

Media and Information Literacy Community of Practice for Scotland (MILCoP) Minutes of open meeting, on Zoom, on Thursday 24 October 2024 at 2pm

Video of the meeting:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qwhlYYVfvDsP OriLFQ6F1UmDjl5A_FV9/view?usp=sharing

Rather than a formal minute, this document précisés the presentations. Please see the relevant sections of the video and the presenters' slides for full details.

1 Welcome, apologies and introductions

This was an open meeting, so attendance and apologies were not recorded.

2 An overview of the community of practice – Sean McNamara

See video (2:15 to 16:30) for full detail.

- Sean is [director of CILIPS](#), and has chaired MILCoP for ~2 years. MILCoP's recently appointed secretary is [Dr Bruce Ryan](#). At the time of this meeting, there were ~35 members. (Since then it has grown to ~50 members.)
 - People can join MILCoP by emailing milcop.admin@milcop.org or using the website [contact form](#).
- 'information literacy' (IL) was first coined in 1974, and has been defined in various ways. CILIP's new [definition of IL](#) was released in 2018.
- MILCoP meets biennially. It stems from the [Scottish Information Literacy Project](#) (2004 to 2010).
- At the time of the meeting, it was the start of the [UNESCO global media and information literacy week](#).
- IL clearly links to (tackling) mis- and dis-information, and fact-checking.
- Partner organisations include the [Media and Information Literacy Alliance](#) (MILA), the [CILIPS Information Literacy Group](#) (ILG) and national organisations such as [Education Scotland](#), the [Scottish Qualifications Authority](#), the NHS, [Young Scot](#), [Ofcom](#), universities.
- There are related literacies, e.g. political, ethical, digital, algorithmic, health.
- MILCoP aims to bring these threads together in Scotland, share ideas and work, and look for partnership activities.
 - Hence next steps include broadening the community, working closely with MILA, ILG etc, focusing on key policy areas, developing its website as a home for news and resources, supporting curriculum development and advocating IL skills to the Scottish Government.

3 A preview of the new website for the community – Sean McNamara

See video (16:30 to 24:05) for full detail.

- The new website is at <https://milcop.org>.
- It has been redesigned from scratch by an Edinburgh Napier University web design student, Adrian Leontescu.
- It contains new featured articles, an 'about' page, definitions of information literacy and media literacy, news, archives and resources from the former website at <http://www.therightinformation.org/> and a [contact form](#).
- Members will be very welcome to upload resources they create, or add new posts.

4 'Fear of the Known: Conspiracy Theories' webinar preview – Leah Higgins

See video (24:25 to 29:40) for full detail.

- This 'myth-busting' event was on Thursday 31 October. Librarians are the third most trusted profession in the UK, so are very well placed to tackle conspiracy theories – they can be encountered every day. The event covered self-protection and how to tackle conspiracy theories, among other topics.
- Members are very welcome to share these resources: [video of the event](#), [slides](#).

5 ILG work – Andrew (Drew) Feeney

See video (30:00 to 38:20) for full detail.

- Drew is a public librarian and museums engagement manager, [a PhD researcher at Edinburgh Napier University](#) and public libraries representative on [ILG](#).
- ILG members also include school librarians, health librarians, academic librarians, MIL advocates and others.
- Recent activities include webinars and training opportunities around IL. These include [information literacy and public libraries](#), events for level 3 apprentices and much more.
- This week, members took part in a parliamentary reception ('libraries change lives by creating opportunities') in Westminster, to advocate for the IL benefits libraries can bring.
- One of ILG's key activities is the annual [LILAC conference](#). The 2025 conference is in Cardiff (14-16 April). Wider representation across the IL sector, e.g. from public, health and law librarians is very much sought, to broaden out the conference and build a wider community of practice. Potential contributors should go to the [call for presentations](#).
- ILG has been asked to present to the [Scottish Libraries and Information Council's](#) (SLIC) public library strategy implementation meeting in early December on how public libraries are developing IL by combatting mis- and dis-information. Hence members are invited to send specific examples to Drew and ILG.

6 Ofcom's work on media literacy – Fay Lant

See video (39:48 to 49:17) and [slides](#) for full detail.

- Fay is a member of Ofcom's '[making sense of media](#)' team.
- ML is the ability to **use**, **understand** and **create** media and communications across multiple formats and services. This includes the abilities to:
 - critically evaluate online information
 - purposefully access important content and services
 - responsibly share, create and participate in life online. (This is because people are not only consumers of information.)
- Ofcom has recently published its [3-year ML strategy](#), which has three components:
 - research, evidence and evaluation (This has been going on for ~20 years.)
 - engaging platforms
 - people and partnerships. (This includes evaluating what works.)
- Ofcom's evaluation toolkit is on Fay's 3rd slide and [available online](#).
- Ofcom's work in Scotland includes work with people and communities experiencing financial disadvantage, with older adults, with people with mental health challenges, and with children and young people aged 10 to 14. For example, Ofcom is working:
 - with [Red Chair Highland](#) on digital inclusion for older adults to help them solve their digital needs.
 - in Glasgow (one of four areas across the UK nations) with [GlasgowLife](#) and [Mhor Collective](#) to deliver Ofcom's action plan.
- Ofcom has also published its [What works in delivering media literacy activities report](#) and [Evaluation toolkit](#).

7 Generative AI and schools – Konstantina (Dina) Martzoukou

See video (50:53 to 1:11:20) and [slides](#) for full detail.

- The project is called *Generative Artificial Intelligence Skills in Schools* (GenAISiS). It is a collaboration between Robert Gordon University and CILIPS. It started in September '24.
- The researchers are [Dina](#) and Dr Pascal Ezenkwu. They aim to have critical conversations with pupils, to co-create educational resources, and investigate the problems and opportunities that generative AI can bring. This can contribute to responsible citizenship.
- The project will also participate with school librarians. It links back to the [BRIDGE project](#).
- This project is linked with others by Dina and colleagues, e.g. *AI in secondary schools, Misinformation/disinformation and generative AI: building young refugees' skills and capacities*, [Maddie is online](#).
- The key partnerships for this project are with CILIPS, school librarians and pupils.
- The project's objectives are:

1. To empirically explore young people's use and perceptions of GenAI tools, working in partnership with students from secondary schools in Scotland. Based on that data and with students' direct creative input, to co-produce an animated video cartoon story on GenAI.

This work will link to sustainable development goals, and will use GenAI prompts to help pupils think about how their cartoon characters should behave and 'think'. The key point here is pupils' own critical reflection.

2. To design and produce with university library science students (as emerging school library professionals) an open educational toolkit on GenAI, aimed at educators teaching in the first year of secondary school. The educational toolkit will complement the cartoon stories with lesson plans, learning activities and curated external resources
3. To run three GenAI openly available online training workshops, for teachers, school librarians and parents, using the co-created resources of objectives 1 and 2 to increase awareness of risks and help capitalise the positive uses of GenAI in education.

- The project has a strong focus on equity and inclusion.

One of the attendees asked 'how can we as librarians agree with the use of generative AI which is inherently unethical both in the way it works (not transparent, biased, hallucinating) but also in the way in which it is produced (unethical – virtually sweat shop workers being paid very little for their work, huge environmental impact, some AI companies are even buying up nuclear plants, using huge amounts of water for cooling)?'

- Sean's response was basically that GenAI is here, so we need to deal with it by supporting users, and have the power to influence GenAI.
- Dina responded that we need to increase understanding of GenAI, and that unethical problems are rooted in society. That is, biases are already present, and other digital tools are also have ethical issues, e.g. around use of personal data. Hence we need to be in such discussions and aware of the actual issues.

8 **Digi_Know – Young Scot and the Information literacy of young people – Reid Aiton**

We are unable to share the video of Reid's presentation but the slides are available [here](#).

- [Young Scot](#) (YS) is arguably best known for its national entitlement card, but it is the national youth information service for Scotland, so the website is the national youth information website. YS's website covers topics such as relationships, health, careers, LGBTQ+ matters, digital skills – and many more including digital literacy and cybersecurity.
- YS works to create connections with young people in the online spaces they spend time in. These spaces include X and TikTok, even though they may have undesirable characteristics, because young people are there – and hence tackle these undesirable factors. However, YS approaches all of this via a data protection lens.
- YS reaches ~800,000 young people aged 11 to 26. On social media, it has a reach of ~28m, so there are many repeat visitors to its website and social media. To achieve this, YS has to use paid marketing.
 - YS recognises the calls for young people not to be on social media but they are, so YS is there to do positive things.
- YS is proud to be one of the first [European Youth Information Quality Label](#) holders. Its information quality assurance staff and processes are one reason for this.
- YS has a [creator collective](#) (launched ~18 months ago) of young people that makes informative, inspiring content to help it connect with others, because young people tend to value information that comes from their (slightly older) peers.
- Most relevant to this meeting is YS' **[Digi Know?](#) campaign** on digital literacy and cybersecurity, aiming to give young people relevant skills to make informed decisions on, for example, online privacy, cyberbullying, management of digital footprints, safeguarding personal information, avoiding scams, using social media wisely and fostering positive online behaviours.
- *Digi Know?* has many articles on the YS website. YS works hard to ensure these reach the social spaces where young people are. There are also podcasts on relevant topics. Several podcasts are embedded into Reid's presentation, helping to present positive role models.
- Because there is digital poverty, YS has relaunched its printed magazine. This is sent to every primary 6 class. The first edition focussed on cybersecurity and information literacy.
- YS has worked on [tackling] scams, fake news and echo chambers – see some of the phone-shaped videos in the slides.
- YS is very happy to [contribute to the global media and information literacy week](#).