Six DASH data activities: use your data to review and enhance digital ways of working

DASH data activities

Here are six activities that allow heritage organisations to focus their attention on a small number of DASH questions and consider whether and how they could improve current practice. Each activity is designed to take about 15-30 minutes. You can:

1. Identify knowledge gaps, such as data protection and copyright

2. Audit the digital skills of your members, trustees, staff and volunteers

3. Spot blockers to effective use of digital ways of working

4. Recognise and lock important specialist digital skills into your organisation

5. Find out what digital skills your people want to develop

6. Evidence improvement (e.g. through time, for funders)

When to use these activities

We suggest that you use the activities during discussions between senior management teams, when creating or discussing your digital plans and future strategy, and/or as a shared activity to engage Trustees or Board members.

You can either crunch some of the numbers before getting people together to discuss them or work together and analyse as you go.

Some analysis will need your Excel file of data, which we will send you after the surveys close on 21st November 2021. Once the national data is published in the New Year, you can also compare your organisation's data against the national results.

| Identify knowledge gaps | Audit digital skills | Spot blockers to effective practice | Recognise specialist skills | Know what skills to develop | Evidence improvement |

Identify knowledge gaps

DASH question numbers	Ask yourselves …	You will need to …
Q28 "Which of the following does your organisation provide you with training about?" Q29 "Which of the following does your organisation make you aware of?" Q30 "How would you rate your organisation's support to develop digital skills?"	Are there any support/training gaps? Do you want to support your people to learn more and close these gaps? Do these affect staff, members, trustees and volunteers equally, or are there some groups of people who are being excluded? If the latter, is it important for e.g. trustees to be aware of certain issues? What training can you put in place? There are free resources available from the DASH website that might help. How do your people rate the level of support you provide? Is it important for you to provide further support, fill gaps etc? If so, how could you go about it?	Start by looking at the visual overview of each question via your summary DASHboard. Consider whether you want to separate the opinions of different types of staff or volunteer – this will need to be done in Excel. If so, sort the data or run a pivot table to separate the data by Q1 ('job level'). Then compare answers to each question. Calculate the average support rating (Q30) separately for different job types (Q1). You can do this in Excel by calculating the mean average for Q30 by each job level, using the =average(*select cells*) function. If relevant: brainstorm ideas for how to improve. Consider who else you need to talk to inside – and outside – the organisation.

Audit digital skills

DASH question numbers	Ask yourselves …	You will need to …
Q19 "Do you have any of these 12 heritage-relevant digital skills?" Q17 "Are you able to carry out these five digital activities?"	Are there any skills gaps? Are there any skills you didn't know people had? Are there important skills gaps in e.g. your Board of Trustees, or permanent staff? Are there any interesting 'other' skills that your people have and that they could share with others? (see Q19 'other' free text in your Excel file) Are the people with important skills permanent employees? If not, how can you make sure your organisation doesn't lose those skills? How many of your people feel able and confident working digitally? Does any of this impact on what you hope to do as an organisation? If no, don't worry! If yes, what are your priorities in order to improve? e.g recruit trustees/staff with specific skills, training, digital volunteer, outsource via subcontractor	Start by looking at the visual overview of each question via your summary DASHboard. Consider whether you want to partition the opinions of different types of staff or volunteer in Excel. If so, sort the data or run a pivot table to separate their answers to each question. If relevant: brainstorm ideas for how to improve. Consider who else you need to talk to inside – and outside – the organisation.

✋ Spot blockers to effective practice

DASH question numbers	Ask yourselves …	You will need to …
Q24 "Do current organisational systems or processes make it difficult for you to use digital in the ways you would like to? If yes, can you give us an example please?" (Free text comments) Q27 "What aspect of your organisation could be improved with new or better digital ways of working?" (Free text comments)	What issues to people raise? Are there common themes? Is it important for your organisation to address them? If so, why are they strategically important? What could you do? Consider filtering by job level (Q1) to see whether there are different themes identified in different groups of people.	To access free text comments, you need to wait until you have your Excel file of all data, which we send you after the surveys close in November. We recommend that the DASH Champion reviews these for any sensitive comments before sharing more widely. You can then go through the comments and consider common themes and issues of importance.

Recognise specialist skills

DASH question numbers	Ask yourselves …	You will need to …
Q31 "What specialist software applications or data systems do you use most in your role?" (Free text comments) Q32 "If you use specialist software, do you find it fit for purpose / reliable / sector standard?"	Are you aware of the diversity of technology and associated digital skills that are in use? Are the systems in use functioning well? Do users consider them to be fit for purpose, reliable, and as good as other organisations are using? Do you know whether these skills are owned by more than one individual? If there is only one person with that knowledge, do you need to lock those skills into the organisation by providing ways to share these skills with others?	You can look at a summary overview of Q32 on your data via the online DASHboard. To access free text comments, you need to wait until you have your Excel file of all data, which we send you after the surveys close in November. We recommend that the DASH Champion reviews these for any sensitive comments before sharing more widely.

Know what skills to develop

DASH question numbers	Ask yourselves …	You will need to …
Q22 "What digital skills, if any, would you most like to develop in your role?" (Free text comments)	Are there any common themes? Are there people inhouse who have these skills and who could share their knowledge? Would it benefit the organisation to run training about specific issues? Consider filtering by job level (Q1) to see whether there are different issues identified in different groups of people.	To access free text comments, you need to wait until you have your Excel file of all data, which we send you after the surveys close in November. We recommend that the DASH Champion reviews these for any sensitive comments before sharing more widely. You can then go through the comments and consider common themes and issues of importance.

Evidence improvement

DASH question numbers	Ask yourselves …	You will need to …
There are five 1-10 rating scales which provide particularly strong data for tracking change through time, because they allow you to calculate an average and compare this between two time points. The rating scales are Q11, Q13, Q16, Q18, and Q30. That said, most of the questions on DASH could be used as an indicator of improvement. Choose those that feel most relevant to your need.	Would it help us to collect quantitative data that allows us to track change through time? For example, at the beginning and end of a funded project? You could use this year's data as your benchmark and repeat questions in the future to identify change. If you're applying for funding, is it relevant to mention that as part of your project you will aim to support the digital skills of staff and volunteers?	Think about which questions can help you with current and future projects. Consider whether providing digital skills support can help your staff and volunteers, and evidence improvement to your board and/or funders.