

## Where can I get more information?

**Website:** [www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie](http://www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie)

**Email:** [schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie](mailto:schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie)

**Phone:** Paula Gormley (01) 678 2025

**Write to:** School Digital Champion Project Office  
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications,  
Elm House  
Earlsvale Road,  
Cavan H12 A8H7.

All correspondence must be submitted to us by the teacher leading the team.



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



[www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie](http://www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie)



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# The School Digital Champion Programme

As part of the National Digital Strategy, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, in collaboration with Department of Education, has developed the School Digital Champion Programme. The Programme aims to promote digital adoption and encourage the productive use of technology by students.

We invite your school and students to complete a project showing how technology can be used to find a solution to day to day problems. In selecting a project for 2021/2022 students are being asked to consider how they could use their skills and technology to reduce waste, help combat climate change, improve energy efficiency, promote digital inclusion, promote online safety and wellbeing.

Online training workshops and other exciting opportunities for students and teachers will be provided as part of the Programme.

**You must submit your completed online application form by 5pm on Friday 26 November 2021**

## The 2020/2021 Programme

The School Digital Champion Programme was launched as part of the National Digital Strategy to promote digital adoption and encourage the productive use of technology by students. During the 2020/2021 programme, teachers and students were provided with online training which included workshops on video editing, web design, coding with microbits and App design, as well as on communications and presentation skills. It also included workshops on Minecraft and an introduction to infographics.

Over the course of March and April numerous Champions and their classmates attended virtual site visits to Google, Twitter, Dogpatch Labs, RTE and Microsoft. The content of the virtual visits included:

- Virtual tours
- Career talks
- Items on digital literacy
- Artificial intelligence

# What are the benefits of taking part in the School Digital Champion Programme?

## Schools

This is a unique opportunity for your students to become involved in an exciting and innovative programme that has the potential to involve learning at many levels.

### The programme will:

- recognise those students who are innovative in the use of new technologies
- maximise the possibilities for students to become involved in their community
- lead learning through the use of new technologies and
- enable your students to make a real difference through the use of technology.

## Students

### Training

The Programme will give students the opportunity to avail of online training which will provide workshops tailored to meet the needs identified in the School Digital Champion Application Form.

### Students will get an opportunity to improve key skills, including:

- critical-thinking
- innovation
- communications
- creativity and
- team-working

### Site visits

The opportunity to visit leading technology companies may be impacted this year due to Covid-19 public health measures and guidance. The Departments are working with these companies with a view to providing online support and career guidance advice to all School Digital Champions where a site visit is not possible. We will update you throughout the programme in this regard as public health measures evolve.

### Prize-winning opportunities

While the programme is not a competition there will be opportunities for the champions to win prizes for their schools throughout the year.

### Showcase projects

The Programme includes an opportunity to showcase all completed projects at a special event in May 2022.

## Teachers

### Training

Teachers will be given the opportunity to participate in the training workshops. In as far as possible course content will be based on the needs identified in your School Digital Champion Application Form. Further details on the training will issue by email to the lead teacher.

## How do schools take part in the programme?

Your school should select a team of up to 4 students to act as leaders or role models in the development of a project which uses technology to make a difference to you:

- School - home
- the local community or
- local business

These 4 students will be known as the School Digital Champions. If your school has a second project proposal, you may select a second team of 4 students.

## What are the project themes?

School Digital Champions, can develop a project from one of the following 3 themes.

### Theme 1: School - Home

Nine out of ten jobs require digital skills. Employers are placing increasing value on skills such as:

- problem-solving
- communications
- critical thinking and
- team-working

It is more important now than ever before that learning becomes something that happens inside and outside of the school.

**How can you, as School Digital Champion, find ways of using digital technology to support learning in school and beyond the walls of the classroom?**

### Theme 2: Local Community

For those who are 'connected', the range of communications, entertainment, information and learning resources available is much greater than for those who remain excluded.

**How can you, as School Digital Champion, support your local community and its citizens to adapt to, and benefit from using digital technology?**

### Theme 3: Local Entrepreneurship

Now more than ever Irish businesses need to embrace e-commerce and engage with customers digitally.

**How can you, as School Digital Champion, help your local small businesses to sell online and connect with their customers?**

In line with the above themes when selecting a project for 2021/2022 students are asked to consider how they could use their skills and technology to reduce waste, help combat climate change, improve energy efficiency, promote digital inclusion, and promote online safety and wellbeing.

## Is this a competition?

No. The focus of the programme is on active participation rather than a competitive endeavour. However, champions will be provided with opportunities to win prizes for their schools. A number of teachers who have previously participated stated that this resulted in a more inclusive programme and provided for all levels of IT skills. They also found that it motivated and inspired students to share knowledge and collaborate with each other. Moreover, it introduced them to career opportunities in the digital arena.

## What is the application process?

Your Principal will have received a letter from Ministers Eamon Ryan and Norma Foley inviting your school to participate in the Programme.

You will find further information about the programme at [www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie](http://www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie). Should you have any queries about the application process please contact the project office at [schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie](mailto:schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie).

---

### Step 1. Your school selects a team of Champions

---

A team can be made up of a maximum of 4 students. It may work well to choose a team with a mix of digital knowledge and technical experience, as well as a range of organisational skills.

The team of School Digital Champions must obtain parental/guardian consent. Parental/Guardian Consent Forms are available to download at [www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie](http://www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie)

---

### Step 2. Agree the project

---

When you have selected your team of Champions, the next step is to collaborate and agree on the digital project to be pursued by your school. Projects must be original and should make a difference within the school, local community or a local business.

---

### Step 3. Complete School Digital Champion Application Form

---

You can complete the School Digital Champion Application Form online at: [www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie](http://www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie)

Please complete this form in full and ensure that it is approved by your School Principal.

**You must submit your online Application Form before 5pm on Friday 26 November 2021**

---

### Step 4. Return the School Digital Champion Parental/Guardian Consent Forms to us

---

The school should email [schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie](mailto:schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie) a copy of the signed Parental/Guardian Consent Form for each of the students selected to be a School Digital Champion on or before 26 November 2021.

We will contact you if further information is required on any aspect of your application.

## When should your project be completed?

Your project must be completed by 7 April 2022.

As part of the project, students must complete a project report describing the project, defining its rationale, aims, process and outcomes. The report should be sent to us by email at [schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie](mailto:schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie) by 7 April 2022.

You can see further guidelines on information to be included in the report at [www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie](http://www.schooldigitalchampion.gov.ie).

**You must complete your project and project report by 7 April 2022**

## What is the timeline?

---

### November 2021

- 26 November – School to submit the completed online School Digital Champion Application Form.
  - 26 November – School to submit a copy of signed parental/guardian consent form for each School Digital Champion to [schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie](mailto:schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie). Students commence work on their projects.
- 

### January 2022

- Skills training workshops, will be provided for teachers and students.
- 

### February/March 2022

- A combination of actual and virtual site visits to partners may be organised for School Digital Champions and their teachers who are actively participating in the programme.
  - Submit a short progress report on your project.
- 

### April 2022

- **7 April** – closing date for completion of all projects. Completed Project Report should be submitted by email to [schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie](mailto:schooldigitalchampion@decc.gov.ie)
- 

### May 2022

- Completed projects will be showcased at a national event.
- School Digital Champions will receive their Certificates of Participation.