# **Focus Group Feedback Template**

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for agreeing to facilitate and /or participate in this focus group session. All feedback received through the process will be making a valuable contribution to the development of the Government’s 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy (ALND) Strategy.

The ALND team at SOLAS appreciate that the rich participant feedback, brought to light through the focus group process, may take on a less structured format than qualitative input gathered via the semi-structured questionnaire/interview method. Equally, we acknowledge that organisations may choose to adopt one or several of the diverse focus group methodologies available (for example, single, mini, two-way, dual-moderator, respondent-moderator or indeed remote focus group arrangement).

The moderator may therefore wish to refer to the following 5 core themes, explored in greater depth within the consultation paper, in order to guide the discussion:

* Theme 1 Different meanings of literacy, numeracy and digital literacy for adults.
* Theme 2 Improving awareness of and access to literacy, numeracy and digital literacy support for adults.
* Theme 3 Bridging the digital divide.
* Theme 4 Priorities and actions.
* Theme 5 Measuring success.

**Theme 1 Different meanings of literacy, numeracy and digital literacy for adults**

The words “literacy, numeracy and digital literacy for adults” can have many different meanings and encompass different aspects of living, working and learning. To ensure the strategy takes the best approach, we would like to know what these terms mean to you and how the ALND Strategy should reflect these.

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| **Synopsis of Focus Group Comments on Theme 1** (maximum 250 words) |

**Theme 2 Improving awareness of and access to literacy, numeracy and digital literacy support for adults**

Research shows it can be daunting for a person to decide to take that first step to seek assistance with reading, writing, maths or technology. In some cases, this can be due to perceived stigma, or embarrassment, about seeking information about help and support.

How can it be made easier for adults to take that first step to seek information and assistance?

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| **Synopsis of Focus Group Comments on Theme 2** (maximum 250 words) |

**Theme 3 Bridging the digital divide**

Increasing the levels of literacy and numeracy, along with essential digital literacy, and creating a more digitally inclusive society, is crucial to achieving a more equal Ireland.

With nearly half of the Irish population scoring at or below the most basic level of Digital Literacy, (PIAAC, 2012) what steps do you think should be taken to promote digital inclusion and help bridge the digital divide?

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| **Synopsis of Focus Group Comments on Theme 3** (maximum 250 words) |

**Theme 4 Priorities and actions**

The ALND Strategy needs to set out the priorities for Ireland over the next 10 years and the actions we need to take to achieve these. We need to ensure that we take a comprehensive approach that will result in practical solutions to meet the needs and challenges that the country faces.

What solutions would you suggest?

What priorities should the new ALND Strategy should focus on?

What actions do you think should be taken during the lifetime of the strategy?

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| **Synopsis of Focus Group Comments on Theme 4** (maximum 250 words) |

**Theme 5 Measuring success**

To know if we have achieved on the priorities and goals of the strategy, it will be critical that we define success criteria and ways to measure these.

In what ways do you think we should measure and track our progress towards the aims of the Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy?

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| **Synopsis of Focus Group Comments on Theme 5** (maximum 250 words) |

## **Focus Group Checklist**

The topics explored below may prove useful to those involved in establishing the house keeping around the focus group sessions:

***Participant Consent:*** Facilitators should obtain consent from participants participate in the focus group discussion. As sessions are likely to take place online, a digital informed consent should be sought, and participants provided with their own copy and a second copy kept by the focus group facilitator. Participants should be informed if any audiotaping will be used for data collection.

***Demographic data:*** Any collection of focus group participants’ demographic data should be done anonymously. This might be carried out via a simple online questionnaire for this purpose.

***Discussion guides:*** A discussion guide, such as the template provided above, may facilitate structuring the focus group discussion by highlighting the topics that need to be covered. This is not to be used rigidly rather the facilitator encourages participants to explore topics in depth, to reflect and to raise their own issues.

***Data collection:*** The discussions can be audio-recorded if agreed by participants, and transcribed verbatim for analysis. Any such recordings need to be securely stored until transcribed and then destroyed. The transcription shall not contain information that would allow individuals to be linked to specific statements. Confidentiality should be strictly preserved, except where disclosure is mandated by a court of law.

***Time and Place for Focus Group:*** The face to face focus group format can last up to two hours, however, as sessions are currently likely to be happening online, it is important to be cognisant of participant comfort around screen time and comfort / refreshment breaks. It could be helpful to provide participants with clear details of where and when the focus group will take place and how long it will last

***Ground rules*:** Encourage only one person to speak at a time. Emphasise that there are no right or wrong answers and participants do not have to speak in any particular order. Check in with participants at the beginning to ensure there are no burning questions

Thank you for your assistance with this consultation and your participants for their valuable contributions. Your feedback will assist with the development of a 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy. Thank you for your time.

***The Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Team***

***SOLAS***