

Application booklet



The NHS Digital Academy

→ Nurturing the next generation of digital leaders in the NHS

The NHS Digital Academy aims to develop a new generation of digital leaders who can drive the information and technology transformation on the NHS. It develops strong digital leaders who are capable of delivering change so that patient care, and the way that organisations operate, can benefit from the many improvements and innovations modern technology has to offer.

The Digital Academy provides the first national learning programme in change management, leadership and clinical informatics, resulting in a [Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Health Leadership](#) awarded by Imperial College London. It is aimed at Chief Clinical Information Officers, Chief Information Officers and aspiring digital leaders from clinical and non-clinical backgrounds within the NHS and social care.

Part of a suite of work governed by the National Information Board, the Digital Academy supports the Five Year Forward View [Next Steps](#) strategy by providing staff with the skills they need to use information and technology to reduce pressure on services and improve care quality.

→ An investment in digital health leadership

The NHS Digital Academy was set up as a direct response to the findings of Professor Robert Wachter's review into how the English health and care system should best approach the implementation of information technology. The report, [Making IT Work](#), observed that there was "a lack of professionals — namely CCIOs and CIOs — that can drive forward the transformation agenda enabled by informatics and technology."

→ NHS experience meets academic rigour

Sponsored by NHS England and NHS Scotland, The NHS Digital Academy combines practical NHS expertise with academic rigour to deliver a unique and ambitious learning experience. The programme is designed and delivered by Imperial College London's Institute of Global Health Innovation and the University of Edinburgh, with international strategic input from Harvard Medical School. Our consortium unites NHS experts with world-class clinicians, researchers and digital specialists with unrivalled expertise in blended learning, health informatics and data science, leadership development and healthcare transformation.



Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Health Leadership

→ A programme for aspirational digital health leaders

The year-long programme of the NHS Digital Academy results in the attainment of a Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Health Leadership, awarded by Imperial College London.

The programme employs a blended learning approach, including online and in-person residential learning. The online component of the programme will be highly engaging for participants, both supporting individual learning and creating a vibrant community of digital leaders. Residential learning will occur across various sites across England for a total of 10 days (please see dates on page 12 and note attendance is mandatory) and offers the opportunity for participants to share best practice and form supportive relationships with peers.

The programme also supports participants to immediately apply what they learn by carrying out a transformational change project within their organisation in parallel with taught modules.

→ Core learning modules

The NHS Digital Academy programme encompasses 6 modules:

1. Essentials of health systems
2. Implementing strategy and transformational change
3. Health information systems and technologies
4. User-centred design and citizen-driven informatics
5. Decision support, knowledge management and actionable data analytics
6. Leadership and transformational change

→ Programme leadership team



Professor Ara Darzi
Co-Director



Professor Aziz Sheikh
Co-Director



Rachel Dunscombe
CEO

MODULE 1

Essentials of health systems

module dates:
23 Apr - 10 Jun 2020

MODULE 2

Implementing strategy and transformational change

module dates:
18 Jun - 26 Aug 2020

MODULE 3

Health information systems and technologies

module dates:
27 Aug - 4 Nov 2020

MODULE 4

User-centred design and citizen-driven informatics

module dates:
12 Nov 2020 - 03 Feb 2021

MODULE 5

Decision support, knowledge management and actionable analytics

module dates:
10 Feb - 20 Apr 2021

MODULE 6

Leadership and transformational change

Module 6 is delivered via the four Residentials and underpins the learning of Modules 1 - 5.

break:
24 Dec 2020 - 6 Jan 2021

residential 1:
01 Apr - 03 Apr 2020

residential 2:
17 Jun - 19 Jun 2020

residential 3:
4 Nov - 6 Nov 2020

residential 4:
4 - 5 Feb 2021

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Essentials of health systems

→ Module overview

This module aims to equip participants with essential knowledge for understanding health systems. It provides a foundation of knowledge for the modules that follow. To achieve this, content is delivered in two parts: part one introduces the essential stakeholders and structures in health systems, and part two introduces key principles for evaluating the impact of process, policy or product changes within a system. Key topics in part one include: 1) the role of information in health systems; 2) the evidence-based rationale for investing in health; and 3) an introduction to recent, influential policy reform. In part two, essential principles for understanding health systems' complexity are introduced. Process mapping is a core discipline introduced here and, by the end of the module, participants will appreciate its importance to quality improvement and system re-design. Content is delivered through short videos from leading academics, which are supplemented with core readings to guide participants through the module.

→ Module lead



Alexander
Carter



Implementing strategy and transformational change

→ Module overview

Participants should finish Module 2 with the tools and techniques to implement transformational change in health and social care.

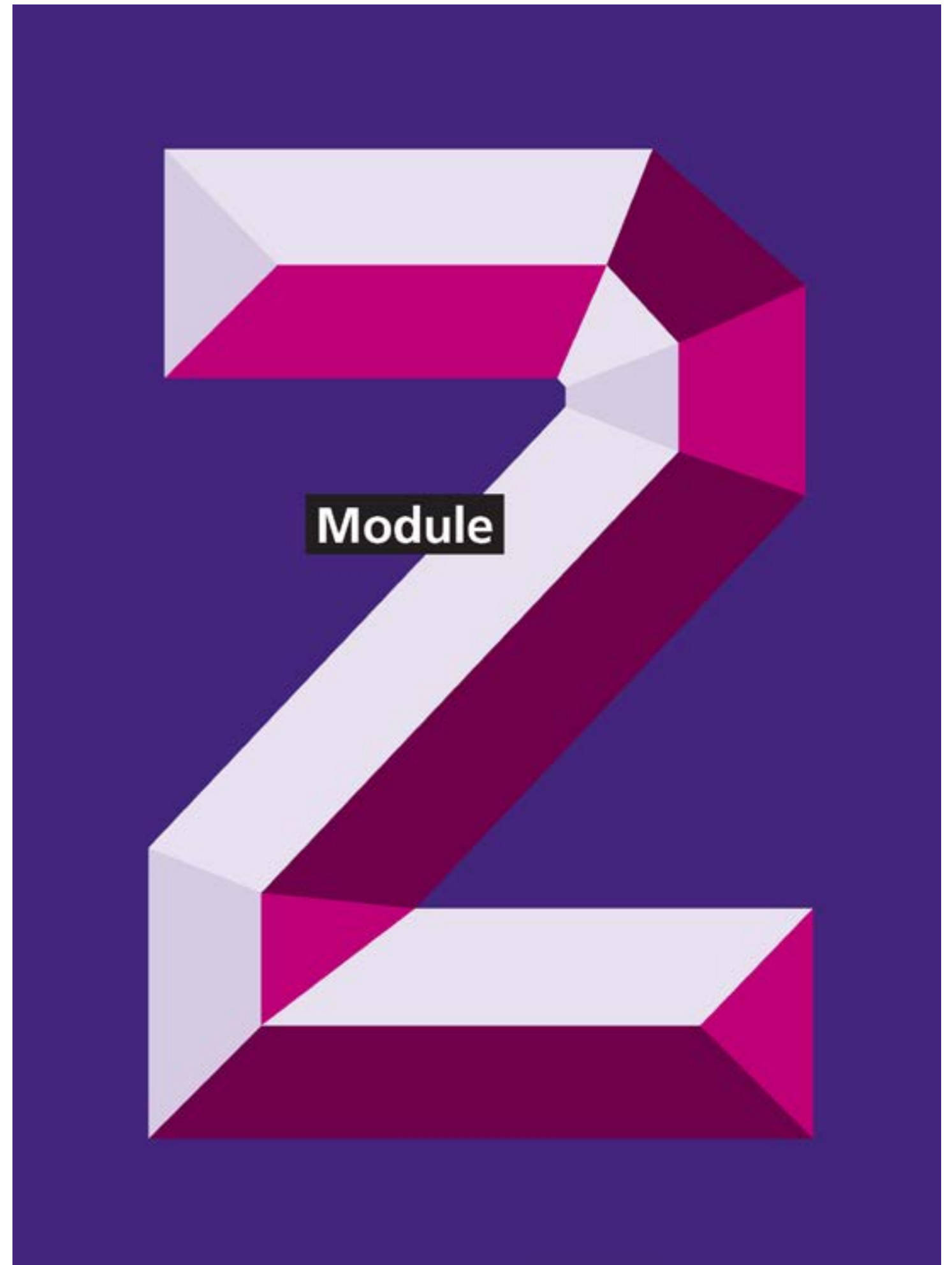
As reflected in Module 1, we work in a complex health and social care system; digital leaders require a toolkit to assist them in implementing transformational change. The ability to manage risks and opportunities whilst taking your organisation/locality and senior leaders on this journey is essential for the success of any digital transformation.

This module focuses on human interactions including strategy setting, risk management, leveraging opportunities and working with partners. The reference points in this module will form that basis for your approach to continually scanning the environment for opportunities to improve health and social care.

→ Module lead



Paolo Taticchi



Health information systems & technologies

→ Module overview

In this module, we will introduce participants to new frameworks for understanding digitally enabled change. The Information Infrastructures perspective helps to understand distinctive features of the contemporary health digitisation landscape. It highlights how simple, stand-alone “discrete” IT applications become knitted together into increasingly complex “systems of systems”. These Health Information Infrastructures emerge and evolve over extended periods of time, never reaching a final state. Major upgrades are extremely expensive, slow and difficult to implement.

The generic options available within packaged solutions have to be matched against the specific methods and procedures of particular settings and specialties. Benefits evolve only slowly as organisational stakeholders learn to exploit the new functionality. These features call into question many of the recipes you might find in popular change management handbooks or courses. For example, change management guidelines all agree on the importance of engaging the user – but how does this work with a project that takes many years to unfold in which staff who took part in engagement activities at the outset may have moved on by the time the change goes live?

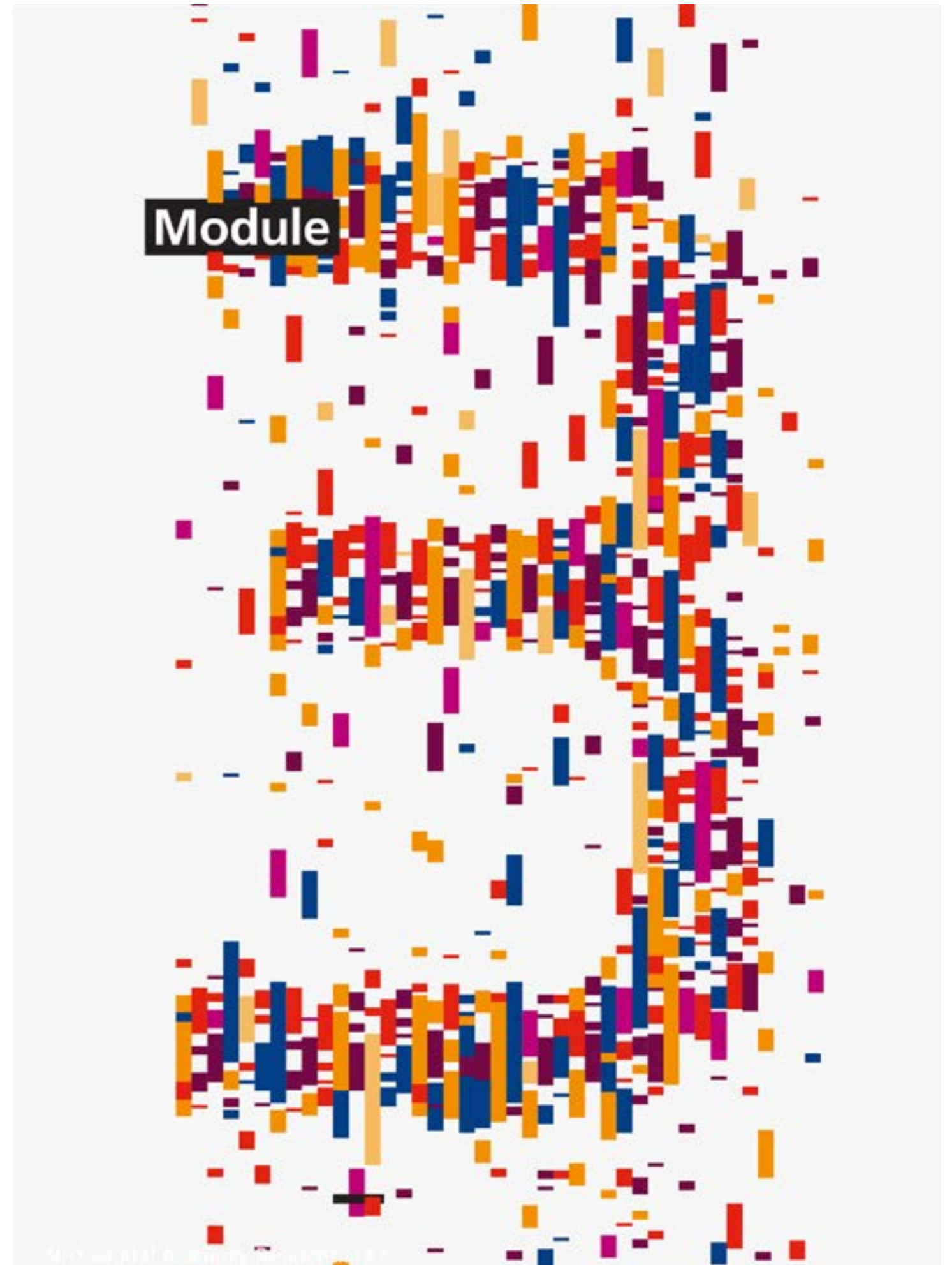
→ Module leads



Robin
Williams



Kathrin
Cresswell



User-centred design & citizen-driven informatics

→ Module overview

Understanding the needs, expectations and experiences of healthcare users is vital if we are to effectively commission, design and deliver digital services. In this module we examine the philosophical and practical reasons for engaging and involving people in the design process and analyse the design methodologies used to ensure that products or services are usable, acceptable, effective and customer-centric. As part of this we will review the current landscape of patient- and citizen-facing innovations and explore the emerging direction of technology and the opportunities and threats this is likely to bring. We will review evidence and experiential learning from the use of innovations such as personal health records, apps, wearables, robots and online decision support. In addition we will examine the importance of inclusive-design for avoiding the 'digital health divide', how to engage citizens in decisions about uses of their data, and how to achieve innovations that are ethical, engaging and even delightful.

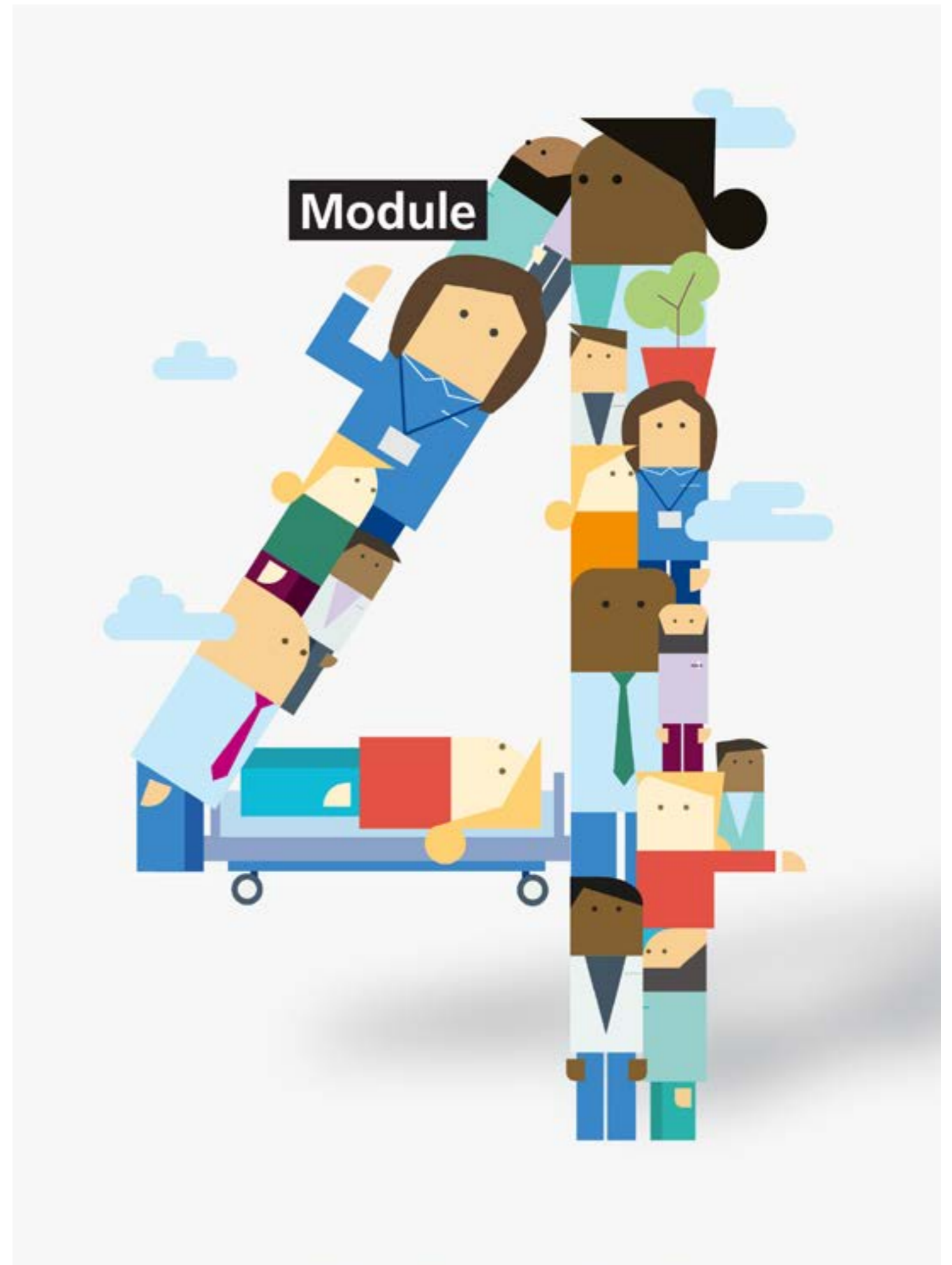
→ Module leads



Claudia
Pagliari



Lenny
Naar



Decision support, knowledge management & actionable data analytics

→ Module overview

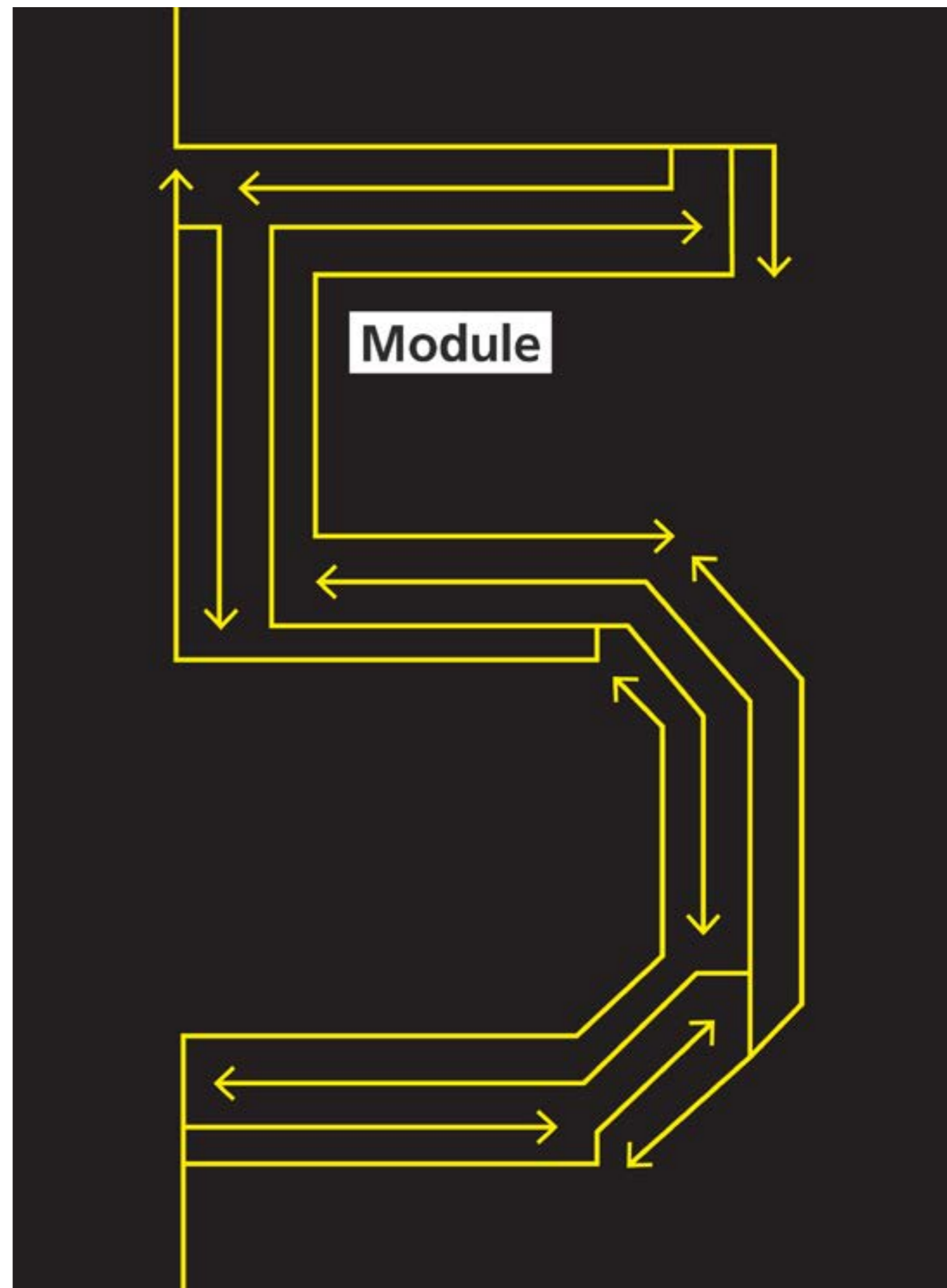
This module aims to provide participants with a broad overview of learning health systems and the workflow for data analysis, including elements of time-series analysis, signal processing, and machine learning. We cover aspects of data collection, data quality management, and study design. We focus on understanding principles towards exploring and analysing data, pattern recognition, and designing practical clinical decision support tools. We use case studies to follow through the entire process and demonstrate how practical tools can be developed. Furthermore, we touch on how decision processes are studied, biases in decision making, and evaluating decision support systems.

At the end of the module, participants will have a clearer overview of learning health systems, an understanding of the data mining and machine learning framework to develop decision support tools, and will be able to create a systematic approach to verification, validation, and evaluation processes of decision support systems.

→ Module lead



Thanasis
Tsanas



Leadership & transformational change

→ Module overview

In this module, participants will gain an understanding of: key concepts in leadership and how these affect their practice; how to engage and build relationships with stakeholders; how to ensure that digital innovation is central to strategic developments across health and social care; and how to lead transformational change in the workplace with the added dimensions of complexity, diversity and disruption ushered in by digital technology. This module is delivered in a series of mandatory face-to-face residentials and is complemented by resources in the online learning community. In addition, residentials bring together concepts and ideas from the other modules, helping participants to apply these principles to transform individual practice.

Each Residential has a theme:

Residential One: Setting the Scene - Your Responsibilities as a Digital learner

Residential Two: The Digital Leader - Changing Cultures & Perspectives

Residential Three: The Digital Future - Next Generation Thinking

Residential Four: Translating Learning into Practice

→ Module lead



Alison
Singleton



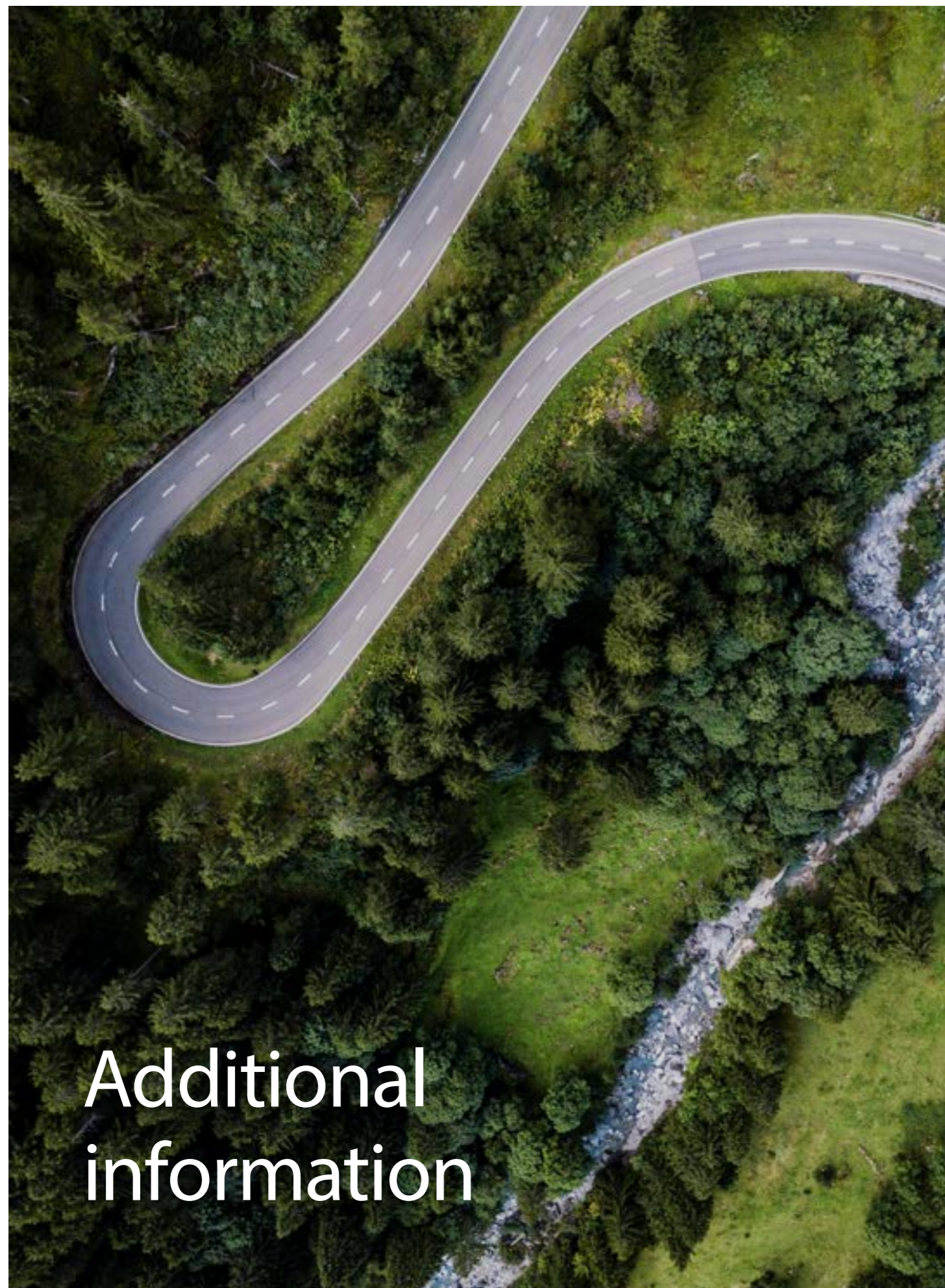
Achieving measurable impact in transformational change

Participants are expected to apply the skills and knowledge they acquire during the programme to their practice in the workplace. To chronicle this journey, Digital Academy participants will use journals to draw together the learning from each element of the programme and to capture how they translate this learning into practice to achieve real-world impact and change.

At the start of the programme, participants are expected to set out their goals for the year ahead in a Personal Development Plan (PDP), which is agreed with their executive sponsor. Participants are expected to identify a theme or programme of work in which they are involved that is of strategic benefit to their organisation. During the programme, they will demonstrate their emerging knowledge by applying best-practice models, frameworks and approaches to improve outcomes and add further value to NHS initiatives. Participants are encouraged to reflect through personal journals – during each module and after each residential – about how they are meeting their development goals and achieving impact in practice.

Participants celebrate the completion of their digital health leadership journey during the final residential with a conference-format seminar, presenting the highlights of their personal growth and demonstrating their impact in the workplace.





Additional
information

→ What is the time commitment?

The time commitment to complete the programme is significant, in line with the requirements of a Postgraduate Diploma from top academic institutions, and is estimated as follows:

- Study time: 5-8 hours per week on average (and up to 10-15 hours), including approximately 3 hours of engagement with online content, 2 hours of core reading time and additional time to engage with discussion forums with your peers. During assessment weeks, this 5-8 hours will be put towards completing specified assessments.
- Workplace project: This should be a project that is already underway/in the pipeline within your organisation and a core part of your job. We will be asking you to apply lessons learned throughout the programme to this transformational change project and submit written reflections on your leadership development. This project is completed outside of the study time stated above.
- Residential learning: 10 days of in-person residential learning sessions. These days are mandatory, so please ensure you are available on the following dates before submitting an application: 01-03 April 2020 (location TBC), 17-19 June 2020 (location TBC), 4-6 November 2020 (location TBC), and 4-5 February 2021 (location TBC)

Please note that whilst participants will be supported by faculty members throughout the programme, individual needs will differ depending on your previous exposure to academic programmes. As a result, some participants will need to commit more time to the programme and undertake additional self-directed study in order to successfully complete the core learning and assessments within the programme.

→ Who should apply?

We welcome applications to join the NHS Digital Academy's 2020 intake from existing and aspiring digital leaders across health and social care including Chief Clinical Information Officers, Chief Information Officers, and senior operational, technical and clinical managers.

The programme is suited to those who are:

- a senior leader within the NHS and social care sector in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland
- in a position to affect the strategic direction within your organisation and implement practical transformational change
- ready and committed to developing your leadership skills and behaviours whilst undertaking a digital health related academic qualification (Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Health Leadership)
- excited by the opportunity to immediately apply new skills, learning and behaviours to a transformational change project within your organisation

→ Entry requirements

In order to be considered for the NHS Digital Academy, you must:

- be a Chief Information Officer, Chief Clinical Information Officer or aspiring digital leader in the NHS or social care sector in England or Scotland
- have three to five years of relevant experience in informatics or digital health
- have executive level support from your organisation
- be available to attend all residential learning sessions (01-03 April 2020, 17-19 June 2020, 4-6 November 2020 and 4-5 February 2021).

Our minimum academic requirement is at least a 2.2 UK Honour's degree. If you do not hold a degree, please do still apply as we will consider your application. In this instance, if we proceed with your application, you will be invited to undertake an interview and sit a test in order to demonstrate you are capable of working at the required academic level for the programme.

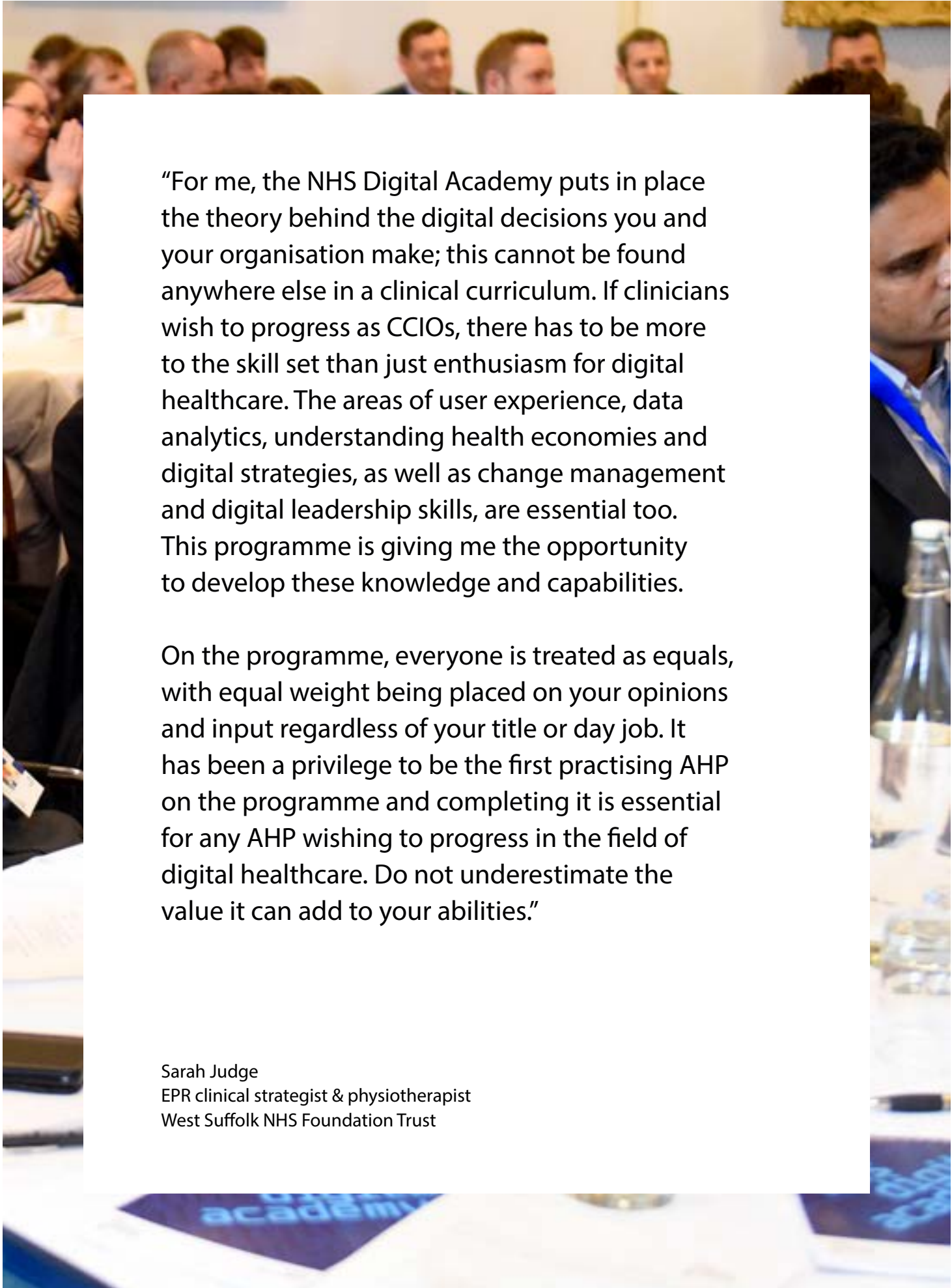
→ Organisational support and Executive Sponsor Commitment

Participants will need to seek the support of an executive level sponsor. A suitable Executive Sponsor is the Chief Executive Officer for your organisation or a member of the Executive Board.

Executive Sponsors are expected to commit to providing the following support to you throughout the programme:

- Ensure you are given adequate time to focus on your studies.
- Ensure you are released from your organisation in order to attend residential sessions.
- Act as a mentor to you throughout the programme and support you when needed.
- Help you to progress your workplace project successfully and unlock doors internally if required.
- Hold you to account for demonstrating translation of your learning into practice for the benefit of your organisation.

We ask that all applicants seek out a suitable Executive Sponsor in advance of submitting an application. It will be your responsibility to not only source a sponsor, but also make the relationship with your sponsor a success for the duration of the programme.



“For me, the NHS Digital Academy puts in place the theory behind the digital decisions you and your organisation make; this cannot be found anywhere else in a clinical curriculum. If clinicians wish to progress as CCIOs, there has to be more to the skill set than just enthusiasm for digital healthcare. The areas of user experience, data analytics, understanding health economics and digital strategies, as well as change management and digital leadership skills, are essential too. This programme is giving me the opportunity to develop these knowledge and capabilities.

On the programme, everyone is treated as equals, with equal weight being placed on your opinions and input regardless of your title or day job. It has been a privilege to be the first practising AHP on the programme and completing it is essential for any AHP wishing to progress in the field of digital healthcare. Do not underestimate the value it can add to your abilities.”

Sarah Judge
EPR clinical strategist & physiotherapist
West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

→ How to apply?

19th August 2019 - 4th October 2019: Applications will open

Please submit a completed application form and CV to

nhsdigitalacademy@imperial.ac.uk

The structured application form is available to be downloaded via: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/digitaltechnology/info-revolution/nhs-digital-academy/>

4th October 2019: Applications deadline

Early November 2019: Applicants will be informed whether they have been selected for the programme

Early November 2019 - 20th December 2019: Successful applicants will be asked to formally apply to Imperial College London, and submit evidence of previous academic qualifications, English language proficiency and two references. More detailed guidance will be provided at the time of application.

1st April 2020: Programme formally commences with a 3 day residential (1-3 April 2020)

If you have any queries about the programme or the application process, please contact the NHS Digital Academy team on nhsdigitalacademy@imperial.ac.uk.

“The NHS Digital Academy is a unique collaborative experience bringing together clinical, data and technology leaders and a fantastic choice for both academic and professional life. Not only has it created thought-provoking debates with peers, faculty, industry and the sector as a whole but has strongly inspired me to move beyond the mainstream by adopting appropriate critical analysis to the complexity of health. The Academy has definitely influenced the confidence and authority to which as digital leaders we can drive transformation and it has become the norm to bring the evidence and learning in to conversations within the organisation day to day. The programme has provided theoretical, analytical and practical tools but importantly a collaboration network of multidisciplinary digital leaders to continue to develop with and learn from.

It is most notable that the reality of the future of Digital Health is only a success with empowering ‘people’ at its centre and the NHS Digital Academy recognises this at its core.”

Mike Cavaye
Associate Director of Digital
Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust