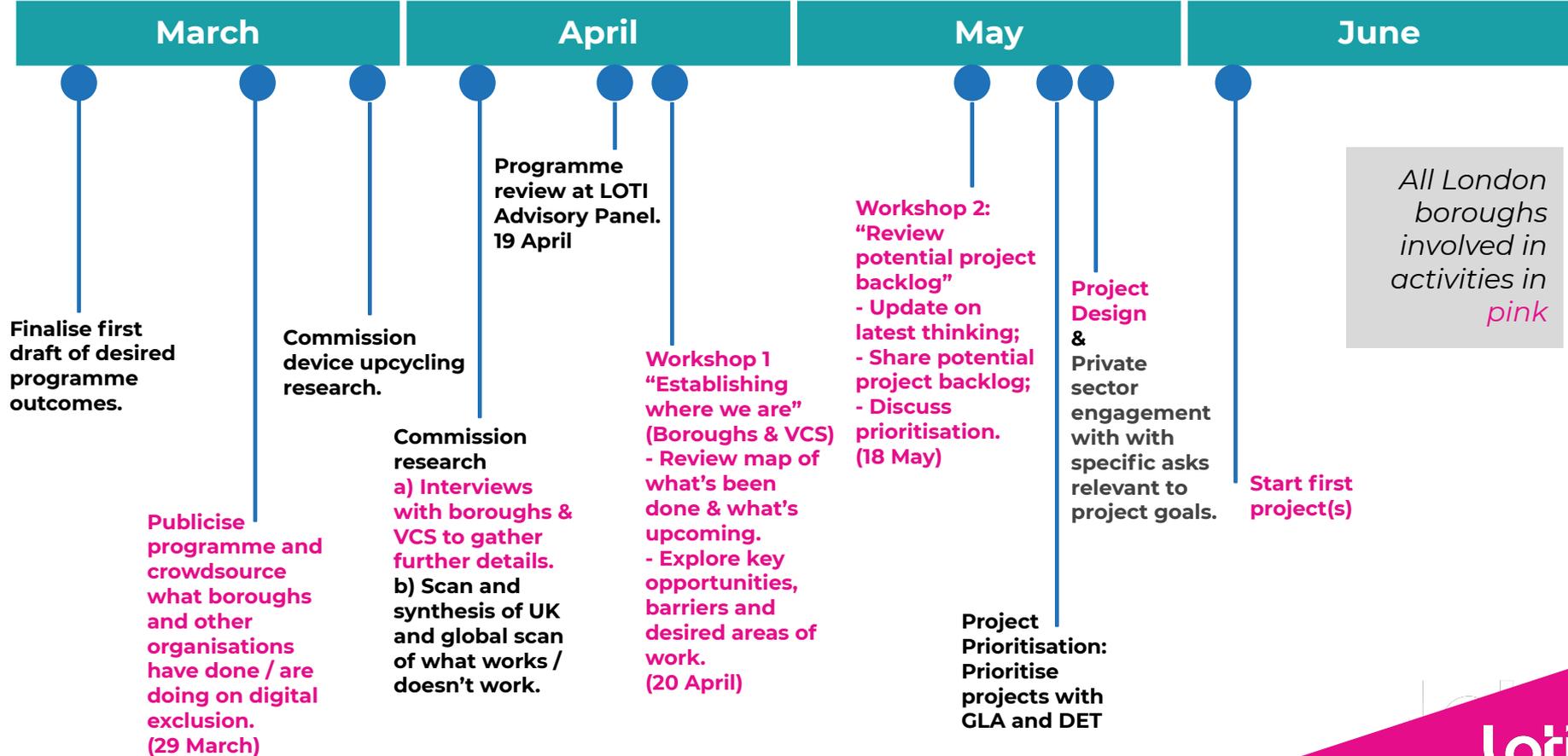


Turn ideas bank into backlog of specific project ideas, prioritised based on assessment of their feasibility, desirability and viability.



Form collations of delivery partners to design and execute projects that fulfil the programme's desired outcomes.

Indicative Timeline



How you can get involved

Mapping DI projects in London:

For public, private and third sector organisations in London - please tell us about your digital inclusion initiatives so we can build on and complement your work!

Please complete the form at:
bit.ly/LOTI_DIIP

Workshop: “Digital Inclusion in London: Establishing where we are”

Digital Inclusion leads from London boroughs are invited to join a workshop on 20 April.

Register your interest via [Eventbrite](#).

Mapping Digital Inclusion Projects in London

Please help us understand what's already been / being done to tackle digital exclusion in London so we can build on, and complement existing work.

Which organisation(s) are involved in delivering this initiative? *

Please provide the name of a contact who can answer further questions about the initiative. *

(This will not be shared publicly)

Please provide the email address for this contact. *

This will not be shared publicly

Notes

Please select the sectors of the organisations involved in this initiative. *

- Public
- Third
- Private