

**TUESDAY 09 JUNE 2021: EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE**

**Sport England launch first free Digital Marketing Hub for the sport and physical activity sector**

* Free hub of learning content – including online courses, webinars and resources - will help people and organisations delivering sport and physical activity to improve their digital skills
* Part of Covid-19 recovery efforts, the hub aims to help organisations bring back lost audiences and engage new ones following research showing [the nation's activity levels have fallen](https://www.sportengland.org/news/impact-coronavirus-activity-levels-revealed)
* Individuals and organisations can register their interest now in order to be first to hear about the platform and webinar series going live at <https://digital.cimspa.co.uk/>

Sport England is launching a Digital Marketing Hub - a free training programme to help people and organisations improve how they apply digital marketing tools and techniques to encourage more people to play sport and be active.

The hub will be delivered by CIMSPA (The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity) and comes as a direct response to findings which highlight a significant digital skills gap within the sector, with research conducted by the Digital Marketing Institute on behalf of Sport England finding that 63% said they don’t have a clear plan to attract new audiences through their digital channels.

Undertaken with over 1,000 people involved in sport and physical activity marketing and communications, this finding comes despite the fact that 81% of respondents said that attracting new participants was very or extremely important.

A further 25% rated their organisation as “not at all effective” at adapting to new trends and insights, while just 10% measured their organisations as “very or extremely effective.” The findings also showed that the majority of respondents rated themselves as underperforming across all core digital marketing channels when asked to compare themselves to their peers.

The new Digital Marketing Hub, which combines online learning via bite-size modules, a live webinar series and peer networking opportunities is part of Sport England’s ongoing work to help the sector recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic while supporting organisations to improve their digital capabilities and skills.

The hub is tailored to small businesses, self-employed professionals and volunteers at frontline organisations and clubs, as well as marketing and communication professionals at larger organisations.

It will specifically explore how people and organisations can use digital marketing to boost participation and re-engage participants, while looking at themes including understanding more about their audience. Other topics the programme will cover include:

* **Reaching new audiences:** helping participants to reach new and more diverse audiences and drive growth for their organisation or club on small budgets.
* **Insight application:** supporting participants to better understand and apply audience and sector insight to inform their digital marketing activities.
* **Measurement:** supporting participants to set goals and KPIs and measure them effectively.
* **Channel** **skills:** increasing understanding of the key digital marketing channels, such as social, search, websites and email, and giving them the practical skills to use them effectively.

Learning content will be provided by a consortium of partners along with bespoke workshops and webinars that will apply the learnings to a sport and physical activity context.

**Sport England’s Director of Digital, Marketing & Communications, Ali Donnelly said:**

““More than ever before we are competing for people’s time and attention with sectors that are far ahead of ours in how they market their services or activities. Done well, digital marketing has a huge role to play in making grassroots sport and physical activity reach and engage more people, ultimately driving up participation numbers.

“As things stand, and as our research bears out, we know that many people and organisations who are working to help people to be active are doing so without the necessary knowledge or confidence when it comes to digital best practice. While we throw all our energy to get people back out there and involved in sport and physical activity, it is important that this skills gap is also addressed so that the sector can emerge in an even stronger place than it was prior to Covid-19.

“A key part of our strategic ambition to tackle inequalities and ensure every single person in the country has the opportunity to be active, the launch of the Digital Marketing Hub will play a major role in upskilling the sector with a view to helping every person in the country see sport and physical activity as both accessible and relevant to them.”

**Tara Dillon, CIMSPA CEO, said:**

“We are very pleased to continue our close collaboration with Sport England to deliver this project, which will directly benefit the workforce and organisations right across the sector. The Digital Marketing Hub is a fantastic opportunity for individuals to gain skills and knowledge from experts from across the marketing sector, as well as those specifically positioned in sport and physical activity.

“Digital marketing has an increasingly important role to play, especially for self-employed and freelance professionals who rely on it to reach and engage their customers. In the last 18 months it has become even more important to develop these skills, with many businesses and individuals needing to rebuild as we emerge from the coronavirus pandemic.

“A key part of the Digital Marketing Hub will be upskilling the sector with a view to reaching a more diverse and inclusive audience, and positioning sport and physical activity as accessible to all.”

Sport England and CIMSPA also recently announced [**ReTrain to Retain**](https://www.cimspa.co.uk/cimspa-news/news-home/retrain-to-retain-25000-sport-and-physical-activity-professionals-set-to-benefit-from-new-job-retention-and-support-package)**,** a new job retention and support package that will benefit 25,000 professionals working in the sport and physical activity sector.

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors**

For further information and interview opportunities please contact: media.team@sportengland.org

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**About Sport England**

Sport England is a public body and invests up to £300 million National Lottery and government money each year in projects and programmes that help people get active and play sport. It wants everyone in England, regardless of age, background, or level of ability, to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. That’s why a lot of its work is specifically focused on helping people who do no, or very little, physical activity and groups who are typically less active - like women, disabled people and people on lower incomes.

**About CIMSPA**

CIMSPA is the professional development body for the UK’s sport and physical activity sector, committed to supporting, developing and enabling professionals and organisations to succeed and, as a result, inspire our nation to become more active.

CIMSPA helps to nurture talent, develop careers, inspire professionalism and set clear regulatory standards for success, continuing the development of a modern, prosperous and respected sport and physical activity sector.

Together we’re developing a vibrant, UK-wide sport and physical activity sector, with the highest standards of service delivery.

<http://www.cimspa.co.uk/>

**About DMI**

Digital Marketing Institute is the global authority in Digital Marketing training and certification, and the worlds largest community for Digital Marketing professionals. DMI supports individuals, universities and companies in more than 130 countries. [www.digitalmarketinginstitute.com](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/-csmCDkRZC5OzRZIZYUfm?domain=digitalmarketinginstitute.com)