

# Guide to joining the Network as part of a Big Local area

This guide from the **Good Things Foundation** gives details on how your Big Local area can sign up to become part of the **Online Centres Network**, and explains the key benefits which come with joining.

The network is a movement for social change - thousands of member organisations working to support digitally excluded people in their communities so that they are happier, healthier and better off. It doesn't matter whether you're a community centre, library, business or even a volunteer running outreach support - we'd be delighted to help, and we hope this handy guide will tell you everything you need to know about what you can expect if you decide to become a member.

*"Being a member isn't just about being able to access marketing materials, resources and apply for funding opportunities. It's about being part of a 'big club with a shared vision' - a network that helps people up and down the country improve their lives through digital"*

Gabrielle Woodhams - Head of Network at Good Things Foundation

**Local Trust**

 **Good Things**  
Foundation

# Funding, support, advocacy and much more...

Being a member of the Online Centres Network comes with a number of key benefits which come at no cost. There's certainly no pressure from us to engage with everything, leaving you to pick and choose which parts of the membership will be most beneficial.



**Access to  
Learn My Way**



**Data  
management tool**



**Funding  
opportunities**



**Training, events  
& resources**



**Regular contact  
& newsletters**



**Advocacy with a  
national voice**



**Network  
Specialist**



**Inclusion on our  
UK wide map**



**Participation in  
campaigns**

## Training programme tailored to the needs of the Network

We're continually listening to our community partners about the challenges they're facing and where they feel they need to develop.

This insight ensures we have a training programme that meets the needs of everyone involved.

Throughout the year you'll have the opportunity to take part in webinars and events. There are always plenty of opportunities to network, ask questions and share best practice with others too.





**Learn My Way** is a website of free online courses for beginners, helping people develop digital skills to make the most of their online world.

Courses cover the basics, such as using a mouse, and more advanced skills such as searching for jobs. There's also content on Universal Credit and being a Digital Champion.

make it **click**

**Make It Click** is ideal for people who already have the basics. It's for those looking to develop the skills they need to progress their career.

There's over 100 free-to-use, trusted and reliable resources on the website broken down into topic areas such as 'presentations', 'build a business' and 'working from home'.

**Access resources to help you deliver support in the community...**



On the Online Centres Network website you can find:

- 'How-to' guides to inspire your sessions
- Marketing materials to promote your provision
- Handbooks for different types of Online Centre

## Your first few weeks as a member of the network

Once you complete the 'Join the network' form we'll be in touch within a few days. Every member has a Network Specialist, and you'll be introduced to yours with an induction call during which they'll go through the membership benefits and give you a warm welcome.

To help us understand your organisation, your Network Specialist will reach out again a few more times during your first few months. Don't worry if you're busy when we ring, we'll always follow up with an email to agree a better date and time.

After this induction period we'll be right here at the end of the phone to answer questions about our websites, funding opportunities and much more between any outbound calls we make to you.

## What do I need in place to get started and be successful?

We value every member of our network. No matter the size of the organisation, each one contributes to the tremendous support that's offered across the UK. It doesn't matter whether you're planning a detailed digital skills programme or running a monthly drop-in, every effort makes a difference.

However, it does really help to identify at least one team member who has the time to help - we'd call them a Digital Champion. They don't need to be a technical expert, just a friendly face that people can bounce questions off from time-to-time.

Being a member isn't just for those who own a building or operate from the same premises continuously. We're more than happy to support those who deliver sessions in various places around the community that they might hire or visit.

## **Understanding people's motivation**

When engaging people for the first time it's good to consider their interests. If someone enjoys taking pictures, tell them about digital photography and the benefits of being able to use computer based image editing programmes. Giving people a practical benefit to starting their digital skills journey can help keep them motivated, especially if they find it a bit daunting at first. Consider telling people about your own positive experiences of using the internet to make them feel at ease when they give it a go.

## **Helpful hints to get you started**

### **Deciding on a delivery model**

We don't have any preset rules on how our members deliver support, but we do provide guidance and resources to help you find a model that works. Whether you're planning face-to-face, remote support or a blend, we'll be able to point you in the right direction of some handy resources. If you're planning to use Learn My Way you'll be able to ask all of the people you support to register using a unique centre code that we'll provide, and this is so you can see what courses have been started and completed.

**Name**

Bekele Teklu

**Organisation**

Hackney  
Co-operative  
Developments

“Being a member of the network puts us in a good position to offer much needed services to socially and digitally excluded members of the local community. Without Good Things Foundation, we wouldn’t have access to funding, training and resources that allow us to provide this vital support.”

**Don’t just take our word for it,  
here’s what our Network have to say**

“We love seeing the difference a tool like Good Things Foundation’s website Learn My Way makes to people’s lives. We’re often told that receiving a certificate from Learn My Way is the only one a learner has ever received! Through these tools and resources, good things really do happen.”

**Name**

Tanya Cook

**Organisation**

A1 Community  
Works



# How to join the Online Centres Network

We're really excited to be working with Local Trust to support Big Local areas with digital inclusion. Remember, you don't need to be a tech wizard or be running a constituted organisation to be a member, all you need is the desire to help local people benefit from being online. If you're interested in joining the Online Centres Network, simply head to the following website to sign-up.

[www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/ournetwork/join-the-network](http://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/ournetwork/join-the-network)

Once you've completed the form one of the team will be back in touch within five working days to find out more about how we can help, and get you set-up on our websites.

We're looking forward to hearing from you.

## Not sure?

If you have any questions about what it means to be a member of the Online Centres Network, or how we can help, don't hesitate to get in touch via:

0114 3491630

hello@goodthingsfoundation.org.uk