***How did you find out about the funding?***

We found out about the Third Sector Challenge Fund as we received an email from the Third Sector Interface for Perth and Kinross. We also received information from the Public Contracts Scotland website as we are on their mailing list.

***How did you advertise the course?***

We advertised through our existing networks such as young people and their families who Access our existing services. We also have a email mailing list for partners. We used social media to promote the course such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and TikTok. We also used posters and liaised with secondary schools in Perth.

***Who did you work in partnership with on the course?***

We worked in partnership with the University of the Highlands and Islands – Perth Campus to deliver the digital skills course. Ian (Subject Leader – Computing) and Elaine (Operations Manager – PAS) met to discuss the partnership and arrangements. Lee, one of the computing lecturers, delivered the digital skills content in the University Campus in the classroom and Chris, Nathan and Joss from PAS provided one to one and employability support in the classroom.

***What have been the successes of the project?***

Getting the young people through the course. The majority of the young people were not engaging in education and were able to access an alternative provision. Being able to learn and develop a portfolio which enabled some of the young people to progress onto further and higher education, without the usual need for formal qualifications, was a real success story.

All of the young people are engaged in digital skills. Due to the partnership approach and the learning around supporting autistic students, this allows the university to continue to improve their delivery of the course through an autism friendly lens. Being in a classroom and having support from the Perth Autism Support staff to complete work outwith the classroom was a real success for the young people, as this supported the need for autistic learners to be able to achieve the learning outcomes at a pace that is right for them.

***What have you learned from the project?***

Offering an alternative provision and having a course specifically designed to the needs of the young people really does work. Seeing the young people learn and progress in the university setting and increasing their confidence and skills in digital skills was testament to the partnership working with Perth Autism Support and the University of Highlands and Islands – Perth Campus.

***If you were to do the project again, what would you change?***

To be able to expand the provision and increase the numbers attending the programme so that more neurodiverse young people can access and improve their digital skills.

***What did you learn from the group that stands out?***

One young person did not like speaking and would keep herself to herself in the classroom. Throughout the course, young people would go to her for ideas as she had an interest in digital skills and would know more when the young people asked her a question. It transpired that she would often go and do extra learning at home as she enjoyed the content of the course. She is now a different person!

Another person had an interest and like to push and progress himself when they would play an online game called ‘Geo Guesser’. He was able to guess the locations much to the lecturer and staff’s surprise. He did not cheat when he would guess.