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Project title: Navigating the digital landscape: universities partnering for change

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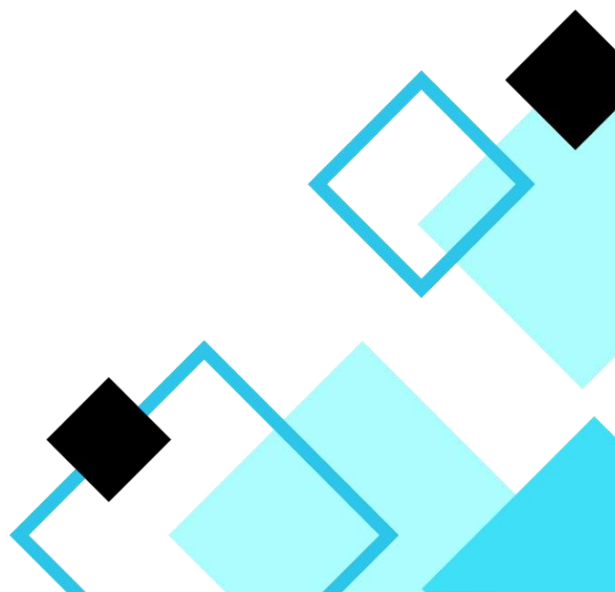
Prepared by:

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Group members from partner institutions



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About the project

The objectives of the NIAGARA project directly address digital transformation, inclusion, and diversity, and will impact participation in social, economic, democratic life and civic engagement through a focus on digital competence. The connection between digital competence and participation in democratic life and civic engagement is well-established, particularly regarding issues such as misinformation, disinformation, and fake news that affect all areas of life. In particular, the NIAGARA project aims to enhance digital resources within university libraries across Tanzania and Zambia, ensuring equal access to library services for all students and staff. In addition, we will examine the essential digital skills required by both librarians and students to deliver efficient library services. To support their development, we will provide short courses tailored to enhance these digital capabilities. The NIAGARA project aligns with international, EU, national, and institutional priorities, making it a vital initiative for academic progress.

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Project Acronym	NIAGARA
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Project Number	101082506
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Start Date	1 January 2023
End Date	31 January 2026
Duration	37 Months
Project Manager	Elin Opheim
Project Coordinators	Jamie Johnston (OsloMet), Kelefa Mwantimwa (UDSM), Wulystan P. Mtega (SUA), Christine W. Kanyengo (UNZA), Greg Kwalombota (UBL), Sabina Cisek (UJ)

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Executive summary

Across the NIAGARA partnership, a clear set of shared outcomes emerged that extend beyond the individual activities carried out in each institution. At its core, the project succeeded in building a collective capacity for digital literacy education—strengthening not only technical skills, but also pedagogical approaches, collaborative networks, and institutional readiness for continued digital transformation. Partners repeatedly emphasised that the most valuable impact was the creation of a learning community that spanned continents, enabling each institution to see its own practices in a new light.

The project demonstrated that meaningful capacity building is not only a matter of delivering courses or installing equipment, but of fostering relationships, mutual understanding, and opportunities for shared reflection. Through workshops, exchange visits, joint curriculum development, and the co-creation of digital learning materials, NIAGARA generated a foundation of trust and professional solidarity that partners are committed to carrying forward.

A key takeaway is the importance of adaptable frameworks—such as DigComp and universal design—that can be embedded into LIS curricula across different educational and infrastructural contexts. Similarly, the use of MOOC platforms and openly shared resources proved essential for widening access, supporting flexible learning pathways, and ensuring sustainability beyond the project period.

The project highlighted both the opportunities and the challenges of cross-national collaboration. While connectivity issues, differing academic calendars, and administrative demands presented obstacles, partners consistently demonstrated resilience and creativity in finding ways to continue working together. These experiences underscore the value of flexibility, clear communication, and shared expectations in international cooperation.

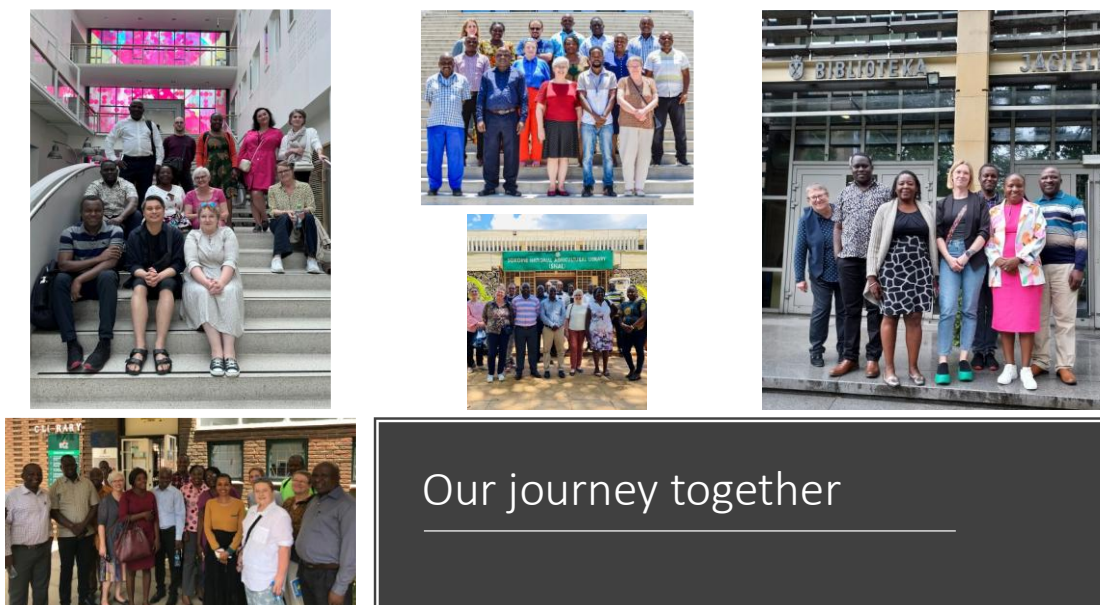
Overall, NIAGARA leaves behind a strengthened network of LIS educators and practitioners, a suite of collaboratively developed courses, enhanced digital infrastructures in partner institutions, and a renewed commitment to ongoing collaboration. The project's greatest achievement is the shared sense of purpose it cultivated: a recognition that digital literacy capacity is built most effectively when institutions learn not only *from* each other, but *with* each other.

Introduction

The NIAGARA Concluding Seminar, *Going Far Together: Building Digital Literacy Capacity in LIS Education and Practice*, was held online via Zoom on 4–5 December 2025. The event brought together partners from Norway, Poland, Tanzania, and Zambia to review project outcomes, share institutional reflections, and discuss sustainability. The seminar was chaired by Jamie Johnston (OsloMet), who moderated the sessions, introduced speakers, and coordinated the discussion blocks.

The seminar opened with a reflective presentation by project coordinator Elin Opheim (University of Inland Norway, INN). Drawing on the project's original objectives—to strengthen digital infrastructure in partner university libraries in Tanzania and Zambia, to examine the digital competence needed for contemporary library services, and to develop and implement short-term courses—she traced the consortium's "journey together" across workshops, exchange activities, and course development. Her reflections highlighted how NIAGARA progressively built skills, processes, resources, and relationships, and showcased achievements such as approved

deliverables, an active project website, extensive social media engagement, and the development of a shared MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) portfolio.



Our journey together

This was followed by a keynote presentation from Stefano Kluzer (All Digital) on DigComp 3.0, which introduced the updated digital competence framework, its expanded learning outcomes, and the integration of AI-related competences. The keynote positioned NIAGARA's work within broader European policy developments related to digital skills, cybersecurity, misinformation, and responsible digital citizenship, providing an up-to-date foundation for the project's curriculum and capacity-building activities. The recording of the presentation can be found here: [DigComp 3.0: highlights and first reflections](#)

The second day began with reflections from Anna Løken, Library Director at Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (INN). Speaking as a coordinating institution and library leader, she emphasised the institutional value of NIAGARA's courses and partnerships in supporting INN's ongoing digital transformation and development of library services. Anna Løken highlighted the cultural and professional skills needed in libraries and in Library and Information Science today and tomorrow, and how goodwill and close communication are drivers to successful project work.

Throughout the two-day programme, partner institutions presented their experiences and contributions following a shared set of guiding questions—key activities, impacts, lessons learned, sustainability, and transferable innovation. This common structure provided a coherent basis for comparing contributions and assessing NIAGARA's overall achievements.

This report follows the structure of those guiding questions and integrates the reflections shared during the concluding seminar.

Key activities and contributions

The summaries below synthesise partner reflections shared during the concluding seminar. Rather than reiterating administrative duties, partners highlighted the activities they carried out, the contributions they made, and the achievements they considered most meaningful. This reflective process allowed each institution to look back on what they had accomplished—both in line with

planned responsibilities and through collaborative efforts that emerged organically during the project. Together, these reflections provided the consortium with a clearer understanding of how each institution contributed to NIAGARA's outcomes and strengthened the collaborative foundation of the partnership.

Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (INN)

INN provided overall project coordination, ensuring effective management and timely progress. The team guided curriculum development using the Didactic Relational Model, hosted mobility activities in Norway, and supported the organisation of seminars and exchanges. INN also contributed to digital competence assessment, developed online courses, sustainability planning and provided reflective leadership throughout the project.

Jagiellonian University (UJ)

UJ contributed to digital-competence assessment, developed online courses, and participated in workshops and mobility activities across partner countries. It also hosted part of the librarian exchange, offering a varied and engaging programme for participants. As leader of dissemination activities, UJ delivered the project's visual identity, website, sustainability plan, and communication structures, ensuring strong visibility and long-term value.

Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet)

OsloMet organised workshop programmes in Tanzania and Zambia, hosted the Oslo seminar, and facilitated the librarian exchange. The team led survey development and the creation of the curriculum analysis framework, introduced the DigComp framework that informed this work, organised the online seminar series, developed the Digital Citizenship course, and will present NIAGARA's DigComp activities to All Digital along with NIAGARA partners from INN and SUA.

Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA)

SUA contributed by developing digital-literacy and data-management courses, producing interactive learning materials, and conducting curriculum analysis aligned with DigComp. SUA embedded new courses into its academic programmes and participated actively in workshops, exchanges, and training sessions across partner institutions.

University of Barotseland (UBL)

UBL advanced the university's digital infrastructure by procuring and installing computers and a server to support the institutional repository and e-library. The team engaged in training workshops, and collaborative development processes, contributing to improved digital accessibility and institutional capacity-building.

University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM)

UDSM participated in developing courses on digital content creation, research data management, and emerging technologies, and integrated NIAGARA courses into the national MOOC platform. The team contributed to dissemination and seminar activities, participated in cross-partner training, and strengthened institutional digital-pedagogical capacity.

University of Zambia (UNZA)

UNZA contributed to curriculum development, needs assessment, and survey-based research. The team hosted mobility visits, developed courses on digital literacy and inclusive services, and supported dissemination through presentations and publications. UNZA also strengthened internal policy discussions informed by NIAGARA's activities.

What impacts emerged from NIAGARA?

Across partner reflections, institutions reported substantial gains in digital literacy capacity, pedagogical development, and institutional preparedness for digital transformation. Skills in digital content creation, research data management, and inclusive services were strengthened, leading to new or revised courses. Investments in digital infrastructure—particularly in Zambia and Tanzania—significantly expanded access to devices and digital platforms. Partners also emphasised the value of mobility activities, which deepened intercultural collaboration, strengthened shared professional identity, and opened new pathways for joint teaching and research. Collectively, these reflections demonstrate that NIAGARA enhanced digital competence and institutional confidence across the consortium.

Lessons Learned

Partner reflections underscored the importance of strong communication, collaboration, and mutual learning. Exchange visits and workshops were particularly valuable for building trust, understanding local contexts, and enriching pedagogical and professional perspectives. Common challenges included unstable internet connectivity, differing academic calendars, demanding workloads, and variations in institutional working cultures. Flexibility, asynchronous communication tools, and adaptive planning emerged as essential strategies for mitigating these challenges. A key lesson shared across institutions was the importance of establishing clear expectations early and maintaining open communication throughout the project.

Sustainability

Partners expressed a strong commitment to sustaining NIAGARA's achievements. Institutions plan to embed newly developed courses into their curricula, continue updating MOOC content, and maintain collaborative teaching groups established during the project. Ongoing efforts include expanding digital skills training, strengthening digital infrastructure, and applying shared frameworks such as DigComp and universal design. Many partners noted that NIAGARA has laid the groundwork for continued collaboration through joint research, publications, conference participation, and future funding applications. Maintaining and expanding project platforms and digital resources will further support long-term sustainability.

Transferable Innovation

Reflections across partners identified several innovations that can be transferred beyond the NIAGARA context. These include the integration of digital competence frameworks (especially DigComp) into LIS curriculum design, the use of MOOCs to broaden access to digital literacy training, and the incorporation of universal design principles into library services. Presentations also emphasised user-centred approaches such as design thinking and the Library of Things, along with the collaborative production of open educational resources and inclusive-services training. Collectively, partners recognised these as adaptable and scalable practices that can strengthen digital literacy and library services across diverse institutional settings.

Social Activity Insights

Partners submitted one word via Mentimeter to describe their NIAGARA experience. These words, when grouped, suggest four overarching themes:

- **Adventure · Fascinating · New.** These words suggested that the project offered new experiences and opened up fresh perspectives for participants.
- **Shared knowledge · Learned a lot.** These words suggested that learning together and exchanging knowledge were central to the project experience.
- **Good networking project · Relations.** These words suggested that the project helped participants build meaningful professional and personal connections.
- **Lovely · Laughter.** These words suggested that participants found the project warm, enjoyable, and genuinely uplifting.

Taken together, the reflections indicate that the project expanded boundaries, supported collaborative learning, strengthened connections, and created a positive experience for the program partners.

NIAGARA Concluding Seminar

Going Far Together: Building Digital Literacy Capacity in LIS Education and Practice

December 4–5 (online) - 08:00 - 12:00 CET

Seminar Program

This concluding seminar brings together all NIAGARA partner institutions to reflect on the project's achievements, shared learning, and collaborative development of digital literacy capacity in library and information science education and professional practice. The seminar will highlight experiences, outcomes, and future pathways for sustaining and extending this work beyond the project period.

Seminar Goal

To consolidate and share the outcomes of the NIAGARA project by reflecting on capacity-building initiatives in digital literacy, showcasing collaborative teaching and professional development practices, and identifying sustainable pathways for continued partnership, curriculum development, and knowledge exchange across the participating institutions. In simpler terms, the goal is to:

- Show what we built
- Share what we learned
- Agree on how to keep moving forward together

Programme Structure

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Stefano Kluzer, [All Digital](#) Senior Expert and Moderator of the [DigComp Community of Practice](#), will present the [DigComp 3.0](#) framework in his presentation titled *DigComp 3.0: highlights and first reflections*.

Participating Partners: Each NIAGARA partner institution will contribute to the seminar through presentations and shared reflections. Partners include: University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Jagiellonian University (UJ), University of Zambia (UNZA), University of Barotseland (UBL), OsloMet – Oslo Metropolitan University, University of Inland Norway (INN).

Guest Speaker: Anna Løken, Library Director at University of Inland Norway (INN) will speak at the *Welcome Session* on the second day of the seminar.

Program Schedule	
Chair/Host	Jamie Johnston, University of Iceland
Zoom Link	Join Zoom Meeting: https://eu01web.zoom.us/j/64322657062 Meeting ID: 643 2265 7062
Time	December 4th
08:00	Welcome: Elin Opheim, project leader
08:30	Keynote: Dr. Stefano Kluzer <i>DigComp 3.0: highlights and first reflections</i>
09:30	Break
10:00	Presentation: University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) Kelefa Mwantimwa
10:30	Presentation: Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) Andrew Malekani
11:00	Break
11:15	Presentation: OsloMet – Oslo Metropolitan University Jamie Johnston
11:45	Wrap up: Discuss key takeaways from the day
12:00	End of Session
Time	December 5th
08:00	Welcome: Elin Opheim, Anna Løken
08:30	Presentation: University of Zambia (UNZA) Christine Kanyengo
09:00	Presentation: University of Barotseland (UBL) Brian Nyambe
09:30	Break
10:00	Presentation: University of Inland Norway (INN) Elin Opheim

10:30	Presentation: Jagiellonian University (UJ) Sabina Cisek
11:00	Break
11:15	Social Activity: Mahmood Khosrowjerdi and Idunn Bøyum
11:30	<u>Concluding Words:</u> Elin Opheim
12:00	End of Session

Partner Contributions

Each partner institution will prepare 15 min presentation addressing the following points:

- Key Activities and Outcomes**

- What your institution contributed or developed within NIAGARA.
- Examples: course modules, teaching materials, workshops, exchanges, documentation efforts.

- Capacity-Building Impact**

- How participation strengthened digital literacy capacity.
- Consider: new knowledge, skills, pedagogical approaches, or institutional developments.

- Lessons Learned**

- What worked well, and what presented challenges.
- Examples: How were challenges (e.g., infrastructural, communication flows, work processes, etc.) overcome or dealt with? What would be important to consider in future grant applications?

- Future Pathways / Sustainability**

- What should continue beyond the project.
- Examples: continued co-teaching, resource sharing, joint research, mobility.

- Transferable Innovation**

- Activities, services, and new ideas adopted from other partners (e.g., support for inclusion, wellbeing, libraries as social arenas)
 - (ideas acquired through the teacher exchange and other library visits)

We, Institutional coordinators from partner institutions, approve the content of D6.5 Concluding Seminar:

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Final Audit Report

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