Potential Platforms for the Management and Delivery
of Online Creative Projects
for Communities, Children and Young People

It is hard to know where to begin when considering what communication platforms to use when designing and delivering creative projects with community groups and children and young people. There are so many to choose from, from basic email and closed social media groups to communications apps and cloud based collaborative tools that support video, and audio.

When choosing the correct platform there are several different factors to consider

- What kind of activities do you intend to do deliver?
- Do you want to use text, audio or video to support and communicate about your project?
- How will you share ideas, communicate and view work that is created?
- Which platforms are popular and currently in use by your target group?
- Which platforms are the most user friendly and age appropriate?
- What kind of security does the platform offer?
- How can you safeguard against other privacy issues may arise?
- Does it require software to be installed on the participant's device?
- Does it work on multiple operating systems?

Below are some options from basic messaging to online meeting services and dynamic information sharing platforms that can facilitate communication and collaboration on creative projects. They include online meeting services, communication apps, cloud based collaborative tools, online classrooms and social media and video channels.

Online Video Conferencing

What is it?	**Zoom** is a video meeting software that allows you to have a video call with an individual or a group of people from your phone or laptop
Basics	Easy to use Join the meeting via webcam or phone Unlimited meetings, even with free version Requires the host to sign up but not the participant

	See up to 49 participants at one time Participants can also dial in to a meeting There is a caption function but it's not automatic – the host/someone must type the captions manually
Packages: basic details	*Free version:* Unlimited meetings Meeting duration unlimited for 1-to-1 meetings Meeting duration limit of 40 mins for groups Max 100 participants Ticket support only *Pro:* Meeting duration limit increases to 24 hrs *Business Package:* Dedicated phone support Vanity URL *Zoom webinars:* This is a separate license to Zoom Meetings although you may get a discount if you buy this with the Business package. Includes up to 100 interactive participants and 100-10,000 view-only (depending on the plan). There is also an option to broadcast across Facebook Live and YouTube. An optional extra on all plan Full details of these and other packages at: https://zoom.us/pricing
Operating Systems	Mac, Windows, iOS, Android, Blackberry https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-Requirements-for-PC-Mac-and-Linux
Good to know	There have been some security concerns recently, particularly around internet trolls 'zoom bombing' meetings and around data sharing with Facebook. However, Zoom have put development on hold for 3 months so they can focus on improving security. There is also a mobile app version but some reviews have reported that the quality is not as good as the website platform.
More information	https://zoom.us/
Tutorial	Zoom host free daily live and interactive webinars to train people on using Zoom: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360029527911
Users	Very popular with the general public right now

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">S
Meet Now</td></tr>
<tr><td>What is it?</td><td>Meet Now in Skype allows you to host conference calls by generating a free unique link.. You then share that link with participants to enjoy unlimited meetings via Skype. ... Meet Now works on any device with the Skype app installed, and you don't need a Skype account to join these calls</td></tr>
<tr><td>Basics</td><td>Easy to use
No sign-up required, even for the host
Up to 50 participants
The number you can see at any one time depends on what device you use
Meeting link does not expire
When you create a meeting, Skype will launch its web app if you don't already have the Skype app installed</td></tr>
<tr><td>Packages: basic details</td><td>No sign-up
No need to download software
No time limit on meetings</td></tr>
<tr><td>Operating Systems</td><td>iOS, Android, Windows, Mac</td></tr>
<tr><td>Good to know</td><td>Participants can use the web version if they don't have the Skype app installed but it would probably work better with the software downloaded. It is still not necessary to sign-up with the download.

Requires either the "new" Chromium-based Edge or Google Chrome itself.</td></tr>
<tr><td>More information</td><td>https://support.skype.com/en/faq/FA34926/what-is-meet-now-and-how-do-i-use-it-in-skype</td></tr>
<tr><td>Tutorial</td><td>https://support.office.com/en-us/article/create-instant-meetings-with-meet-now-26e06837-853d-4df1-a729-06bf700d4ecf</td></tr>
<tr><td>Users</td><td>Friends, family, educators etc. This is a good alternative to Zoom for video calls.</td></tr>
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What is it?	**Houseparty** is a social networking app that allows up to eight people to video chat at once in a "room." Users can have infinite rooms and easily float between rooms.
Packages: Basic Details	It is free to download. Unlike Facetime, you don't need to call someone. Users receive a notification when friends open the app and can join chats with friends (and friends of friends).
	There is no time limit on calls
Operating Systems	Houseparty is available on iOS, Android, Mac, PC, and as a Google Chrome extension.
Good to know	Houseparty has excellent quality video but is a bit of a drain on your battery and you may need to plug in your phone while you are using it. To ensure security you have to "lock" your room or complete strangers can also join. This needs to be done manually in your settings.
More information	https://houseparty.com/faq/
Users	Popular with teenagers and young people

Online Meeting Services

	Microsoft Teams logo
What is it?	**Microsoft Teams** is a collaboration platform complete with document sharing, online meetings, video conferencing.
Basics	Sign-up required for the host but not the participant Participants can dial in to the meeting instead of video if they like Only those with Microsoft account can participate via video Live captioning is available (only on the desktop app for now) Moderator option Ability to remove participants from meeting Ability to assign a status presenter/attendee status to participants No time limit on calls
Packages: Basic Details	There are several service plans available but Microsoft lifted user restrictions on the free version in March so it is worth investigating if you don't already have 365.
Operating Systems	Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, Android
Good to know	Video participants are limited to four at any time (most 'active' people on the call will display) but this will be nine people in May. There can also be up to 250 audio participants. Teams is also available to schools for free so may be worth investigating if your local schools use it if considering online events for students.
More information	https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoftteams/teams-overview https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/blog/2020/04/06/microsofts-commitment-privacy-security-microsoft-teams/
Tutorials	https://support.office.com/en-ie/article/microsoft-teams-video-training-4f108e54-240b-4351-8084-b1089f0d21d7
Users	It is geared at business and educators but could be a good option for communicating on creative collaborative projects.

What is it?	**Cisco Webex** is a video conferencing platform that also facilitates online meetings, screen share, and webinars.
Basics	Sign-up required for the host but not the participant Participants can dial in to the meeting instead of video if they like There are different viewing options: speaker, speaker & thumbnails, gird Grid view allows you to see up to 25 participants
Packages: Basic Details	*Free version:* Up to 100 participants No time limit on meetings Unlimited meetings Phone-in option *Paid plans* can have up to 200 participants, branding and customisations, single sign-on, dedicated support, more cloud storage
Operating Systems	Windows, Mac, Linux
Good to know	The basic free plan has been upgraded due to the pandemic Participants can join from computer, mobile device, phone, or video system. When you join a meeting for the first time, you're prompted to download the installer file to install the desktop app on your computer. If you can't download the installer, you can still join the meeting using the web app instead. You don't need to install anything using the web app.
More information	https://www.webex.com/pricing/index.html
Tutorials	https://help.webex.com/en-us/8bzter/Cisco-Webex-Meetings-Video-Tutorials
Users	Mostly corporate but free version can be used for smaller groups

What is it?	**Google Meet is** a video meeting software that allows you to have a video call with an individual or a group of people from your phone or laptop. It is the big brother to Google Hangouts (Google Hangouts is to be wound down in 2020)
Basics	Google Meet is not a stand-alone app but is included in the Google G subscription. In response to the coronavirus crisis, Google announced that the Enterprise functionalities of Hangouts Meet will be temporarily available to all G Suite customers.
Packages: Basic Details	Free trial for 14 days and subscriptions start at €4.68/mth Meetings can include up to 100 people with the basic suite, 150 in business suite and 250 for enterprise suite Anyone can dial in to the meeting (including the basic plan) and there is no charge for participants to dial in You can view everyone on screen and the speaker gets enlarged at the centre of the grid No time limit on calls Live captioning available
Operating Systems	Mac, Windows, Chrome, Linux
Good to know	Integration with other Google apps could be useful e.g. Gmail, Google Chat, Google Drive
More information	https://gsuite.google.com/pricing.html https://support.google.com/a/users/answer/7317473?hl=en
Tutorials	https://support.google.com/a/users/answer/9282720?hl=en
Users	Growing popularity with Gmail users

Communication Apps

What is it?	**WhatsApp** is a communication app for your smartphone
Basics	On **WhatsApp**, you can share text, images, documents and videos to other users as individuals from your phones address book. You can also create private groups.
Packages: Basic Details	The service is free

WhatsApp video call now supports with up to 8 people and is end-to-end encrypted

No time limit on calls |
Operating Systems	Works on web, Android, iOS
Good to know	It is very user friendly. As it is owned by Facebook and Instagram it is very easy to share information between these platforms. a very good option for video call and communication if you have connectivity issues although screen size might be an issue
More information	Only smartphones are supported so you might need to consider this if members of your group don't use them
Users	Whatsapp is a very popular platform with all groups particularly adults.

What is it?	**Slack** is an instant messaging system with lots of add-ins for other workplace tools. ... There are two methods of chat in **Slack**: channels (group chat), and direct message or DM (person-to-person chat).
Basics	**A chat** room designed to replace email as your primary method of communication and sharing. It allows you to organize communications by channels for group discussions and allows for private messages to share information, files, and more all in one place. It is a good platform

	for sharing information on creative projects. You can also create private groups.
Packages: Basic Details	You can use **Slack** with a limited number of features for **free**, but if you need more there are two paid plans.
Operating Systems	Microsoft **Windows**, macOS, Linux, iOS, Android, **Windows,** Phone
Good to know	With both desktop and mobile versions, **Slack** can help your project participants collaborate and coordinate their work no matter where they are.
More information	https://slack.com/intl/en-ie/?eu_nc=1
Users	Slack was developed for business but can be used by anyone who need to share information within a group.

Cloud Based Collaborative Tools

What is it?	**Google Drive** is cloud based storage **and Google Docs** is a range of free software
Basics	**Google Drive** is part of your total Google cloud storage. You can store all your files in one place **Google Docs** is a suite of free software that includes an office administration suite like Microsoft Office that can be used for project management and collaborative projects.
Packages: Basic Details	If you have a gmail account you can access Google Docs & Google Drive. Every user gets 15GB of free storage. When you go over this storage you have to pay
Operating Systems	Google Drive is available for PCs running Windows 7 or later, and Macs running OS X Lion or later

Good to know	It is a very effective project management tool where information can be stored, created and shared and where multiple users once given permission can access and update them
More information	You can use Google Docs to open and edit Microsoft Word documents. You can even download your Google doc as a Word document so it has a standard Word extension
Users	Anyone with a Gmail Account

	Realtime Board miro
What is it?	**Miro** is an online collaborative whiteboard platform
Basics	It is is a cloud-based collaboration tool for small to midsize businesses but can also be used for any creative projects. The solution has a digital whiteboard that can be used for research, ideation, mapping xfand a range of other collaborative activities.
Packages: Basic Details	There is a free basic service and other paid options
Operating Systems	Works on web, Android, iOS
Good to know	It has a wide range of templates that can be used for brainstorming, ideation and project management and project planning in real time. It has a very visual interface and is quite intuitive
More information	https://miro.com/features/
Users	Creative businesses

Classroom Setting

What is it?	ClassDojo is a school communication platform that teachers, students, and families use every day to share what's being learned in the classroom and home through photos, videos, and messages
Packages: Basic Details	It is a free web service.
Operating Systems	ClassDojo is optimized for devices running <u>iOS 11</u> and <u>Android 5</u> and above
Good to know	It has a very child friendly interface and supports the sharing of lots of different document types of information e.g. audio, video, text
More information	https://www.classdojo.com/
Users	Teachers, educators and parents

What is it?	**Google Classroom Google Classroom** , developed by Google for schools, that aims to simplify creating, distributing, and grading assignments in a paperless way. The primary purpose of Google Classroom is to streamline the process of sharing files between teachers and students
Packages: Basic Details	It's a free web service. It is popular as it is fully integrated with all other google applications
Operating Systems	All google platforms work with the 2 most recent versions of the following browsers: <u>Chrome</u>, <u>Firefox</u>, <u>Internet Explorer 11</u>, <u>Microsoft Edge</u>, <u>Safari</u>

Good to know	As part of G Suite for Education, does not show any advertisements in its interface for students, faculty, and teachers, and user data is not scanned or used for advertising purposes
More information	https://classroom.google.com/
Users	Teachers and educators

Closed Groups

	vimeo
What is it?	**Vimeo** is a video-sharing website that allows members to view, upload and share videos. You can create a closed channel and easily invite team members and participants to private projects, then set exact permission levels for each person.
Packages: Basic Details	Vimeo basic which allows you to upload 250 MB a week for free. There are several other packages that you can subscribe to depending on the amount of storage space needed.
Operating Systems	For vimeo.com access and features, the **latest** version of the following browsers are supported (mobile/desktop): Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Edge, Internet Explorer 11 Vimeo app is available for Android + iOS
Good to know	To upload your own videos, you need to register for a free account. Then, you can upload your videos either publicly or privately and share the link to it with your group as well as embed the videos on any html page.
More information	You can set a password on any video so that only those with the password can view it. Vimeo is more popular with professionals than YouTube as it allows you to customise your interface and isn't full of advertising.
Users	Popular with filmmakers, journalists and artists

facebook	
What is it?	**Facebook** is a social networking site that makes it easy for you to connect and share with family and friends online. Facebook has a closed groups option which allows you to share information with a private group and can be very useful for creative projects. It supports the sharing of information as text, audio or video form.
Packages: Basic Details	It is free to set up an individual Facebook page. You can also set up a private Facebook Group Page for project or business use.
Operating Systems	Works on web, Android, iOS
Good to know	As Facebook also owns Instagram and WhatsApp it works very well with these platforms. It is also very easy to share information to other social media and communication platforms
More information	There is also the opportunity to Live stream within the group with Facebook Live
Users	Very popular with young people and adults

Additional Options

Video Conferencing

Discord: https://discordapp.com/ Originally set up for gamers to chat but can be used by anyone. Works with PC, Mac, Linux, iOS, Android.

Jitsi: https://jitsi.org/ Open-source video conferencing service so works on most platforms. No requirement to create an account

Facebook Live: https://www.facebook.com/facebookmedia/solutions/facebook-live. Allows you to broadcast a conversation, performance, Q&A or virtual event. You can go live on a Page, in a group or an event, and your live videos will also appear in people's News Feed.

Tik Tok: https://www.tiktok.com/en/ Short video sharing popular with young people.

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/ A video-sharing website that allows members to view, upload and share videos.

Online Meeting Services

Go To Meeting: https://www.gotomeeting.com/ Is an online meeting platform. The free plan allows you and your coworkers or friends to collaborate with high-quality screen sharing, webcams, VoIP audio and chat messaging in one session.

Communication Apps

Signal: https://signal.org/ A messaging app, just like WhatsApp or iMessage or Facebook Messenger, but one that's geared towards privacy and security rather than cute emoji stickers.

Cloud Based Collaborative Tools

AWW: https://awwapp.com/ A Web Whiteboard is a secure touch-friendly online whiteboard app that makes drawing, collaboration and sharing easy.

Classroom Setting

Seesaw: https://web.seesaw.me/ A platform for student engagement. Teachers can empower students to create, reflect, share, and collaborate.

Social Media Groups

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/ A social networking app which allows its users to share pictures and videos with their friends.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/home A 'microblogging' system that allows you to send and receive short posts called tweets