Learning Event Ministry of Justice Specialist Fund

Digital support partner: DOT PROJECT
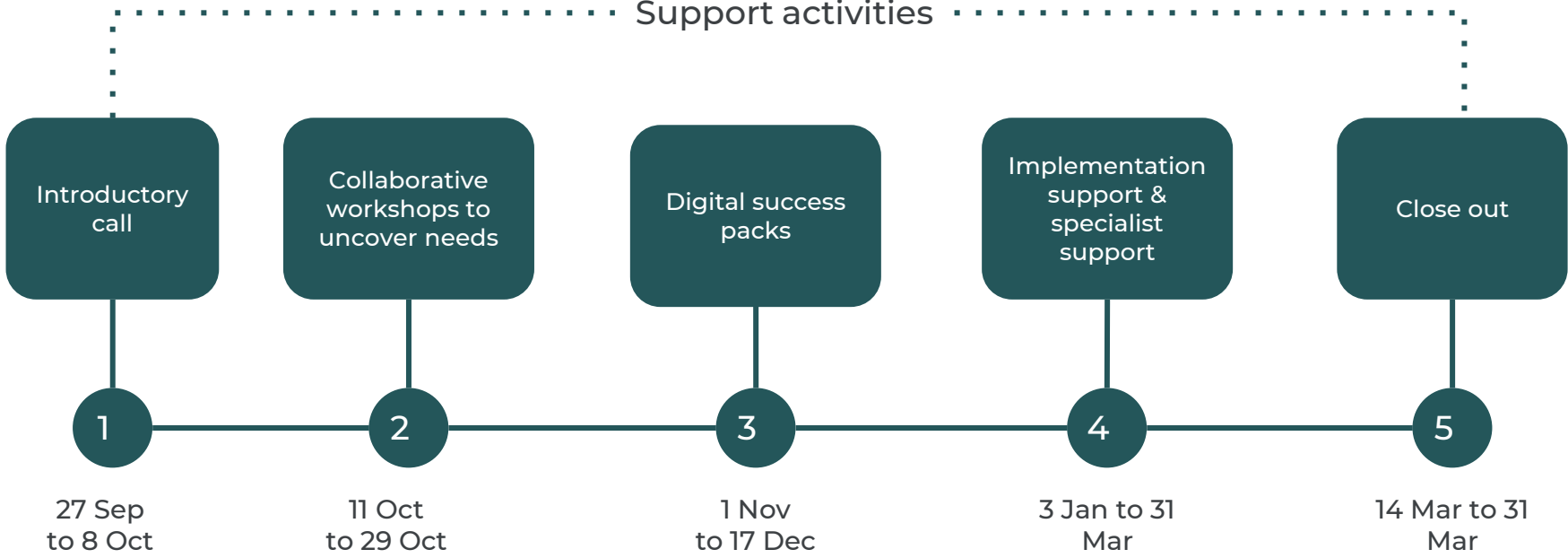18th May 2022

About DOT PROJECT

DOT PROJECT are a cooperative technology consultancy with a social purpose. We strengthen the technology foundations of charities and social sector companies so they can operate at their full potential, always.

People and relationships are at the centre of everything we do. We relentlessly focus on team needs relating to technology, both within organisations and across their primary and secondary stakeholders.

Overview of approach

Support activities

| Introductory call | Collaborative workshops to uncover needs | Digital success packs | Implementation support & specialist support | Close out |

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5

| 27 Sep to 8 Oct | 11 Oct to 29 Oct | 1 Nov to 17 Dec | 3 Jan to 31 Mar | 14 Mar to 31 Mar |

Phase 1: Requirements gathering   **Phase 2: Delivery**

Insights and learnings

Knowledge & skills

What went well

Funding allowed organisations to recruit skills in-house/increase time of existing staff

Teams have deep knowledge in how their services operate and what their service users need

What was challenging

Lack of in-house skills & staff turnover/absences

Lack of digital & technology talent accessible to the sector

Managing multiple priorities

What is needed:
- **Recommendation 1:** Skills audit as part of support process to create better understanding within teams about their existing digital capabilities and the digital & technology skills they need for the medium to long term
- **Recommendation 2:** Investment in stronger technical leadership to support senior leadership teams to create and implement a digital strategy

Building trust & relationships

What went well

- Critical role of mentors inc. women mentors

- Breadth of mentor expertise

- Playing a supportive and guiding role

What was challenging

- Lack of wider diversity within mentor pool

- Small pool of mentors available

- Time required to build trust

What is needed:
- **Recommendation 3:** Develop more diverse and bigger technical skills pool in the sector - particularly business analysis, chief technology officers, digital product managers
- **Recommendation 4:** Increase understanding/develop benchmarks for what digital processes cost - particularly investing in skills and sustaining technology costs can be much higher than anticipated. Assign draw-down stream of funding to assist with costs that cannot be estimated upfront

Technology implementation

What went well

Building realistic plans with organisations

Developing clear briefs

Finding 'good fit' digital partners/building existing relationships with digital partners

What was challenging

Managing competing priorities

Focusing on key priorities vs. investing in a broad range of digital and technology needs

What is needed:
- **Recommendation 5:** Building a better understanding about the role of digital partners - for both organisations and funders. Reviewing partner contracts should be a key part of application due diligence
- **Recommendation 6:** Design for 3 year funded projects if you want sustainable change

Adaptability and Sustainability

What went well

🚀 Organisations took big steps forward in their digital approach

👥 Specialist support well received

What was challenging
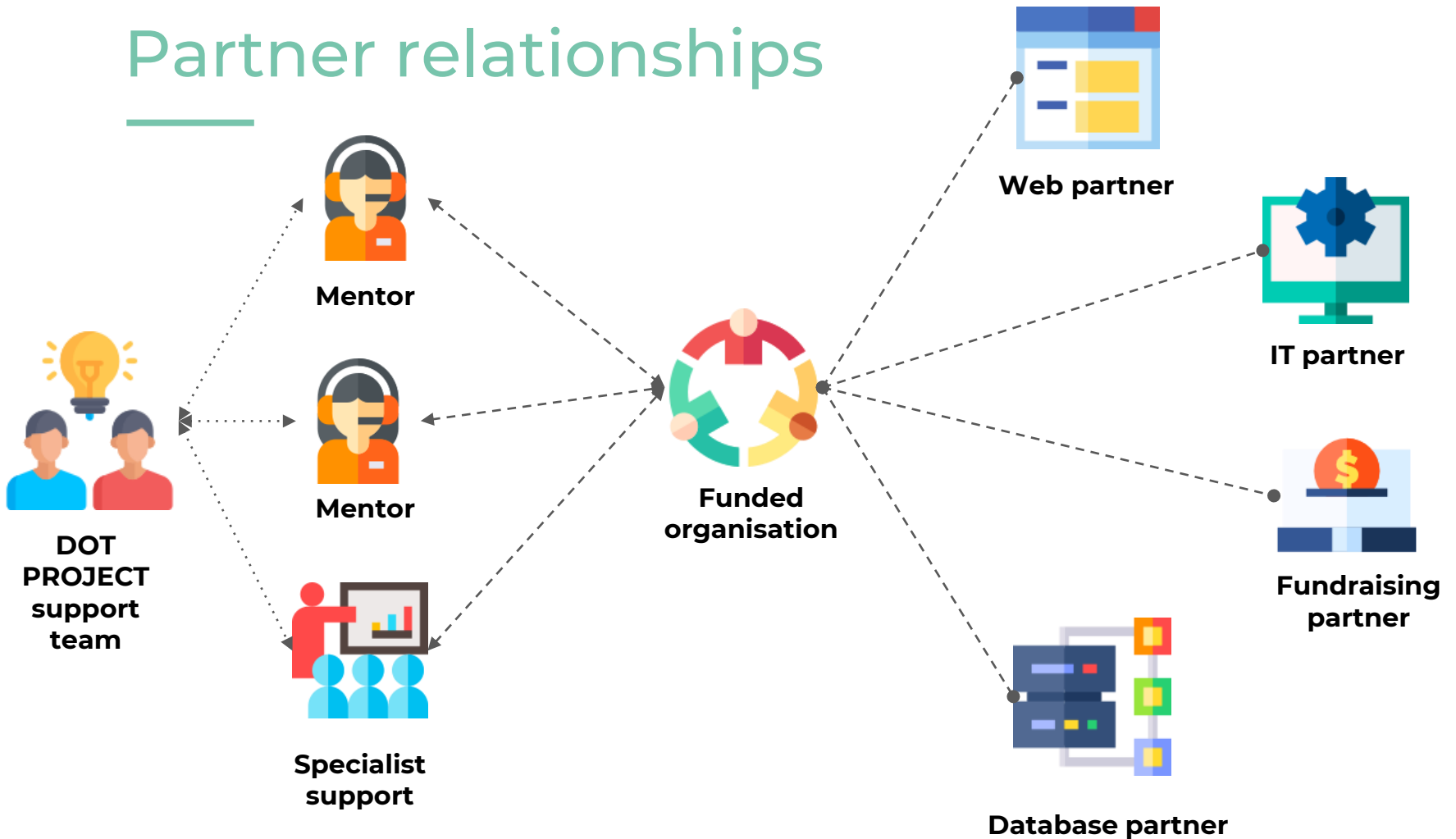
📅 Accepting change takes time and space

💬 Bringing the whole team on a journey is critical but hard

What is needed:
- **Recommendation 7:** Fund teams not individuals and ensure commitment from senior leadership that key team members can be involved and contribute to designing and implementing digital approaches
- **Recommendation 8:** Design funding to support core infrastructure - tools, people, skills - to lead to longer term impact

Partner relationships

DOT PROJECT support team

Mentor

Mentor

Specialist support

Funded organisation

Web partner

IT partner

Fundraising partner

Database partner

Matching expertise with need

Capabilities required by FOs

Business analysis & requirements gathering

Digital Strategy / IT Strategy
Systems integration
Organisational Strategy
Organisational Coaching
Communications
Change management

Data consulting
Digital Safeguarding
Governance, compliance & GDPR
Cyber security
IT Infrastructure & cloud
Impact measurement

Agile coaching
Matchmaking charities with digital experts
Software selection
Project management
User research
Prototyping & user testing
Product development
Service design
Website design & build

Support mentors

Alex Mecklenburg
Annie Legge
Cat Ainsworth
Chloe Parker
Helen Stevenson
Lucy Knight
Nicola Chowings Thomas
Sally Bennett
Lisa Forte
Sadaf Rasheed
Eva Kestner

Chris Charlton
Danny Hearn
Ivan Teage
Martin Howitt
Paul White
Simon Gough

Capabilities of digital partners who are working with funded orgs

Website / digital agency	IT infrastructure upgrade partner
App developer	Moving to the Cloud partner
IT consultant	CRM supplier
Mobile app developer	Case management supplier
Software developer	Social media partner
Service design	Extranet partner
Requirements analyst	Intranet partner
	Fundraising strategy partner
Impact partner	Staff training partner

Impact of funding

Having a case management system up and running - feels like a real success 'something we have always needed'

Organisation is no longer afraid of tech change

The full scope of works delivers positive change to the organisation and outlook for service delivery going forward

Equipment purchase has made a big difference - it has changed how we can communicate and work together

The ability to secure better systems / equipment upgrades, leading to improvement in services being gained from the investment

The positive way the organisation responded and agility and flexibility that now exists to aid improved ways of working and efficiency created in future IT investment

Charity recognised its own limitations and were able to resist being taken advantage of by thirds parties - making intelligent choices

Thank you