Digital Transformation in Youth Organisations

A Practice-Based Training Framework

1. Why This Framework Exists

Digital transformation in youth organisations is often approached through tools, platforms, and skills. While these are important, they rarely address the deeper questions that shape how digital environments are experienced:
 Who participates?
 Who decides?
 Who feels safe?
 Who carries responsibility?

This framework was developed through a multi-day international training process that brought together youth workers, facilitators and organisational leaders to reflect on their real digital practices. Rather than offering fixed solutions, the training focused on **questions, tensions and choices** that organisations face when digital tools become part of everyday work.

The framework is shared openly for youth organisations, cultural organisations and civil society actors who wish to approach digital transformation as a **values-led, participatory and care-based process**.

2. How to Use This Framework

This framework is designed to be:
- **adaptable** to different organisational sizes and contexts
- usable in **in-person, hybrid or online trainings**
- suitable for **staff teams, youth workers, volunteers and leadership**

You do not need to implement everything at once.
 You can:
- use individual exercises as standalone sessions
- build a short internal workshop
- develop a longer training or retreat

The framework works best when participants bring **their own organisational reality** into the process.

3. Core Learning Principles

The training framework is built on the following principles:

• **Digital transformation is not a one-time process:** It is ongoing and must be revisited as people, tools and contexts change.

• **Participation is more than access:** Being present online does not automatically mean having influence.

• **Digital spaces are governed spaces:** Even informal digital environments reflect power, roles and responsibility.

• **Care is a digital responsibility:** Well-being, consent and safety must be actively designed into digital practices.

• **Questions are more useful than answers:** The framework prioritises reflection and shared understanding over prescriptions.

4. Core Questions for Organisations

These questions form the backbone of the training. They can be used for discussion, reflection or written work.

Digital Practice & Strategy
- Why do we use the digital tools we currently rely on?
- Which practices feel intentional, and which have simply accumulated?
- What feels supportive — and what feels exhausting?

Participation & Power
- Who speaks most in our digital spaces?
- Who tends to stay silent, and why?
- Who sets the pace and tone of communication?

Consent & Visibility
- Do people know how their data, images or contributions are used?
- Is consent ongoing or treated as a one-time formality?
- Are young people credited as contributors or only as participants?

Care & Well-being
- When does digital availability turn into pressure?
- How do we recognise digital overload or withdrawal?
- Who is responsible when harm occurs online?

Governance & Responsibility
- Who moderates, stewards or maintains digital spaces?
- Are responsibilities clear — or invisible?
- How are decisions revised when something no longer works?

5. Training Methods & Exercises

Below are **reusable methods** tested during the training process.

1. Mapping Our Digital Ecosystem

Participants map all digital tools they use and link them to purposes, emotions and challenges.
 Use when: starting a process or making invisible practices visible.
 Group size: 5–20

2. Values-to-Tools Translation

Small groups connect organisational values (e.g. participation, care, inclusion) to concrete digital behaviours and tools.
 Use when: tools feel misaligned with values.
 Group size: 4–15

3. Participation Spectrum Exercise

Participants reflect on where different actors sit between *access*, *voice*, *influence* and *decision-making* in digital spaces.
 Use when: addressing power and inclusion.
 Group size: 6–20

4. Consent Scenarios

Groups discuss realistic scenarios involving photos, recordings, AI tools or online visibility, and explore ethical responses.
 Use when: working with youth or public communication.
 Group size: 6–15

5. Digital Care Check-in

Participants reflect on personal and collective digital well-being, availability and boundaries.
 Use when: addressing burnout or overload.
 Group size: any

6. Governance Mapping

Participants identify who currently holds responsibility for digital spaces and where accountability is unclear.
 Use when: digital spaces feel chaotic or unsafe.
 Group size: 5–12

6. What Organisations Commonly Discover

Across different contexts, participants often realise that:

- many digital practices exist by habit, not choice
- participation is uneven, even in "open" spaces
- care is expected but rarely structured
- governance exists, but is often unspoken
- clarity reduces tension more than control

These insights often lead to small but meaningful changes rather than radical overhauls.

7. Adapting the Framework

This framework can be adapted for:

- **small organisations** with limited capacity
- **rural or low-connectivity contexts**
- **youth-led initiatives**
- **online-only settings**

What matters most is not scale, but **intentional reflection**.

8. Invitation to Adapt

This framework is shared as a living resource.
You are encouraged to:

- adapt it to your context
- translate it
- combine it with your own practices

If you do, we invite you to credit Magnet and the Digital Navigator project and to continue the conversation on ethical, participatory digital transformation in youth work.