

Report on
Learning 2.0gether Final Conference
Sheffield,
24th September 2014



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Introduction

The Learning 2.0gether Final Conference was the highlight and culmination of a series of dissemination activities implemented under Learning 2.0gether, to attract attention to the project, encourage and celebrate stakeholder engagement and highlight the benefits and successes of the project in ‘plugging the gap’ between generations in terms of professional Social Media knowledge and work experience.

“Social media is not an age issue!”

The Conference was advertised by the UK partners- Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) and Inova Consultancy Ltd.- by contacting the stakeholders and participants of the pilots and it was promoted through social media and organisational newsletters.

Agenda of the Conference

The event took place in Sheffield on September 24th at the headquarters of VAS- The Circle- and hosted forty-two participants, including members of the partner organisations. VAS, UK, was responsible for the organisation of the event supported by Inova Consultancy Ltd, UK. During the entire Conference, the participants were encouraged to make active use of social media for promoting the event and being more confident with these technological tools



as this is one of the main goals of the project itself. It is possible to follow the development of the Conference as it was spread and advertised on Twitter, Facebook and Youtube by the participants by viewing our Storify:

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https://storify.com/Inova1/learning2-0gether-final-conference?utm_campaign=website&utm_source=email&utm_medium=email

The agenda of the Conference included four main sections (see ANNEX 1) and the event was hosted by Marina Larios, the director of Inova Consultancy Ltd, UK.



Initially, Marina gave an overview of the background of Learning 2.0gether. She highlighted that the main reason for implementing the project was to fill the gap between the skills of older workers (50+) in small/medium enterprises in the use of social media for business purposes and the willingness of unemployed young people to gain relevant work experience and to improve the soft and hard skills needed for employment, especially in a period of economic crisis. Marina then introduced Petra Newrly, from MFG in Germany, who illustrated the conceptualization and development of the project training materials.

“Given the referendum that may happen in the UK, the conference raised my awareness on the power of European collaboration.”

Isabel Contreras from UPTA, Spain, then spoke about the experiences of the pilot training in Granada, stressing the involvement of the participants and sharing inspiring and successful stories. Then, Manuela Caramanna, CLP, Italy, explained the good reception of the project and the willingness to take it further in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce of Genoa. The section ended with Sirindra Bhandal, VAS, UK, speaking about the reasons for her organization’s involvement and the challenges faced during the pilots.



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The second section of the Conference was given to our key speaker, John Popham who gave his personal and original view of the possibilities offered by social media in a speech entitled *“The impact of the transition for business and the third sector: grasping opportunities presented by social and digital media”*. His intervention was very inspiring for the participants as most of them considered John’s focus on the importance of storytelling as one of the most important things they learned from the conference.



“It is amazing to realize how fast we can reach the people and the world!”

Afterwards, participants had the opportunity, over coffee to network and exchange opinions on their use of social media for business purposes and on the challenges or obstacles faced in using them, e.g. privacy concerns and time constraints.

In the next section of the conference, delegates heard from some of the project participants who benefited from the training. Videos were shown of 2 local small business owners Bob Bridge and Elaine Skinner speaking about the experiences of the project and the benefits they had gained from taking part.

“With today’s conference I realized how the project and the social networking have changed people’s life.”

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This was followed by a live interview with Sandra Baerens, a young person who took part in the training and delivered a training session to 4 older workers from NOMAD in Sheffield. Sandra spoke about her expectations and considerations on her personal involvement in the project especially about the benefits she gained from taking part in it. She stressed the importance of the soft skills that this experience provided her with, from teaching skills to the interpersonal skills required when getting in touch with older SME workers and to putting herself into someone else's shoes along with understanding his/her needs.



“I liked the idea of challenging myself and go out and deliver training which I have never done before.” (Sandra)

The conference ended with the official launch of the Skills Match platform, along with an explanation of its functions and how it will be used in the four countries involved in the project. Participants showed their interest in further development of the questions by asking questions on the subject to the panel.

“It was really good to hear about the platform, will be signing up for that!”

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Evaluation questionnaire

At the end of the event, participants were given evaluation questionnaires to express their opinion on the conference.

The most common expectations from the meeting were the participants' willingness to learn about the project, specifically the benefits of using social media in business and their curiosity in knowing how the project will be taken further and what impact it will have on its future implications. All participants considered their expectations on the conference fulfilled.

Most of the participants highlighted that the most remarkable learning they got from the conference was the great impact that social media can have on people's lives and businesses, making marketing easier and enabling faster connection with the world.

"I wanted to get a sense of the impact of the project and you were very successful in achieving that!"

Furthermore, many participants stressed the importance of intergenerational programmes that provide a win- win situation for young people to develop new skills and for older workers getting more confident with and benefitting from the use of new technologies.

"I learned about the huge impact of intergenerational programmes."

The overall perception of the conference by the participants can be summarized by this sentence from one of the businesswomen who took part in the piloting in Sheffield: *"It was a lovely and laid back gathering of individuals who were all interested in understanding how social media works and their further uses"*.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1- AGENDA

ANNEX 2- SCANNED PARTICIPANTS' ATTENDANCE LIST

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