Tips and tricks on how to collect stories

Sharing stories is essential in showing the impact of the digital skills program you are part of and the work you do in your community. Sharing a story of a person you are supporting will not only highlight the relevance of the program, but it will also make it real, human and more relatable to others.

You could also share stories about your Digital Mentors and volunteers and how this program has helped them, for example, to find new work opportunities. Or you could film someone from your organisation speaking about the importance of this program and how much it has helped your community. And, of course, you can do an article or video bringing all the stories together in one place.

In this document, you can find some tips and tricks for collecting stories that will help you to advocate and promote your participation in our digital skills programs, weather it is Be Connected, Digital Sisters, Building Digital Communities, Get Online Week or any other.

What is a good story?

Any story is a good story that deserves to be told, especially when the person has progressed or achieved an objective. For example, the story of a woman who learnt how to do her resume and has now found a new job, a older person who feels more confident now to go out alone because he knows how to use Google Maps or a person with disability who feels more connected with her family overseas because learnt how to video call them.

These real-life stories will help show the true impact of the program.

How to approach people

There are different ways to approach people to collect stories. You could mention at the beginning or end of your session that you are looking for someone willing to talk to you and/or Good Things to share their story and motivations around this program. If they are interested, they can talk to you to arrange an interview.

Another option is to approach a person participating in your session who you think might be willing to chat with you. You can explain to that person why this is important and the different options we have, such as a written interview, a video interview, or just a short quote. We can use its name, or we can change it. We can use her photo or not.

You can also ask your digital mentor if they have heard any stories about how this program has helped one of their participants. They are usually more in contact with them, so they might have spotted someone who is using technology more than before, or who has a new job thanks to feeling more confident because of this program.

Another good approach is to review your learners' digital skills checkers and see their comments. You can find good progress or more information about their achievements there. You can then contact them and ask if they want to tell their story.

How to collect the story?

There are many ways to collect stories, and that will depend on the format you are looking for. One of the easiest ways is to do an audio-recorded interview. You can use your phone to do that, and then you listen to that and write down the whole conversation.

Another option can be to send a written interview and ask her to fill it out. You could also do a video interview using your phone or a camera.

Alternatively, we can help you collect the story via phone call, in person, or by video.

We understand that many people don't feel comfortable on camera or they don't want/can't have their faces and names in a public place. In those scenarios, you can always offer discretion, which means they can change their names if they want, and we can use a stock image or an image of their hands using a device. The most important thing is always to make sure they are comfortable and we are protecting their privacy and needs.

In every scenario, make sure to ask them to fill in a consent form, giving you and/or Good Things Australia permission to use the interview and images. You can use the one [available on our website](#).

Which format is the best one?

That depends on the platforms, resources and time you have available. You can do a written piece on your website and also use a quote from that article in a social media post. If you have more time and budget, you could do a video recording of one or more program participants.

All formats will have an impact! It's essential to make sure you are capturing good quality photos or video and that stories are written in an attractive and easy to understand way. For example, in a written piece, try to tell a full story, not only add questions and answers. If you are making a video, make sure to add captions and add images of program participants using devices.

As we mentioned before, please feel free to contact us for help and guidance. We are always looking for good stories to share, so if you prefer, you can give us the details you have, and we can interview the participant and produce the content.

Possible questions you can ask

Here are some questions you can ask your program participants to collect their stories:

- How did you hear about the program?
- What motivates you to come to these sessions?
- What sorts of things did you learn?
- How do you rate your Digital Skills before and after participating in the sessions?
- Did you feel more socially connected by doing this program? Did you meet more people?
- Did you enjoy coming to the classes? What do you enjoy the most?
- Do you think you will do more digital skills classes?
- How has this helped you in your life?
- How has this made your life better?
- Can you give us an example of how you have been using what you have learned in this program?
- How does finishing this program make you feel?

And here are some questions you could ask a Digital Mentor:

- Why is this program important to you?
- Why is this program important to your community?
- How is this helping the women you support to feel more confident online?
- What are the main topics/questions/challenges they have

- What is your favourite memory of teaching digital skills to these women? Can you share an example?
- What do you like the most about what your organisation and you do to support people in your community?
- How do you think this changes people's lives?

Make sure you get permission to share the final story

As mentioned above, once someone has shared their story with you, make sure you ask them to fill in a consent form. You should then send them a copy of the story, video, or photos you are planning to use so they have a chance to review the final story. They should also let you know if there are any changes they would like to make.

Once someone gives you their permission to share their story, please let us know so we can share it too.