The challenges involved in developing digital learning content can sometimes be a barrier to the successful application of learning technology and blended Learning. Therefore the National Digital Learning Resources (NDLR) service has been established as an Irish sectoral initiative (supported by HEA) to make high quality digital material in Irish colleges freely available for educators, students and self-learners to use and reuse for teaching, learning and research.

A key impact of the online NDLR service is to support greater collaboration in developing and sharing of digital teaching resources and associated teaching experience across all subject disciplines and communities of academics and to promote good practice use and re-use of existing resources.

By being empowered by the support of communities of academics, staff from different disciplines can share effort and expertise as they raise the bar collectively for how they support their students learning, embed research in their teaching and potentially embracing partnerships with research and industry, both in Ireland and Internationally.

The NDLR mission is "to promote and support Higher Education sector staff in the collaboration, development and sharing of learning resources and associated teaching practices".

The aims and objectives of the NDLR service:

- To support individual, group and community HE sector staff in the collaboration and sharing of digital learning resources and associated teaching practices across all subject disciplines in all Irish HE Institutions
- Provide a repository platform for storage, search and retrieval facilities for shared resources
- Provide a Community Portal to showcase and support communication and collaboration across subject areas and institutions
- Support coordination of collaboration within and across different subject communities through the SMARTCoPs and partner institutions
- Promote usage and sharing of digital resources and associated teaching expertise through national programme of training and events
- Support open access digital rights management of teaching resources

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3 stage evolutionary pathway for supporting NDLR users

Individual Academics – Level 1
Local Innovation Projects (LIPs)
The NDLR, through the local institutional representative, provides support and encourages the development and sharing of reusable teaching and learning resources to members of academia through the coordination of a number of local initiatives and local supports.

Groupings of Academics – Level 2
Learning Innovation Community Support Projects (LINC)
The NDLR, through the services provided by the NDLR core support team, supports cross-institutional linking between academics and projects with shared interests through the following activities.

SMART Communities of Practice - Level 3
Sustainable, Manageable, Active, Relevant and Reflective, Targeted (SMART CoPs)
SMART CoPs are cross-institutional subject discipline related communities associated with locally funded institutional learning innovation projects (LIPs) and cross-institutional collaborative projects funded (LINC). They are nurtured and sustained from support given to individual academics and groupings at both local and national levels. SMART CoPs are focused on targeted funded RLO development through projects, and evolve from successful collaborations through LINC projects.

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