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A Citizens' Curriculum

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Scotland's Learning Partnership

Forum for Adult Learning

NI

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The challenge

- **OECD Survey of Adult Skills** shows young people (16-24) in England / NI perform below the EU average and worse than the overall population in literacy and numeracy.
- Other issues in basic skills for young adults ...
 - **Disadvantaged groups** e.g. care leavers, migrants
 - GCSE re-sits / condition of funding – **motivation?**
 - Functional Skills reform
- **Digital skills** – exclusion / basic digital skills / digital skills gap / digital skills for learning

So, Learning and Work Institute's response

More flexible, creative and innovative models are needed to engage and motivate learners and meet the challenge of poor basic language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills in the context of rapid changes in society and work.

“A citizens’ curriculum is learning which is locally-led, developed with the active participation of learners, and interlinks the life skills of language, literacy and numeracy with health, financial, digital and civic capabilities.”

Tom Schuller • David Watson

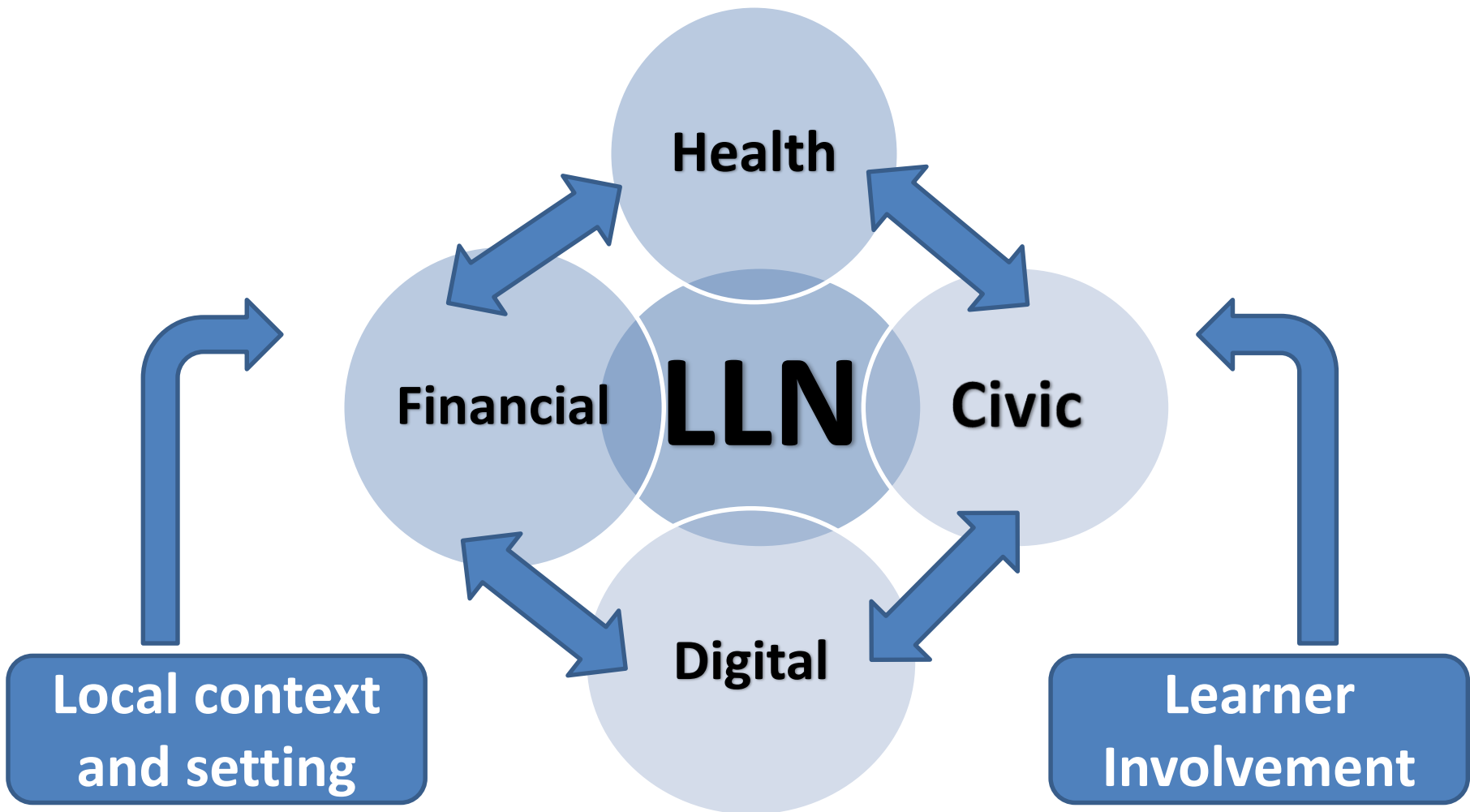
Learning Through Life

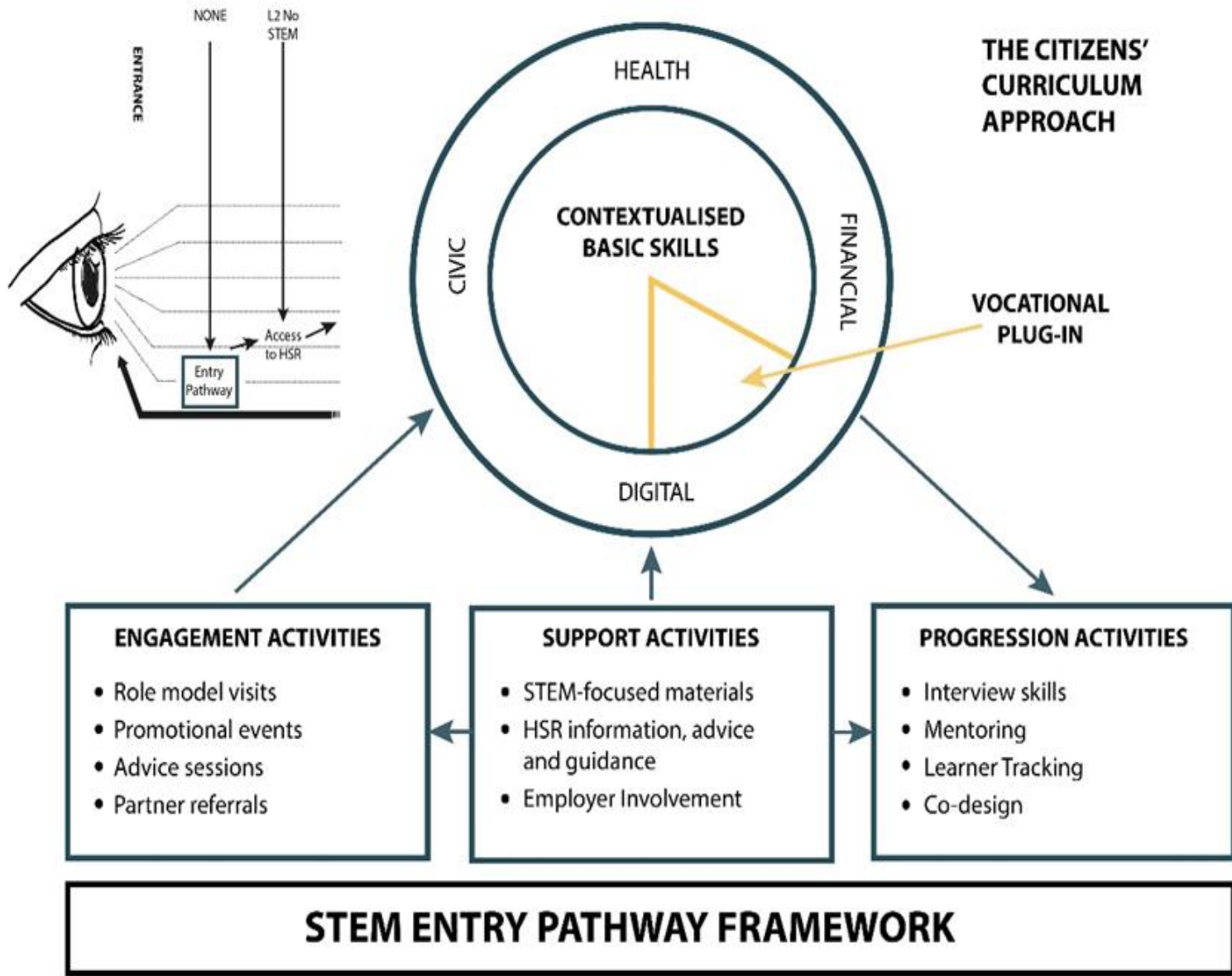
Inquiry into the Future for
Lifelong Learning

Summary



- Schuller and Watson (NIACE, 2009)
- NIACE / NRDC Evidence on impact on achievement of embedded basic skills – Eldred (2005); Casey (2006)
- Co-design of the curriculum – e.g. *A New Curriculum for Difficult Times* (Beer, 2013)





Developing the Citizens' Curriculum

- Our **pilots** are helping us to learn more about how a Citizens' Curriculum approach can work in **different contexts** incl. funding streams and formal / non-formal learning
- In 14/15 - **13 providers (ACL, FE, VCSE / ITP)** targeting disadvantaged groups – over **160 learners**.
- In 15/16 – **13 providers (incl. 5 returners)** with a focus on language, literacy and numeracy provision – **152 learners**.
- 16/17 – currently working with employers, housing associations and prisons.
- Supported with a '**health check**', **resources** and **community of practice**.

Positive Indications

- **Providers** – improved planning and ways of working through **a simple yet powerful framework**
- **Practitioners** - improved capabilities in adopting **learner-led approaches** and **making learning relevant**, plus greater **professional autonomy**
- **Learners** – a range of **personal and social benefits**, enhanced **employability skills** and improved **attitudes to learning**.

Discussion

1. In what ways could you – or do you already – **adopt a Citizens' Curriculum approach** in your context?
2. What would be the **benefits** and the **challenges** of adopting a Citizens' Curriculum approach? What would help to overcome the challenges?

**THANK YOU
QUESTIONS**