



***David Cameron Supports Digital Champion's Ambition -***

***Make UK First Nation Where Everyone Can Use the Web***

- **10 million Britons – the combined population of our five largest cities –have never used the internet**
- **Manifesto calls for urgent action to get millions more online by the end of 2012 with key roles for government, industry and charities**
- **Ambition to get everyone of working age online by the end of this Parliament, so that everyone who then retires will have skills to enjoy benefits of the web**

The UK's Digital Champion, Martha Lane Fox, today launches her manifesto for a 'Networked Nation' at Number 10 Downing Street. The manifesto, a bold statement for fairness and social justice, sets out plans to inspire, encourage and support everyone in the UK to enjoy the benefits of the web.

**The Prime Minister** said: "I'm delighted to have Martha Lane Fox on board to help drive forward this important agenda. In the internet age, we need to ensure that people aren't being left behind as more and more services and business move online. But this issue isn't just about fairness - as Martha's work shows, promoting digital inclusion is essential for a dynamic modern economy and can help to make government more efficient and effective."

**The UK Digital Champion, Martha Lane Fox**, said: "Networked Nation is a rallying cry for the 40 million internet users in the UK to help 10 million people who have yet to enjoy the huge benefits of the web that the vast majority of us enjoy every day. By getting more people online, everyone wins. Businesses are competing for more online customers. Government needs to deliver better for less. Charities want to support the people they serve better. So we are calling on them to work together and tackle the unfairness and lost opportunities caused by digital exclusion, and deliver positive social change."

The manifesto shows that one fifth of the population in the UK, 10 million people, are missing out on consumer savings, access to vital information and educational success. As industry, the media and increasingly government, expand ever faster into digital-only services, the manifesto identifies the need for urgent action to stop some sections of society being left offline and excluded from many aspects of everyday life in the UK.

**Iain Duncan Smith, Secretary of State, Department of Work & Pensions** said: "Digital literacy is a great enabler of social mobility. It is a way for those who have had bad experiences of institutions to re-engage in learning, and it can break down feelings of social isolation. It is a powerful weapon in the fight against poverty."

## **Delivering benefits of the web for everyone:**

The Networked Nation Manifesto sets out detailed plans for government, industry and charities to help everyone get online, including four million of the most disadvantaged; the unemployed, over 65s and adults in families with children reap the benefit of being web enabled. Research detailed in the manifesto identifies important social benefits for these groups:

- The web empowers the unemployed: more than 90% of all new jobs require basic internet skills, and 7m job adverts were posted online last year but 900,000 workless people do not currently use the internet.
- The web can prevent the social isolation of older people: half of internet users say the web increases contact with friends & family who live far away, but 3.1 million people in the UK over the age of 65 see a friend, neighbour or family member less than once a week and 1.8 million have contact less than once a month.
- The web improves educational performance: children who are online at home can achieve a two-grade improvement in a subject at GCSE.

People and organisations in every sector and in every corner of our country are being urged to work together to inspire, encourage and support millions of new people to get online by the end of the Olympic year, by:

### ***Inspiring change:***

- Government should “think internet first” in designing services and provide support for those who need help using its online services.
- Industry partners should develop specific strategies to communicate the positive benefits of the internet to the 10 million potential new online customers.
- Charitable funders should review their funding guidance to ensure that it supports capital investment in IT infrastructure by small charities so that they can inspire the vulnerable groups that they serve to get online.

### ***Encouraging a web nation:***

- DWP is already working towards an expectation that people of working age should apply for benefits online and have the skills to look for, and apply for, work online so that everyone who then retires will have skills to enjoy benefits of the web.
- Industry should take the lead in developing a national equipment recycling programme so that the best lifetime use is made of the 12 million devices shipped into the UK every year.
- We will tap into the incredible work that local charities do so that they can help us get to some of the people who would otherwise be too difficult to reach.

### ***Support locally to get people connected:***

- Organisations in every sector should encourage their employees to be local digital champions to identify people needing help, find and map support available locally from organisations in all sectors, and signpost people to it.
- Central and local government should ensure that there are local digital champions in all local authorities, all 750 jobcentre plus offices and all public libraries by the end of the year. For example Museums Libraries and Archives (MLA) has committed to getting half a million more people online.
- Device and connectivity retailers should provide tailored internet access packages for people on low incomes and the elderly, with low up-front costs, affordable monthly payments, and ongoing support
- Charities should expect reasonable access to publicly funded facilities with ICT equipment in any area where web access and or training facilities are inadequate.

**- Ends -**

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**Notes to editors:****FULL COPIES OF NETWORKED NATION ARE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT:**

[WWW.RACEONLINE2012.ORG/MANIFESTO](http://WWW.RACEONLINE2012.ORG/MANIFESTO)

The UK's Digital Champion is asking organisations of any size to get involved to ensure everyone can use the web. It's simple to sign up and only takes a few minutes to register and make a digital promise at [www.raceonline2012.org](http://www.raceonline2012.org)

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**About Race Online 2012**

- On June 18th 2010 Martha Lane Fox was appointed by The Prime Minister as the UK Digital Champion with a remit to encourage as many people as possible to go online, and improving the convenience and efficiency of public services by driving online delivery.  
<http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/latest-news/2010/06/martha-lane-fox-appointed-uk-digital-champion-52086>
- Digital Inclusion Limited is government funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government (through the Community Development Foundation) but is an independent organisation
- Martha Lane Fox co-founded lastminute.com, Europe's largest travel and leisure website, in 1998. She then went on to co-found and chair the private karaoke chain Lucky Voice. In 2007, she launched Antigone, a grant-giving foundation that supports education, health and criminal justice charities to reflect her commitment to social justice. She is non-executive director at Marks & Spencer plc, Channel 4 Television and Mydeco
- UK online centres provide millions of people with access to technology and support in using it. They offer free or low cost access to the internet and email, deliver online courses and encourage people to progress onto further learning. For more information, please visit [www.ukonlinecentres.com](http://www.ukonlinecentres.com)
- For a full copy of the PwC report please visit <http://www.raceonline2012.org>