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# The Citizens' Curriculum

## Life Skills in Europe – Project Inception Meeting

Copenhagen, 09 – 10.02.17

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## The skills challenge in England ...

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- The **Skills for Life Survey** (2011): 1 in 4 adults have low levels of numeracy skills; 1 in 6 have low levels of literacy skills.
- **Census data** (2011) records around 850,000 adults 'non-proficient' in the English language.
- Research for **Go-ON UK** estimated that 23% of adults in the UK do not have basic digital skills
- **UKCES Employer Skills Survey 2015** found that 23% of vacancies were hard to fill because of skills shortages – a range of **personal** and technical skills.
- **Government data** shows that adult (19+) participation in basic English and maths provision is falling and the Adult Education Budget is under increasing pressure.

So, Learning and Work Institute's response ....

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More flexible, creative and innovative models are needed to engage and motivate learners and meet the challenge of poor basic language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills in the context of rapid social change.

“A citizens’ curriculum is learning which is locally-led, developed with the active participation of learners, and interlinks the life skills of language, literacy and numeracy with health, financial, digital and civic **capabilities.**”

Tom Schuller • David Watson

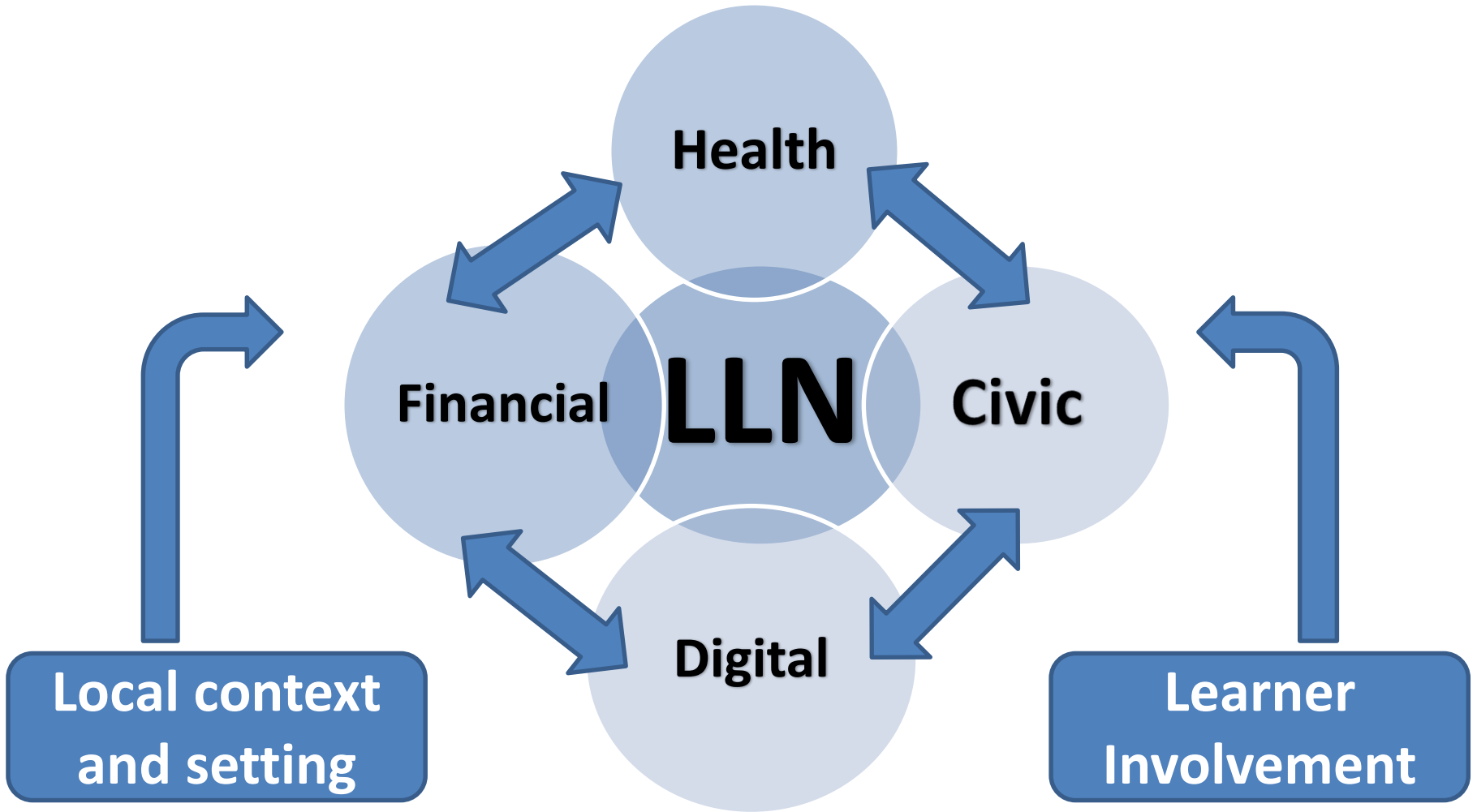
# Learning Through Life

Inquiry into the Future for  
Lifelong Learning

Summary



- Schuller and Watson ( NIACE, 2009)
- NIACE / NRDC Evidence on impact of embedded basic skills – Eldred (2005); Casey (2006)
- Co-design of the curriculum - *A New Curriculum for Difficult Times* (Beer, 2013)



## **Civic capability** includes:

awareness of the local community; cultural awareness; interpersonal and communication skills; negotiation and influencing; action planning; public speaking; equality and diversity awareness; readiness to engage in volunteering; and the ability to recognise, appreciate and assert one's own attributes, skills, strengths, rights and responsibilities.



**Digital capability** includes: accessing and using technology with confidence; locating and evaluating information; research skills; working within the online economy, personal safety online; problem solving; and team working and self-management.

**Financial capability** includes:  
personal finance; personal, household  
and family budgeting; income and  
benefits awareness; awareness of  
local economy, personal banking;  
rights and responsibilities; and  
problem solving.

**Health capability** includes: understanding of how to enhance, maintain and manage physical and mental health and wellbeing; awareness of health services and how to access and use them; mental health awareness; emotional intelligence; and the ability to manage caring responsibilities and support positive health in others.

## Piloting the Citizens' Curriculum

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- Scoping exercise in 2014 – workshops and webinars – developed underlying principles.
- Our **pilots** helped us to learn more about how a Citizens' Curriculum approach can work in **different contexts**.
- In 14/15 - **13 providers (ACL, FE, VCSE)** targeting disadvantaged groups – over **160 learners**.
- In 15/16 – **13 providers (incl. 5 returners)** with a focus on language, literacy and numeracy provision – **152 learners**.
- Supported with a '**health check**', **resources** and **community of practice**.

## Key Overall Findings – Providers (15/16)

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- Improved **understanding of their impact** on learners
- **Improved organisational ways of working**, including the sharing and adoption of good practice and expertise across curriculum teams;
- **More effective planning** and interlinking of provision through adoption of a recognised and evidence-based framework; and
- Increased number of **learners returning as volunteers**.

## Key Overall Findings – Practitioners (15/16)

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- Increased confidence in **adopting a learner-led approach**
- Enhanced capability to adopt interlinked and **contextualised approaches** to teaching Citizens' Curriculum capabilities
- Improved **practitioner morale** through greater autonomy and involvement in curriculum design and development

## Key Overall Findings – Learners (15/16)

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- Increased **social and civic engagement**, with
  - 73% making new friends
  - 59% reporting an improved social life
  - 28% improving their relationships with their family
  - 16% joining a community group
- Improved **self-efficacy**, with
  - 67% improving their self-confidence
  - 65% reporting a greater satisfaction with their life
  - 31% reporting improved physical health.

## Key Overall Findings – Learners (15/16)

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- Changes in their **employability**, with
  - 8% finding a new job
  - 20% starting to apply for jobs
  - 33% starting to look for work
  - 49% improving their work-related skills
  - 14% starting to volunteer on a regular basis.
- Improvements in their **attitudes towards learning**, with
  - 94% feeling more motivated to learn
  - 42% signing up for another course.



## Social Value

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- Phase 2 Citizens' Curriculum pilots created **a public value of at least £1,443,390**
- Actual value of the pilots will be far greater – not all outcomes achieved by the pilots have been allocated a monetary value
- Data on the costs of the pilots were not collected, but ...
- Rochdale Borough Council's cost-benefit analysis suggests that **for every £1 the council spent, they achieved a £3.68 financial return** and generated a public value of £19.65

## Next Steps for the Citizens' Curriculum

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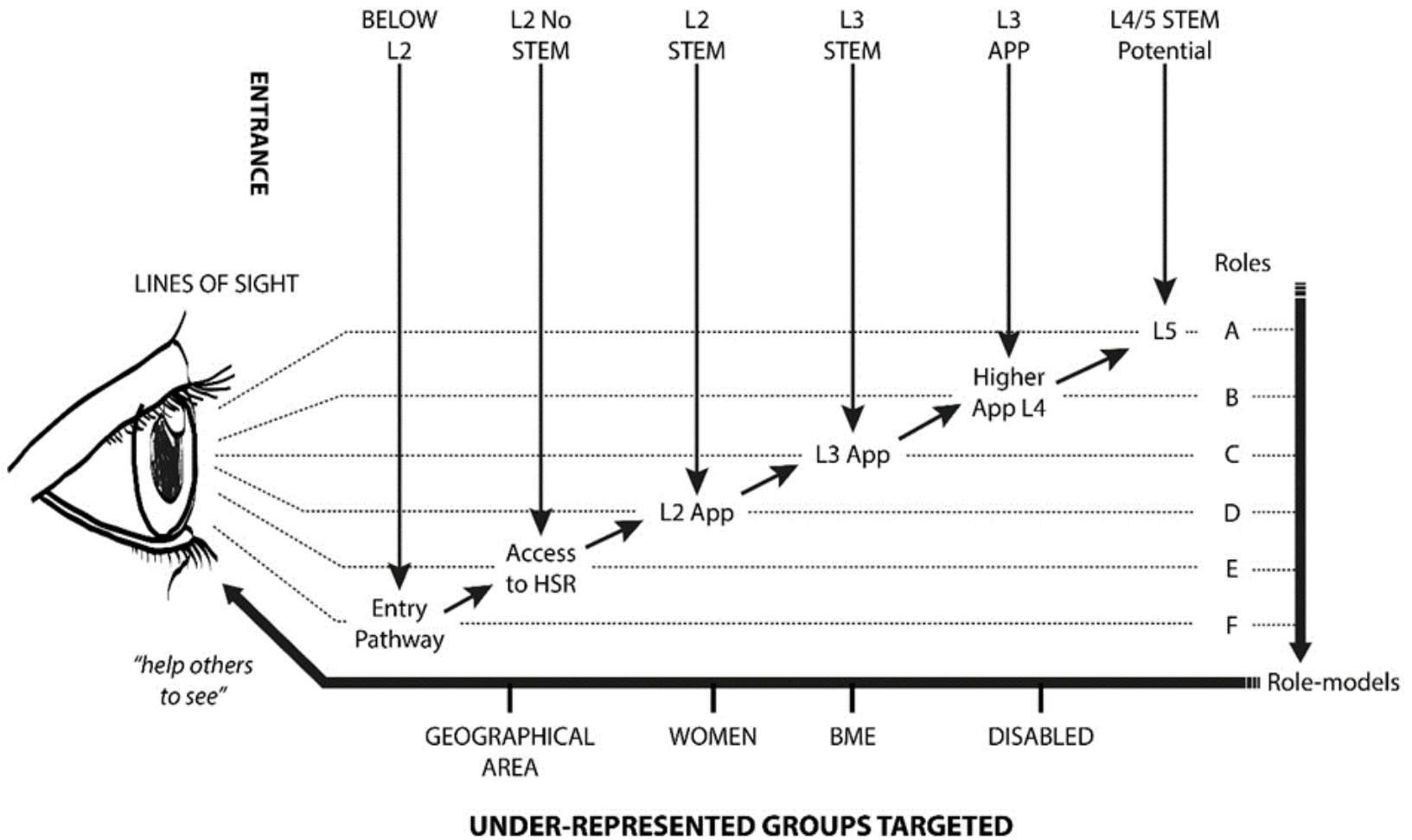
- **More piloting** – developing models **for the workplace and the secure estate**, including a partnership with the Bell Foundation to look at ESOL needs in prisons
- **Longitudinal follow-up of pilots** – delivered through our work as **UK Co-ordinator for the European Agenda on Adult Learning**, to establish further evidence of the impacts over time.
- Developing an offer to **support practitioners, providers and new commissioners** of adult learning to implement a Citizens' Curriculum approach.

## Putting the Citizens' Curriculum into Practice

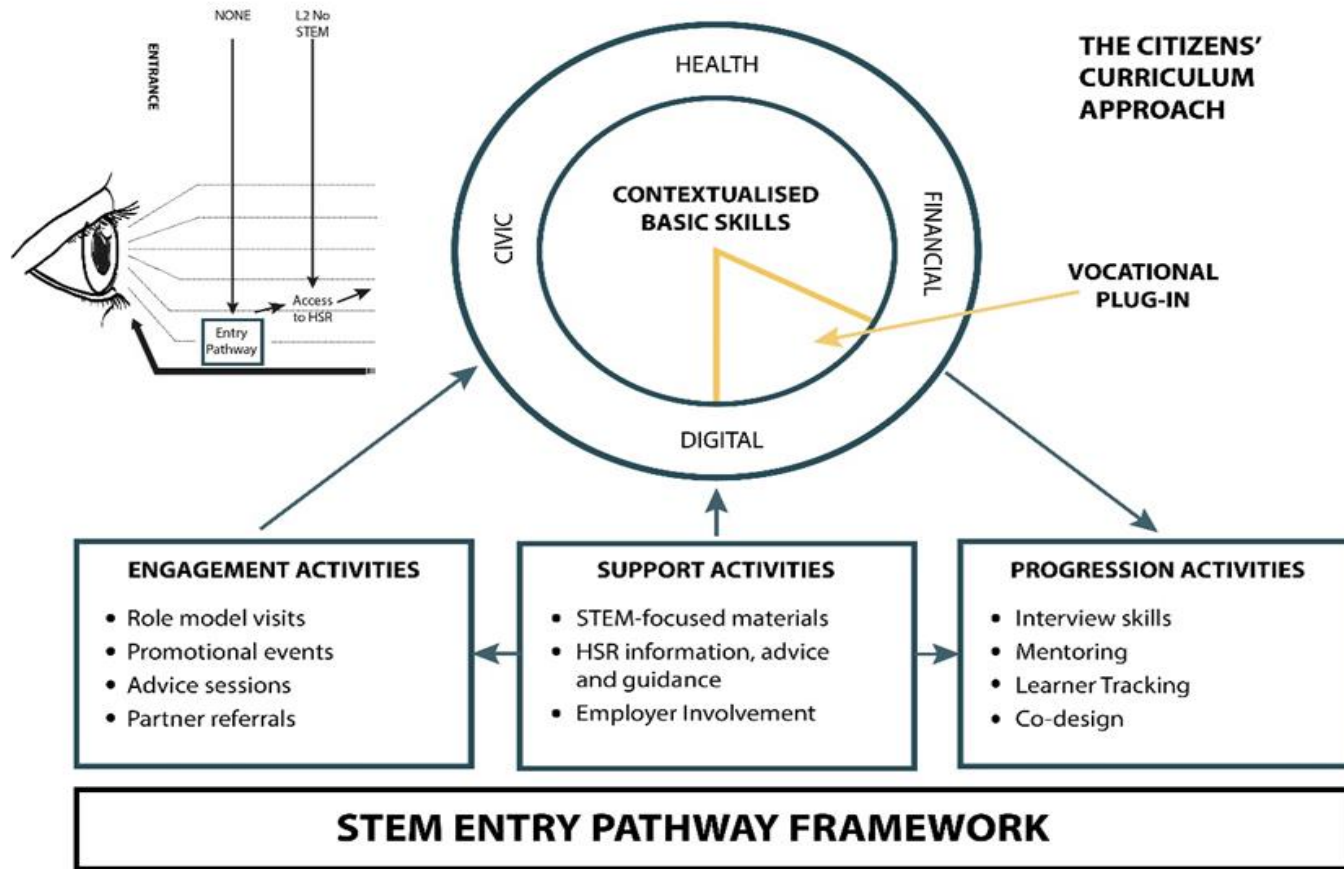
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- Pilots have demonstrated the feasibility of adopting the Citizens' Curriculum at provider and practitioner level, with or without accreditation
- Our **projects in Birmingham and Doncaster** are now looking at how the concept can support skills and growth in the context of the devolution agenda
- We're testing the approach to see how it can help in the context of specific, local skills and employment needs

# CURRENT QUALIFICATION LEVEL



# Citizens' Curriculum STEM Entry Pathway Framework



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**THANK YOU  
QUESTIONS**