



# **Mhor Collective & MILK Community - Project Report**

## **Executive Summary**

Over twelve weekly events, Mhor Collective collaborated with MILK Community to run digital sessions for a cohort of women, many of whom are refugees and people seeking asylum.

Participants reported that their skills in media literacy and digital skills improved, while also expressing that their self-esteem and confidence was boosted by learning useful practical skills. The social nature of the learning, in a community space with food provided, was noted by attendees as a positive.

The key lessons from this project are:

- Attendees reported that they had been empowered to contribute to the sessions.
- Most of the attendees felt well-compensated for their time.
- The training and resources felt relevant to the attendees.
- Attendees provided constructive feedback for improvement, such as more structured learning, segmenting learners by skill level, and greater access to digital devices.

Looking ahead to future research and activity, participants suggested future topics for learning, based on their growth throughout these initial sessions.

## **Introduction**

### **The Project:**

MILK Community is a social enterprise based in Govanhill, Glasgow. It supports women from migrant backgrounds, many of whom are refugees and asylum seekers. Mhor Collective began its partnership with MILK Community in early 2025, recognising a demand for assistance in providing media literacy and digital skills education in the area. Many community members visiting MILK have limited media literacy, and the staff's capacity to offer such training is constrained. In response, Mhor staff initiated weekly structured learning sessions, collaboratively designed with community members to address their specific needs and the various barriers they face in learning.

Over two blocks of six weekly sessions, MILK delivered structured media literacy workshops for a group of thirty women. While the overarching aim was to build media literacy, sessions were framed around immediate lifestyle needs—making the learning more relevant and engaging.

### **How it was evaluated:**

The aim of the evaluation form was to assess the changes for participants as a result of their attendance at the session, both to understand what worked well and to gather potential improvements.

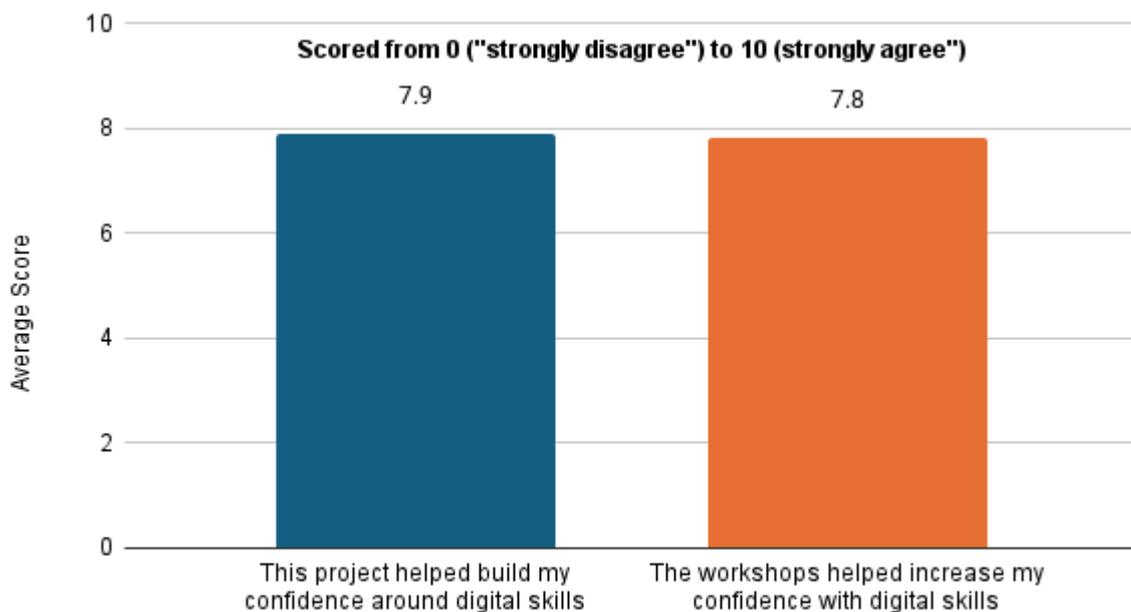
A total of 18 participants completed the evaluation form on October 7<sup>th</sup> 2025. Overall, feedback was very positive. A 10-point scale was used to gather data. Before undertaking the survey, participants were asked to sign consent forms to ensure they understood the nature of the survey and their participation, how their data would be used, and that they understood they could withdraw their participation at any point. All data was anonymised and answers could not be traced to any of the participants.

This evaluation fostered insights into four of Mhor's Key Evaluation Questions:

- How effectively were people with living experience of inequality involved in design and implementation?;
- To what extent have participants (e.g. frontline staff, service users) reported improved media literacy skills and awareness?;
- How effectively did the project engage with the identified target groups and frontline organisations?; and
- What lessons were learned that could inform future media literacy initiatives, particularly those targeting seldom-heard populations?

## Findings

### Increased Confidence and Empowerment:



A major theme emerging from participants' feedback was increased confidence and self-belief. Many participants described feeling more capable in using digital tools for everyday life. From navigating maps and completing online forms, to downloading useful

apps like Lidl plus, many participants said they felt “stronger” and “proud” of their progress, noting that digital tasks that may have once felt intimidating feel more manageable.

The sessions built digital skills but also boosted the overall confidence of participants. Participants frequently spoke about feeling comfortable in the learning environment and appreciated the supportive, non-judgmental atmosphere created by staff. A number of participants shared that they wanted to keep learning digital skills in order to better support their children’s education and daily life, highlighting that some see digital skill building as a crucial pathway to greater independence and well-being.

*“I thought the class was super informative, interactive and influential. It was well put together and had put the past skills we learned in mind. I thought it was great and find myself using the Lidl Plus app often. It was lovely changing it up and putting maps and Lidl Plus in practice.”*

### **Increased Knowledge:**

Participants reported learning a range of new practical skills, including how to download and transfer files, complete online forms, and how to use apps that could support their everyday life. Participants highlighted that these skills translated into greater independence in daily life. Many participants reported feeling more confident with shopping online, navigating transport apps, or managing their personal digital accounts. Several participants noted that they were now using various digital tools much more confidently outside the sessions.

The feedback indicates that the project was highly successful in fostering a sense of inclusion, respect, and meaningful participation among participants. The data highlights that participants felt their lived experiences were valued and expressed strong enthusiasm to engage in future digital skills activities, reflecting the project’s positive environment and relevance. The relatively high ratings for confidence-building and digital skill development suggests that the training effectively met its learning objectives. However, some of the slightly lower averages in the areas of digital confidence and the usefulness of resources for participants’ organisations highlight potential opportunities for more tailored support.

While the majority of participants felt fairly compensated, a small number expressed partial or no satisfaction with payment, suggesting that clearer communication or more consistent compensation practices could further strengthen future initiatives.

### **Increased Community and Social Connection:**

The social aspect of the project was another key highlight. Participants discussed how they valued the opportunity to meet people from different countries, make new friends, and practise English in a relaxed and informal way. The setting at Milk Café was repeatedly described as welcoming and community oriented, with many appreciating that they could bring their children to sessions.

The shared lunch was seen as more than just a meal. Some participants described it as space to connect, exchange ideas, and build confidence through conversation. For many, this sense of belonging and community was highlighted as being just as valuable as the

digital skills themselves. Participants' feedback highlights that their participation in the sessions helped to reduce isolation and in turn, encouraged their regular attendance.

## Lessons Learned

### What Worked Well:

#### ***Participation and Inclusion***

Participants' responses highlight that they felt valued, included, and motivated to engage in similar digital literacy activities in the future. Participants reported high levels of inclusion and respect, with an average score of 9.1 (on a 10-point scale). They also strongly agreed that they had opportunities to share their lived experiences and insights (average: 8.2) and that they felt their contributions were valued and could influence the project (average: 8.3). Encouragingly, willingness to participate in similar future activities scored 9.7, suggesting strong satisfaction and engagement from participants. The questions asked during the evaluation and scores are as follows:



Facilitators of the sessions were described as patient and encouraging, often helping participants feel at ease even when they were tackling unfamiliar material. The supportive approaches of the staff within the Milk space help to foster visible growth in confidence across the sessions, particularly among those who began with little or no prior digital experience.

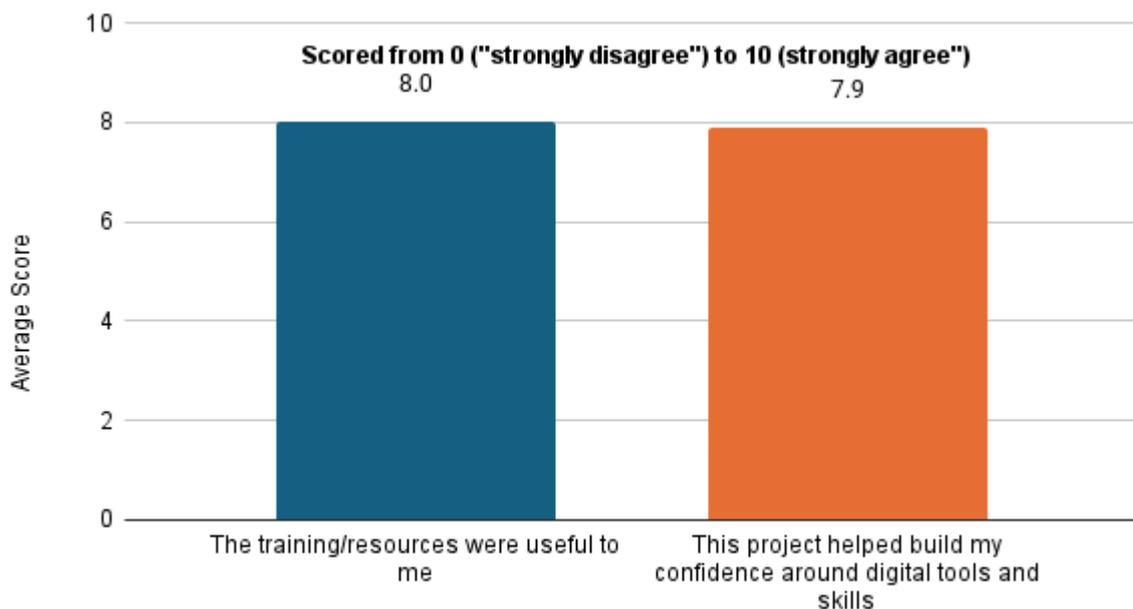
#### ***Compensation***

While most participants were satisfied, a small proportion indicated that improvements could be made in communication or consistency around payment. Of the 17 participants who responded to the compensation question:

- 12 (71%) felt they were fairly paid or compensated for their time.
- 4 (24%) said they were partly compensated
- 1 (6%) said they did not feel adequately compensated..

### ***Training and Resources***

Participants also rated the usefulness and impact of the media literacy training. Participants provided highly positive feedback on the training and resources delivered through the project, highlighting personal and professional benefits from the workshops.



Participants were very satisfied with the teaching methods and structure of the sessions. They enjoyed the natural progression of lessons, where each topic built on the last, and particularly liked the interactive quizzes and group activities that made learning difficult topics a more fun and accessible experience. The UK Government’s set of “Hostile Environment” policies mean that these systems are designed with intent to inhibit access to essential resources and opportunities such as: housing, healthcare, benefits, employment, education and bank accounts, building skills, understanding and confidence with these essential online platforms was challenging for many of the groups, when language is barrier and understanding of trusted, credible online media sources is low.

The majority of participants reported that they could name at least one new technology learned during the sessions, indicating that a majority of participants gained practical new

skills and knowledge that they could recall and apply beyond the classroom. Interest in continued participation in the digital workshops was also very high, highlighting a high level of satisfaction and motivation to continue developing their media literacy.

- When asked whether they could give at least one example of a new technology learned during the sessions, 15 out of 17 participants (88%) said yes, indicating that the vast majority gained practical new skills and knowledge that they could recall and apply beyond the classroom.
- Similarly, when asked if they would attend similar sessions again, 16 out of 17 participants (94%) said yes

### ***Attendance and Motivation***

Participants identified several factors that helped them attend regularly:

- Friends and family attending together (12 mentions)
- Others speaking the same language (11 mentions)
- Travel money support (10 mentions)
- Free lunch (4 mentions)
- Childcare provision (4 mentions)

Other motivating factors included friendly staff, structured sessions (which some neurodiverse participants said helped with focus), and the general sense of belonging and purpose created by the group.

*“I liked the sense of community. Me and my mother normally stay at home so it was nice to have something to go to every week”*

### **Areas for Improvement:**

While the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, participants also shared constructive suggestions for improvement.

Some felt that sessions could be better structured and requested more consistency in timing and delivery. A few suggested splitting the groups by skill level (for example, beginner and intermediate) to ensure everyone could learn new topics at their own pace. Preferences for devices also varied. Some participants wanted more time on laptops while others preferred sessions solely focused on using mobile phones, which they found more relevant to everyday use.

Participants also asked for longer sessions or the option to attend two sessions in one day to provide space for more hands-on practice. Some participants also requested allocating designated quiet time for individual learning alongside the group activities, as large groups could sometimes feel too intimidating for some to participate.

Access to equipment was also highlighted. Several participants said that having more laptops available for use during the sessions would help them build stronger computer skills.

### **What Participants Want to Learn Next:**

Participants expressed enthusiasm for continued learning and identified more topics that they would like to potentially explore in the future. These included:

- Core digital skills: building confidence with laptops and computers, understanding online safety (scam awareness, fake websites), managing storage, cookies, and refunds, and learning to use email for attachments, job applications, and CVs.
- Everyday apps and services: safe online shopping (Amazon, Shein), using reward and travel apps (Uber, bus/train), and exploring social media (Instagram, TikTok) and English-learning apps.
- Employment and education: writing CVs, searching for jobs, setting up professional email accounts, exploring university courses, and learning creative tools such as Photoshop, Excel, and Canva.
- Personal development: identifying personal strengths, supporting others through peer learning, and exploring emerging topics like AI.

Participants also said they would like more quizzes and practice time, as these methods helped reinforce new skills and help build language fluency.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

In summary, our collaboration with MILK was successful in engaging attendees, by providing a welcoming and inclusive space for learning. Participants felt they were able to contribute to the sessions by bringing their own experiences and perspectives, and appreciated the relevance of the subject matter. They reported improvements in their digital skills, media literacy confidence and social cohesion, while suggesting a range of constructive improvements and areas for future activity.

Several themes ran through participants' reflections. English education and learning remained a strong motivator. Participants frequently said that attending the digital sessions had improved their English language skills and their confidence in communication. Confidence and self-worth improved across the board, with participants describing a greater sense of autonomy and pride in their learning. A strong interest in computer-based learning was very much linked to greater aspirations of pursuing education and employment. Laptops were seen as tools of empowerment and professionalism, suggesting that expanding access to them could further boost participants' inclusion in Scottish society, their confidence, and sense of digital inclusion.

Participants wanted smaller, tiered groups based on both English and media literacy levels to create a more tailored learning experience. Further, the social element of the sessions played a crucial role in sustaining attendance, with many citing the comforting presence of friends, family, and peers as the biggest motivator to attend the weekly sessions. Practical,



real-life sessions (such as the popular Lidl app workshop) were especially valued, suggesting that future programmes should continue to focus on hands-on, applied learning.

Broadly, our work with MILK has provided valuable data on what works in media literacy for an audience composed greatly of refugee and asylum seeking women. It will allow many aspects of this project to be replicated in other settings to further validate their usefulness, for both similar and differently constituted audiences, while also setting up future efforts with the MILK team that can, in time, both embed and embellish their users' knowledge and confidence as they continue to navigate the media landscape together.

We will continue our partnership with MILK, using our learnings to develop appropriate, tailored media literacy support for the groups who attend. Our immediate next steps include delivering media literacy through the lens of VAWG, helping the women stay safer online and understand where and how online harm can arise.