

Case study



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Bridging the digital divide:

The positive impact of the DTLSN on Welsh communities

Overview

The Digital Technology Learning Support Network (DTLSN), led by Cardiff Metropolitan University in partnership with Technocamps at Swansea University, was launched through the UK Community Renewal Fund. The initiative aims to equip Welsh primary and secondary schools, teachers, parents, community groups and businesses with essential digital skills needed in today's technological landscape.

To date the DTLSN has supported learning communities in Powys, Blaenau Gwent, Neath Port Talbot, and the Vale of Glamorgan, providing comprehensive digital education support for implementation of the new curriculum and GCSE Digital Technology qualification along with digital upskilling for individuals and businesses. The project, funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, is set to continue until March 2025 and has already made a significant impact in communities throughout South Wales.

Reaching 3,000 learners: The DTLSN has provided vital digital skills education to a substantial number of learners across Welsh communities.

Support for schools and teachers: It has helped schools implement the new curriculum and improve teachers' confidence in delivering Computer Science lessons.

Free digital skills training for businesses: DTLSN offers businesses free training in **creative coding**, **cybersecurity**, **interacting with data**, **crypto and blockchain** and **machine learning (AI)**, enhancing workforce capabilities and competitiveness.

Digital Inclusion for local communities: Harnessing creativity, the DTLSN collaborates with Cardiff Metropolitan University's Fablab to bring technology to rural communities.

Highlights and successes

The DTLSN's work aligns with Welsh Government strategies to improve digital workforce skills and reduce poverty and inequality. By offering digital education and support, the programme has improved job prospects, created a skilled workforce, and promoted gender equality through its focus on women in STEM fields.

Key impacts include:

- Enhanced digital technology skills, helping learners explore academic and career opportunities.
- Strengthened the ability of teachers and schools to implement the new curriculum.
- Expanded access to STEM resources, leading to greater teacher confidence in teaching Computer Science.
- Provided businesses with free training such as programming, cybersecurity, and machine learning, enhancing workforce skills and competitiveness.
- Supported community learners with workshops on digital survival skills, AI, and cybersecurity, promoting lifelong learning, improving job prospects and increasing prosperity in the region and resilience within society.



School pupils thriving with DTLSN workshops

Participants have praised DTLSN's workshops for their engaging and informative nature. Teachers report increased confidence in teaching Computer Science, and students expressed enthusiasm for the lessons, asking for more sessions. Businesses have also benefited from upskilling their teams along with enhanced recruitment successes in digital technology roles.

Pupil feedback

It was amazing! I absolutely loved this session, and I learned a lot!

We learnt about abstract patterns algorithms - decomposition.

I really loved the lesson it was super fun, and I really hope we can do more.

It was a challenging but a fun way to learn.

I loved it and I want more!



DTLSN empowering pupils with digital skills

Business feedback

"As a company, we've benefited in undertaking this course through i) in recruitment and accelerating the growth within the company, ii) internal upskilling iii) utilising the understanding into the services we provide."

Dr Chris Jones, Chief Science Officer for Sports and Wellbeing Analytics Ltd.

Expanding the impact

The DTLSN is preparing for follow-on funding applications to extend its impact beyond 2025. Future initiatives may seek funding from government grants and involve partnerships with businesses, organisations and educational institutions to continue supporting digital education in Welsh communities.

To arrange a call with a member of Cardiff Metropolitan University's Research and Innovation team email business@cardiffmet.ac.uk

Discover more about DTLSN

[DTLSN website](#)

[Cybersecurity course video](#)

[Case study video](#)

Contact the team:

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<dt/sn>

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