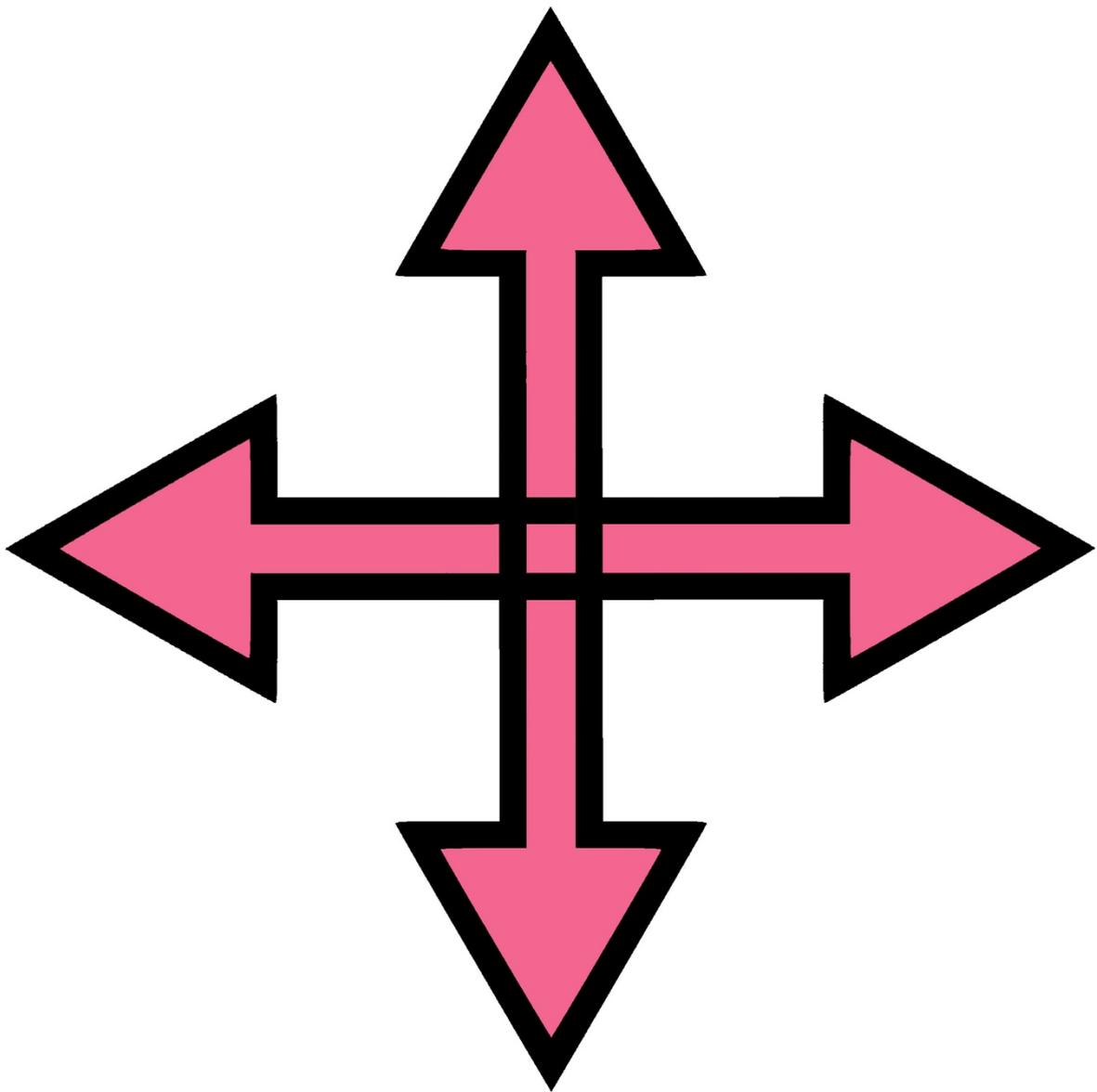


Nordisk Ungdomsorganisation / Nordic Youth Organisation



Digital tools for education in NGOs and schools



Digital tools for education in NGOs and schools

Aim

The aim of this document is to give Nordic and Baltic youth NGOs and schools practical guidance regarding use of digital tools, as well as its opportunities and risks.

Advantages

Digital tool has become a natural part of education in both NGOs and schools, and the advantages are the following:

- Digital tools are a big part of young people's lives -so it is natural that young people use digital youth also in education.
- Digital youth work has the potential to reach out to a wider range of young people and gives (in most cases) more equal opportunities to for young people to participate regardless where they live and what their financial situation is.
- Digital tools can lower the barrier for participation in the democracy and finding out information about the society.
- Many digital tools are suitable for youth work and schools are available, and more are all the time developing. They can make traditional work in youth NGOs and schools more efficient and improve the quality. Digital tools can for example make it easier to gather information, spread and analyse a survey, disseminate results and do instant communication.
- Digital tools support smooth communication, and digital meetings can be a complementary for to physical meetings. It both saves money and the environment.

Risks

There are also many risks with digital youth work, from data security to lack of actual human interaction. Special attention should be put handling personal data (text, photos, video) according to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and common sense. Passwords should at all circumstances be complex and be kept safe. More detailed information about risks of digital youth work is available in the source material we have used for this summary.

Our recommendations for digital youth work

Here follows NordYouth's and the member/partners recommendation for use of specific digital tools in youth work. We are aware of that programmes and communication formats develop all the time, so we want to emphasise that these recommendations apply to the situation in 2020.

Internal communication

Many digital communication formats exist, but for efficient internal communication in Nordic youth work it is important to find communication programmes that are already used by most of the target group. Based on

a study among our target group (Nordic and European youth and youth workers) youth we recommend to use:

- The two most used chat platforms among our Nordic-Baltic target group are Messenger and WhatsApp. In our cooperation we have realised that Messenger chats is often easier to set up as it is based on name, while phone number is needed for WhatsApp, which is not always available. In wider European NGO/school context we have experienced that more people use WhatsApp than Messenger. It is possible to do also simple video and voice calls by both platforms, but the functions are limited
- For online calls requiring more functions we have good experiences of for example Zoom, Teams and Jitsi.

Visibility and external communication

NordYouth uses Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/nordiskungdomsorganisation>) and Instagram (nordiskungdomsorganisation) for social media visibility. Twitter is a good channel especially for organisations with a more political agenda, but is used widely also by NGOs (however not so much by Nordic NGOs as by for example British). Snapchat is useful for organisations that need strong presens among young grassroots members.

Social media communication (except for Twitter) is to a high degree based on pictures and videos. It is therefore important to get at least good quality photos of the activities. In NordYouth we use videos regularly for visibility, spreading of information and Nordic/Baltic views. Some partners are also using videos for very practical communication, for example explaining for participants how to travel to an activity venue or describing a preparation task. NordYouth spreads its videos normally on Facebook and Instagram, and can reach a wider audience on YouTube. Videos can also be used for example as introduction to sessions. Smartphones have nowadays so good cameras that good amateur level videos can be made filmed by these. A microphone compatible with smartphones is the most relevant small investment if wanting to improve the video quality. Also a gimbal can be good for keeping the camera steady. Challenges with videos is that they take some time to prepare, film and edit, but short videos can be made rather quickly.

Sharing material

NordYouth uses mainly Dropbox for storing and sharing documents. We appreciate the easy offline access format and that users can move folders in a way that individual structure is possible. Licences for upgrade is quickly relevant as the space of the free version is limited. Among our partners, organisations with more staff and board members needing extensive access have good experiences of Dropbox professional licences with multiple users.

We also use Google Docs for common drafting of documents, but according to our experience, the offline use, folder structure building and

final editing of documents are less practical. An advantage is though that the space used for free is larger, 30 GB (in 2019).

Surveys and evaluation form

Many programmes are available, but at NordYouth we have with good experience used Google Form and Survey Monkey for digital surveys and evaluation forms.

Scheduling

There are several programme alternatives for scheduling. Doodle has been suitable for us.

Voting

Electronic voting can be relevant both when a group sits physical together to make voting smoother, and is essential for enabling online meetings including voting. If planning to use voting in an NGO for board meetings and general assembly, the organisation need to first ensure electronic voting is allowed in the organisation according to its statutes. Some programmes for voting are Pollunit, Mentimeter, Voxvote, Electionrunner, Easypolls and Capterra.

Quizzes and games

In NordYouth and several partners we have used Kahoot for quiz games on various topics. It can be used in educational context as an interactive tool for raising participants' awareness about any preferred topic. It can also be used as a social tool for getting to know each other better.

There is a large variety of educational games online, but at least the more complex ones require powerful computer (which can be expensive) and some experience of using them.

Layout and design

Organisations need to do layout and design for activity material, invitations, magazines etc. Many free digital tools are available online, like for example Canva, as well as those that cost some to use, like Photoshop.

Passwords

Online tools can be helpful for creating safe passwords and easily access the own accounts by one single password. A provider of this kind of service is for example Lastpass.

Källor/ Sources /Lähteet

1. The EU publication “Developing digital youth work”. It was set up under the European Union Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018, the expert group on 'Risks, opportunities and implications of digitalisation for youth, youth work and youth policy' provides policy recommendations, training needs and good practice examples in developing digital youth work across the EU. It can be found at: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/fbc18822-07cb-11e8-b8f5-01aa75ed71a1>.
2. The tool kits for youth organisations developed commonly by Council of Europe and European Union do not directly address digital youth work, but many other areas of youth work which are also related to digital youth work. They can be found at: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kits>.
3. A guide to digitalisation of youth work: <https://www.verke.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Digitalisation-and-youth-work.pdf>
4. Information from the NSU members and partners via direct contact with us.

The production and/or Nordic dissemination of this text is done in cooperation with members and partners, and with support by:



Regional management and dissemination in south-west of Finland:



Europeiska jordbruksfonden för landsbygdsutveckling: Europa investerar i landsbygdsområden



Svenska Kulturfonden

The content of this text may not reflect the opinions of the funders and partners.