



The Church of England's Digital Communications team has announced the five judges for the first Digital Labs today.

The Digital Labs project is being launched to bring together 50 Christians from across the country with experience in app development, web building and social media to pool knowledge and ideas. The apps, websites and social media campaigns that will be developed aim to help people grow in faith and support the work of local churches.

The day-long event will end with participants presenting their solutions to the panel, who have been chosen for their knowledge of digital, creativity and understanding of the breadth and depth of the Church of England.

The panel will then choose two projects to be built and tested with dioceses. They will be funded by the Church of England.

Led by the Church of England's Head of Digital Communications, Adrian Harris, the panel includes James Poulter from The LEGO Group, Lynda Davies, Senior Digital Producer for BBC Radio, artist and theologian Siku, and the Very Revd Catherine Ogle, Dean of Winchester Cathedral.

Speaking about the judging panel and event, Adrian Harris said: "We're delighted with the combined knowledge and experience our judging panel brings to Church of England Digital Labs. I'm really excited to hear the creative ideas on the day that will help us develop our digital evangelism and discipleship offering.

"We're very grateful to the 50 Christian techies and creatives who have are giving up their times to be part of this and to help more people know the love of Jesus Christ in their lives.

"This project is part of our Renewal and Reform programme, which seeks to ensure the Church of England is a growing Church for all people and all places. The app, website or social media campaigns that are developed following Digital Labs will help further this work."

### **James Poulter**

After a career spanning a decade in a variety of social media agencies and content shops, James is now a Senior Manager in the Global Social Media Team at The LEGO Group based in London where he leads Social feature development and marketing for LEGO's new kids social network, LEGO Life alongside developing strategic social media innovations.

James regularly speaks on the subject of technology, culture and faith and is the presenter of Signal, a podcast from TheMediaNet which looks at the intersect of journalism, media and faith.

### **Lynda Davies**

Lynda Davies is a Senior Digital Producer for BBC Radio, mainly looking after Radio 1 and 1Xtra. After working in television production for programmes including Strictly Come Dancing, she moved into digital 10 years ago and has lots of experience in initiating, producing and

delivering major projects spanning video, web, print, mobile and social for BBC flagship brands including Blue Peter, the Natural History Unit, CBeebies and Glastonbury. She's also a trustee of The Media Net, an organisation which aims to support Christians working in the media. She's married to Matthew, a trainee vicar, and lives in Cambridge.

## **Siku**

Siku is an artist, author, theologian and musician. He has worked for Marvel UK and COM X. He is one of Britain's leading comic book creators having worked for 2000AD; producing hundreds of titles such as *Judge Dredd*, *Slaine* and a strip he co-created called *Pan-African Judges*. He is the author and creator of the best-selling *The Manga Bible* which is translated into 19 languages and the author of *The Manga Jesus (2007 and 2010)*. Siku is also a broadcaster and Jerusalem Award nominee for BBC Radio, scripting and leading Radio 2 and Radio 4 Worship Services. He is currently listed as one of London's most noted black people in *Black Londoners - A History*. Siku is married to Bell.

## **The Very Revd Catherine Ogle**

The Very Revd Catherine Ogle, who is Winchester's first female Dean, is the former Dean of Birmingham Cathedral, a position which she held for six years. Dean Catherine was ordained at 27 as one of the UK's first female priests. She then served as a parish priest in West Yorkshire communities for 17 years, nine of those as Vicar of Huddersfield. During this time, she was seconded to BBC Radio Leeds where she worked as the Religious Affairs Editor

## **Adrian Harris**

Adrian Harris joined the digital team in 2016 and has previously worked as Head of Digital Communications for Bupa and Group Head of Digital Communications for Tesco PLC. Prior to Tesco Adrian worked as Head of Digital and Web Editor for the Conservative party.

Church of England Digital Labs will take place in central London on 24 February 2018, with further events planned in future years. We will make materials from the day available through our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

[Read this blog to find out more about the launch of digital labs in 2017.](#)

*Digital Labs is part of the Church of England's Renewal and Reform programme, aimed at helping us become a growing Church for all people and for all places.*