

*(This document was previously sent out as an unofficial newsletter to the project members only).

Introductory Document

January 2021



- Innovating Digital and Social Inclusion

“Make people able to connect to both digital and physical networks through developing tailor-made learning activities with digital technology as the means for learning”

Connect://able

– Innovating Digital and Social Inclusion

Connect://able is an innovative Erasmus+ project addressing the digital divide in Europe. Using design thinking methods, the participating organisations will develop learning activities involving digital technology to explore its potential.

The project applicant and managing organisation is Bergen Public Library. Partnering organisations are Blenders from Belgium, Aarhus Public Libraries from Denmark, and Western Norway University of Applied Sciences.

Visit the Project Page here: [Erasmus+ project card | Erasmus+ \(europa.eu\)](#)

Digital Divide

Connect://able focuses on exploring innovative solutions through social and creative learning activities to overcome challenges concerning the digital divide in Europe. Improving digital literacy among citizens is crucial for an inclusive society.

Social Cohesion Through Digital Inclusion

The Connect://able project will serve several purposes. First, it will improve the participants' digital skills and make the target groups more connectable by leading them from learning to participate in a digital-first society.

Second, the participating organisations will gain knowledge on how to organise digital learning activities. As professionals, they will work closely together on an international level, and share ideas, knowledge, and experiences.

An important part of the learning activities is to engage in collaborations to activate resources in the local communities. Furthermore, it will be essential to explore the role of libraries as institutions that can link social capital.

Kick-Off: The 1st Transnational Project Meeting

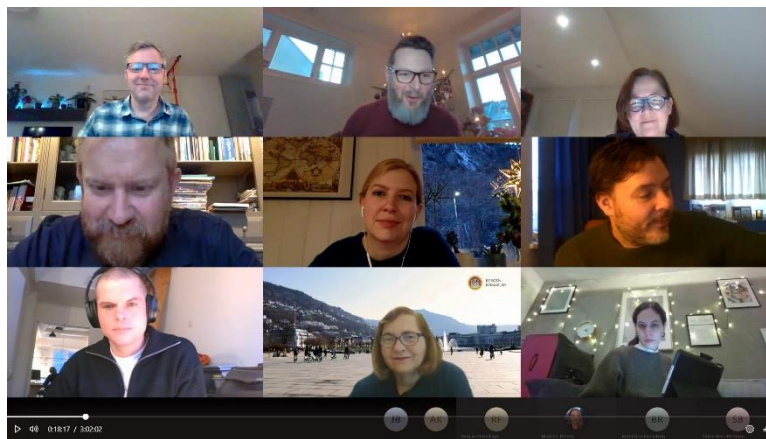


Photo: Screenshot from the Kick-Off on Teams.

All Connect://able partners met for an online Kick-Off on January 6, 2021. This Kick-Off was an arena for exchanging ideas and getting started with the project. Each participating organisation got to present the work they do and how it applies to Connect://able.



Photo: Group photo from when the attendants at the Connect://able Kick-Off got to test out Mozilla Hubs during lunch hour.

Social, Creative, and Innovative Learning Activities

Bergen Public Library, Aarhus Public Libraries, and Blenders will develop a minimum of two learning activities throughout the project. The entire process; from planning to performing these learning activities, will be observed by the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL) for research purposes. Researchers from HVL will develop a report study of Connect://able, which will be a valuable resource for developing digital training methods in the future.

Design Thinking: A Framework for Innovation



Photo: designthinkingforlibraries.com

At the Connect://able Kick-Off, Aarhus Public Libraries introduced 'Design Thinking', which will be the primary methodological approach for developing learning activities during this project.

Design thinking is something Aarhus Public Libraries are known for as they have worked with such methods for several years. Together with

Chicago Public Library, they have developed a Design Thinking for Libraries toolkit used by many libraries.

An essence of design thinking is to talk less and do more. People are in focus; the aim is to design with them instead of for them. It is crucial to listen, observe and be visual and practical by making prototypes. Both Aarhus Public Libraries and Bergen Public Library have explored methods of co-creation together with local citizens.

Open Digital Inclusion Network



One of the main deliverables of Connect://able is to establish an Open Digital Inclusion Network (ODIN). This network will give professionals working with digital inclusion an opportunity to connect and share experiences and knowledge.

Find more information about each participating organisation on their websites:

[Bergen Offentlige Bibliotek — Bergen Offentlige Bibliotek \(bergenbibliotek.no\)](https://bergenbibliotek.no)

[Home - Western Norway University of Applied Sciences \(hvl.no\)](https://hvl.no)

[Homepage Blenders](https://blenders.com)

[AarhusBibliotekerne \(aakb.dk\)](https://aakb.dk)