# Innovate Michigan!

2025 Co-Learning Plan Series

## FUTURE PROOFING DETROIT AI LITERACY AND UPSKILLING INITIATIVE

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# FUTURE-PROOFING DETROIT: AI LITERACY AND UPSKILLING INITIATIVE

## Community-Led Digital Empowerment through AI Education

Center for Community and Economic Development

EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into everyday life has created unprecedented opportunities—and deepened longstanding digital divides. In Detroit's underserved communities, residents face barriers to accessing emerging technologies, digital literacy programs, and workforce-ready skills. These disparities risk excluding entire populations from participating in, shaping, and benefiting from the AI revolution.

The *AI Literacy and Upskilling Initiative* entitled *Future-Proofing Detroit* emerged as a response to this challenge. Spearheaded by the University of Detroit Mercy's Center for Augmenting Intelligence in partnership with the Mama Akua Community House (MACH) and the Michigan Roundtable for Just Communities, the initiative centers on one core idea: AI literacy must be accessible, culturally relevant, and community driven.

This project was supported by the Regional Economic Innovation (REI) Center at Michigan State University through funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). It is part of a broader commitment to advancing equitable economic development in distressed urban neighborhoods.

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THE CO-LEARNING PLAN

The purpose of this Co-Learning Plan is to document, evaluate, and share a replicable model for delivering hyper-personalized AI literacy training to residents and frontline community organizations. The initiative aimed to:

- Empower Detroit residents and MACH staff with practical AI knowledge and skills.
- Co-develop curriculum with input from solopreneurs, creatives, and community members.
- Build confidence in using generative AI tools for personal, professional, and entrepreneurial purposes.
- Create sustainable learning pathways through the design of an AI Upskilling Toolkit and a Train-the-Trainer rollout.

The Plan provides insights into the structure, delivery, outcomes, and lessons learned from the pilot implementation, offering a blueprint for similar neighborhood-based efforts across the city and beyond.

## 1.3 COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The initiative focused on Detroit's Zone 8 neighborhood, where systemic inequalities including limited access to broadband, digital tools, and tech training continue to hinder economic mobility. Residents served by MACH reflect a wide demographic range, including ALICE (Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed) populations, formerly incarcerated individuals, single parents, and young adults navigating post-pandemic transitions.

The selected co-learning model emphasized mutual learning between faculty, residents, community organizers, and students. It prioritized lived experience as a knowledge base and cultivated a space where all participants contributed to and shaped the learning environment.

# 2. OBJECTIVES

The *AI Literacy and Upskilling Initiative* was designed to address Detroit's growing need for equitable access to digital tools and AI training. Through community partnership, experiential learning, and real-world application, this co-learning model aims to empower residents in historically marginalized neighborhoods with the skills needed to navigate and shape the evolving AI-driven economy.

## 2.1 PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

1. **Deliver Community-Based AI Literacy Training**
    - Provide foundational AI concepts in an accessible and culturally relevant format.
    - Leverage the LSD instructional model (Learn it, See it, Do it) to support experiential, mobile-first learning.
    - Host in-person workshops facilitated using StudyAid and tailored PowerPoint content.
2. **Develop and Deliver Hyper-Personalized Training Modules**
    - Co-create course content with community advisors to reflect local priorities.
    - Build relevance by aligning modules with resident interests, including civic engagement, entrepreneurship, productivity, and creative expression
3. **Advance Workforce Readiness and Digital Equity**
    - Equip learners with applied AI skills relevant to employment, entrepreneurship, and community impact.
    - Focus on ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) populations and other underrepresented groups.

## 2.1 SUPPORTING RATIONALE

Numerous studies have emphasized that digital literacy particularly around emerging technologies like AI is a prerequisite for modern workforce participation and economic mobility. According to the World Economic Forum (2025), AI-related skills are among the top ten growing competencies needed for jobs by 2027. However, these skills are often inaccessible to low-income communities, exacerbating digital inequities. It is critical that technology integration must be done effectively to avoid adoption challenges Dysart, S., & Weckerle, C. (2015).

Furthermore, research by Eynon & Geniets (2016) highlights how localized, contextualized learning experiences especially those co-created with community input can dramatically improve digital learning outcomes in underserved populations. This project builds upon that foundation by not only delivering training but creating conditions for ongoing, locally driven instruction and support.

Co-learning is an educational approach where knowledge is created and shared collaboratively between facilitators and participants, rather than delivered in a one-way, top-down format. It emphasizes mutual learning, cultural relevance, and shared ownership of outcomes. As Israel, Schulz, Parker, and Becker (1998) note, community-based initiatives thrive when they "promote co-learning and capacity building among all partners" This model is particularly applicable to our AI literacy initiative because it ensures that training is grounded in the lived experiences and priorities of the community. By engaging residents, solopreneurs, and local organizations as co-creators, co-learning builds trust, reduces barriers to participation, and makes abstract technologies like AI directly relevant to everyday life, workforce readiness, and entrepreneurial opportunity.

## 2.2 ALIGNMENT WITH REI PRIORITIES

This co-learning initiative directly supports the REI Center's mission by:

- Promoting economic resilience and workforce transition in distressed communities.
- Supporting community-based planning and learning through student- and faculty-led technical assistance.
- Demonstrating scalable innovation in AI upskilling for inclusive, sustainable development.

# 3. CO-LEARNING FRAMEWORK

The *Future-Proofing Detroit* initiative was designed around a community-first co-learning framework, emphasizing shared ownership, rapid learning cycles, and accessible technology use. The structure prioritized cultural relevance, peer support, and practical skills, especially for learners with limited time and digital exposure.

## 3.1 COMMUNITY-CENTERED CO-DESIGN

A diverse Advisory Group convened by the Michigan Roundtable for Just Communities comprising solopreneurs, creatives, residents, and MACH staff was formed at the outset to shape the training experience. Through bi-weekly meetings, the group provided critical input on module topics, delivery format, and tools used. This co-design approach ensured the curriculum reflected real-world needs and addressed community aspirations, fostering early buy-in and trust.

## 3.2 INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL: LSD (LEARN IT, SEE IT, DO IT)


Figure 1: LSD framework

The program used the **LSD model** to break AI literacy into digestible, actionable segments:

- **Learn it**: Each concept was introduced in under 10 minutes using plain language and real-life examples.
- **See it**: Participants observed live demonstrations of AI tools using pre-crafted prompts.
- **Do it**: Learners then practiced hands-on with mobile devices, supported by prompt templates, peer support, and instructor feedback.

This lightweight, microlearning approach was especially effective for adult learners, allowing flexible engagement without overwhelming participants. According to De Gagne et al. (2019), microlearning

improves digital skill acquisition by delivering content in short, focused bursts—a design well suited for underserved communities managing multiple responsibilities.

## 3.3 MICRO-COURSE DESIGN

Each of the four co-learning micro-courses focused on a different real-life application of AI. Modules illustrated in Figure 2 were designed for 20–30 minutes of total instruction per topic, combining all three LSD components:


Figure 2: AI Literacy Courses deployed

All modules were delivered in person using PowerPoint and the StudyAid platform, with TVs used for demos and phones for participation. Prompts were customized to match local stories and needs, reinforcing relevance and cultural alignment.

## 3.4 PEER-BASED LEARNING AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING

Sessions emphasized peer learning, where participants supported each other in prompt writing and tool use. This created a low-pressure environment that encouraged experimentation. As Vygotsky's social learning theory suggests, learners build confidence when they observe and collaborate with peers at similar skill levels. Participants reported feeling “more confident” and “excited to keep learning AI” as a direct result of this community learning environment.

# 4. KEY ACTIVITIES & TIMELINE

The *Future-Proofing Detroit: AI Literacy and Upskilling Initiative* unfolded in a series of coordinated phases, beginning with community engagement and co-design, followed by pilot training sessions and culminating in toolkit development and summit dissemination. This section outlines the major activities, deliverables, and their corresponding timelines.

*4.1 ACTIVITY OVERVIEW*

| Activity | Description | Status |
|---|---|---|
| **Advisory Group Formation** | Recruited solopreneurs, creatives, residents, and MACH staff for curriculum co-design | Completed (March 2025) |
| **Community Needs Survey** | Surveyed 17 agencies to determine digital skill gaps and training preferences | Completed (April 2025) |
| **Curriculum Development** | Created 4 micro-courses using feedback from community and advisory group | Completed (May 2025) |
| **AI Literacy Training Workshop** | Delivered in-person micro-course training to cohort of 30 residents and MACH staff | Completed (May 14, 2025) |
| **Toolkit Creation** | Compiled curriculum guide, prompt library, facilitator instructions, and templates | Completed (July 2025) |
| **Innovate MI! Summit Presentation** | Prepare to present key insights and deliverables to the REI community | Completed (August 2025) |
| **Train-the-Trainer Recruitment & Launch** | Recruit 10 local trainers to continue AI literacy delivery | Scheduled (Fall 2025) |
| **Sustainability Strategy** | Explore LMS/digital formats for ongoing course delivery and access | Upcoming (Fall 2025) |

Table 1: List of Activities

## 4.2 PROJECT TIMELINE

| Month | Milestone |
|---|---|
| **March 2025** | Advisory Group established; co-design process initiated |
| **April 2025** | Community survey distributed and analyzed |

| Month | Milestone |
|---|---|
| **May 2025** | Micro-courses developed and pilot training delivered |
| **June 2025** | Evaluation and feedback integration |
| **July 2025** | AI Upskilling Toolkit finalized |
| **August 2025** | Project showcased at Innovate MI! Summit (Aug 14) |
| **September 2025** | Train-the-Trainer program recruitment begins |
| **Fall 2025** | Community trainer sessions begin; sustainability planning underway |

Table 2: Milestones of Project

## 4.3 METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Each milestone was achieved through a combination of:

- **Community-based planning** with the advisory group
- **Rapid instructional prototyping** using the StudyAid platform
- **Iterative curriculum revisions** based on survey and learner feedback
- **Hands-on delivery** emphasizing mobile-first accessibility
- **Facilitated peer practice** and culturally responsive design


Figure 3 Method for implementing Co-learning activities

Each milestone in the project was achieved through an intentional blend of strategies that placed community voices and accessibility at the center of the work. The process began with community-based planning through the advisory group, ensuring that priorities reflected the lived experiences and aspirations of residents. To translate these insights into learning materials, the team employed rapid instructional prototyping using the StudyAid platform, which allowed for quick development and testing of course modules. This was followed by iterative curriculum revisions informed by survey responses and learner feedback, ensuring that content remained relevant, engaging, and culturally appropriate. Delivery was anchored in hands-on instruction with a mobile-first approach, making training accessible even for participants who relied on smartphones as their primary device. Finally, the program emphasized facilitated peer practice and culturally responsive design, creating a supportive environment where learners could see their own experiences reflected in the training. Together, these strategies not only aligned project deliverables with community realities but also helped to bridge the gap between AI opportunities and neighborhood readiness, positioning residents to engage with emerging technologies on their own terms.


Figure 5: Sample flyer for in person training event

# 5. OUTCOMES & IMPACT

The *Future-Proofing Detroit: AI Literacy and Upskilling Initiative* produced significant educational, social, and strategic outcomes—both immediate and foundational—for future scale and sustainability. Grounded in community co-creation, the program successfully equipped residents and frontline staff with practical AI skills while fostering confidence, digital inclusion, and peer-driven momentum.

## 5.1 PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

'( *TRAINING COMPLETION*

- **30+ residents and MACH staff** completed in-person AI literacy training
- All participants engaged in micro-courses covering everyday AI, prompting, productivity, and entrepreneurship

'( *SKILL DEVELOPMENT & APPLICATION*

- Participants demonstrated the ability to:
  - Differentiate AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT vs. Snapchat My AI)
  - Craft effective prompts for resumes, schedules, community flyers, and product pitches
  - Identify and respond to deepfakes and misinformation
- Many participants reported using the tools in daily life shortly after the training

'( *LEARNER CONFIDENCE & FEEDBACK*

- Real-time reflections showed measurable increases in:
  - Confidence using generative AI tools
  - Willingness to experiment with new prompts
  - Awareness of ethical AI use in community contexts

- Some quotes from learners included:

  “This was the first time I felt like AI made sense to me.”

  “Can we do this every Wednesday.”

  “Now I can teach my kids how to use ChatGPT for school.”

## 5.2 COMMUNITY & SYSTEMIC IMPACT

'( *CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT WITH COMMUNITY PRIORITIES*

- Training was directly informed by **17 agency survey responses**, identifying top needs:
  - AI literacy
  - Communication and productivity tools
  - Support for digital storytelling and small business

'( *ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL EXPERTISE*

- The program laid the groundwork for a **Train-the-Trainer model**, empowering up to **10 grassroots facilitators** to extend access across neighborhoods starting Fall 2025

'( *TOOLKIT CREATION FOR REPLICATION*

- A reusable **AI Upskilling Toolkit** was developed, including:
  - Curriculum overview
  - Facilitator guides
  - Prompt templates and cheat sheets
  - Storytelling and project design resources

'( *SCALABILITY POTENTIAL*

- The modular structure and micro-course format allow for:
  - Rapid onboarding in new communities
  - Adaptation for youth, seniors, re-entry populations, and entrepreneurs
  - Seamless transition to digital platforms such as LMS or mobile-friendly web apps

## 5.3 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This initiative directly supports key goals of the REI Center and aligns with national frameworks on digital inclusion:

- **Workforce readiness**: Addresses growing demand for AI-literate workers (World Economic Forum, 2023)
- **Economic resilience**: Builds local capacity to adapt to rapidly evolving tech environments
- **Equity in AI**: Centers marginalized voices in designing and delivering digital learning

## 5.4 LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The StudyAid platform has been a cornerstone in advancing this initiative, serving both as a learning management system and an AI training environment tailored to community needs. Through StudyAid's AI tools, learners gain hands-on experience with prompt libraries, writing assistants, content creators, and productivity applications in a safe and supportive setting. These tools allow participants to move beyond theory, and into practice, applying AI directly to real-world tasks such as résumé development, storytelling, business planning, and community campaigns. By embedding these capabilities within StudyAid.Institute and StudyAid.Store, the project ensures equitable access to advanced AI resources, even for those who may lack prior exposure to digital technologies. This integration not only boosts learner confidence and digital fluency but also strengthens the initiative's broader goal of bridging the AI opportunity gap across Detroit neighborhoods.

By combining StudyAid.Institute and StudyAid.Store, the program ensures equitable access to AI **resources**. Communities that have historically lacked exposure to advanced technologies are provided with structured learning pathways, localized content, and practical tools that make AI literacy attainable. This dual-platform approach helps close the digital equity gap, ensuring that AI education and tools are not concentrated in privileged institutions but distributed across Detroit neighborhoods**.**

Importantly, this model is designed for scalability and replication. Once a course is customized and deployed in one neighborhood, the framework and toolkits can be adapted for use in other communities with minimal modification. Through the Train-the-Trainer program, facilitators are equipped with the skills, curriculum, and toolkits needed to independently deliver AI literacy workshops across diverse neighborhoods, creating a multiplier effect that extends impact well beyond the pilot communities.

# 6. LESSONS LEARNED

The *Future-Proofing Detroit* initiative not only succeeded in delivering AI literacy training but also revealed critical lessons for scaling similar co-learning models in other communities. These lessons span instructional design, community engagement, technological access, and sustainability planning.

*TABLE X. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE* FUTURE-PROOFING DETROIT *INITIATIVE*

| **Theme** | **Key Lessons** | **Implications for Future Scaling** |
|---|---|---|
| **Community Design Enhances Relevance and Trust** | - Advisory group involvement ensured cultural alignment and relevance. - Trust-building through co-creation increased openness to AI learning. - Local leaders and peer facilitators boosted engagement. - | Build advisory groups into all rollouts; integrate visible community leaders and peer trainers to strengthen trust and adoption. |
| **Microlearning is Effective—But Requires Scaffolding** | Micro-courses introduced AI concepts quickly. - Some learners needed more time and repetition, especially in "See it" and "Do it" phases. - Real-life, hands-on prompts (e.g., side hustles) were most effective. | Extend time blocks or add follow-up sessions for advanced modules; design prompts tied directly to learners' lived experiences. |
| **Mobile-First Design Expands Access—But Limits Depth** | - Smartphones improved access but created challenges typing long prompts and switching apps. - Engagement slowed by device limitations. | Provide loaner devices, larger screens, or group stations; balance mobile-first accessibility with tools that deepen practice. |
| **Peer Support is a Powerful Confidence Booster** | - Learners were more willing to try new tools when peers shared struggles and successes. - Informal peer feedback built confidence and a sense of community. | Embed peer coaching into Train-the-Trainer programs; formalize peer sharing as part of workshops. |
| **Sustainability Requires New Delivery Channels** | - Participants wanted digital followup: LMS courses, video tutorials, certifications. - Ongoing access to curriculum and toolkits seen as critical. | Prioritize digitization of content, create modular online follow-up, and introduce optional credentialing to sustain engagement. |

Table 3: Summary of Lessons Learned

## 6.1 COMMUNITY DESIGN ENHANCES RELEVANCE AND TRUST

- **Advisory group involvement** ensured cultural alignment and real-world relevance. Participants were more engaged and willing to experiment with AI when they recognized their own voices in the curriculum design.
- **Trust-building through co-creation** was key: communities were more open to learning AI tools when local leaders and peer facilitators were visibly part of the process.

*"It helped that someone like me was part of making this. I felt like it was for us."* — Workshop Participant

## 6.2 MICROLEARNING IS EFFECTIVE—BUT REQUIRES SCAFFOLDING

- The **micro-course model** allowed quick introduction to core AI concepts, but some participants needed additional **time and repetition** during the "See it" and "Do it" stages.
- Participants responded best to **real-life, hands-on prompts** that reflected their own challenges and goals (e.g., "write a pitch for your side hustle").
- Future implementations should allow **extended time blocks or follow-up sessions** to reinforce learning, especially for more advanced modules like digital entrepreneurship.

## 6.3 MOBILE-FIRST DESIGN EXPANDS ACCESS—BUT ALSO LIMITS DEPTH

- Most participants used smartphones for the training, which improved access but introduced constraints:
  - Typing long prompts was difficult on smaller devices.
  - Switching between apps (e.g., ChatGPT and StudyAid) slowed the "Do it" experience.
- Future iterations could offer **loaner devices, larger screens, or group stations** for smoother engagement.

## 6.4 PEER SUPPORT IS A POWERFUL CONFIDENCE BOOSTER

- Participants were more willing to try new tools when they saw others struggling and succeeding together.
- Informal peer feedback during "Do it" activities—e.g., sharing prompt results—built community and confidence.
- Embedding **peer coaching** into the Train-the-Trainer rollout can amplify this strength.

## 6.5 SUSTAINABILITY REQUIRES NEW DELIVERY CHANNELS

- Participants requested more **digital follow-up options**, such as:
  - LMS-based course versions
  - Short video tutorials or voice-guided demos
  - Optional certification or badges
- To maintain momentum, future plans must prioritize digitizing the curriculum and ensuring community-wide access to the Toolkit and materials post-workshop.

# 7. SCALABILITY & REPLICATION

A key objective of the *Future-Proofing Detroit* initiative was to design a model that could be replicated across neighborhoods, agencies, and cities. Through intentional design choices and community-based implementation, the program established a flexible and modular foundation for broader scale.

## 7.1 MODULAR CURRICULUM FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ADAPTATION

- The AI literacy content is structured as **four independent micro-courses**, each composed of compact "Learn–See–Do" modules. This allows communities to:
  - Deliver courses as full-day workshops, weekly sessions, or mobile drop-ins.
  - Select and reorder modules based on audience needs (e.g., youth-focused vs. entrepreneurial).
- The model accommodates both **in-person and hybrid delivery**, making it adaptable to different community settings and technological capacities.

> "We designed it so that a community leader could take one course and run with it without needing to be an AI expert." *Dr Phillip Olla*

## 7.2 AI UPSKILLING TOOLKIT FOR TURNKEY DEPLOYMENT

To support replication, the initiative produced a comprehensive AI Upskilling Toolkit that includes:

- Curriculum overview and facilitator notes
- Prompt libraries and cheat sheets
- Community storytelling and capstone project templates
- Train-the-Trainer preparation guide and certificate template

These materials are reusable, editable, and designed for non-technical facilitators, ensuring that the model can be used even in low-resource contexts.

## 7.3 TRAIN-THE-TRAINER (T3) MODEL FOR LOCAL OWNERSHIP


Figure 6: Trainer – Trainer Model

The Fall 2025 rollout of the **Train-the-Trainer program** will equip up to 10 facilitators with the following capabilities:

- Deliver workshops using the toolkit
- Support others in prompt-based learning
- Provide feedback and mentorship within their neighborhoods

This model supports **community-led sustainability**, creating a distributed network of facilitators capable of growing local AI capacity over time.

## 7.4 CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY REPLICATION

Communities seeking to replicate the model should have:

- At least one **anchor organization** (e.g., community center, school, nonprofit)

- Basic access to mobile phones or internet-connected devices
- A willingness to form an **advisory group or peer learning cohort**
- Interest in building local capacity, not just delivering a one-off workshop

## 7.5 DIGITAL EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES

The initiative is now exploring options to digitize the curriculum for broader access, including that would allow community leaders to become community AI Facilitators.

- Uploading content to a **learning management system (LMS)**
- Hosting the Toolkit on a mobile-friendly platform like **StudyAid**
- Recording **short, guided tutorial videos** to accompany each module

This expansion would support continuous learning, increase retention, and enable tracking of community-wide progress and outcomes.

*StudyAid Platform*

All courses in this catalog are supported by the **StudyAid platform**, a digital tool designed to enhance hands-on learning with artificial intelligence. StudyAid provides:

| | |
|---|---|
| www.studyaid.store | Access Courses including lectures and course material |
| www.studyaid.institute | Access Course AT Training platform which contains chatbots, templates and prompt library |

Table 4 : Training Tools used

Figure 7: Types of AI tools used


- Guided prompt-based exercises for each module
- Access to curated AI tools, including chatbots, resume builders, image generators, and more
- Personalized feedback and revision suggestions based on learner input
- A Prompt Library where learners can store, reuse, and refine their best prompts

## 7.6 THE JOURNEY TOWARDS COMMUNITY AI FACILITATOR

Becoming a **Community AI Facilitator** begins with orientation as a **digital beginner**, where participants are introduced to foundational digital literacy skills. From there, learners progress to **AI Basics**, building confidence in understanding how artificial intelligence works and how it can be applied in everyday life. With this foundation, participants move into a **Capstone Project**, applying their knowledge to real-world, community-driven challenges. Next, the **Train-the-Trainer** stage equips individuals with the teaching strategies, toolkits, and resources needed to deliver AI workshops in their own neighborhoods. Finally, participants graduate as **Community AI Facilitators**, ready to lead, teach, and empower others in advancing equitable access to AI literacy.


Figure 8: Journey to AI Community Facilitator

# 8. COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT: AI UPSKILLING SURVEY FINDINGS

To align the co-learning initiative with real community priorities, an **AI Upskilling Needs Survey** was distributed to 17 local organizations serving Detroit residents. The results highlight both the opportunities and barriers to advancing equitable AI literacy.

## 8.1 POPULATIONS SERVED

Agencies reported serving a wide range of community members, with **youth (82%)**, **single parents (65%)**, **low-income families (65%)**, and **seniors (59%)** cited most frequently.

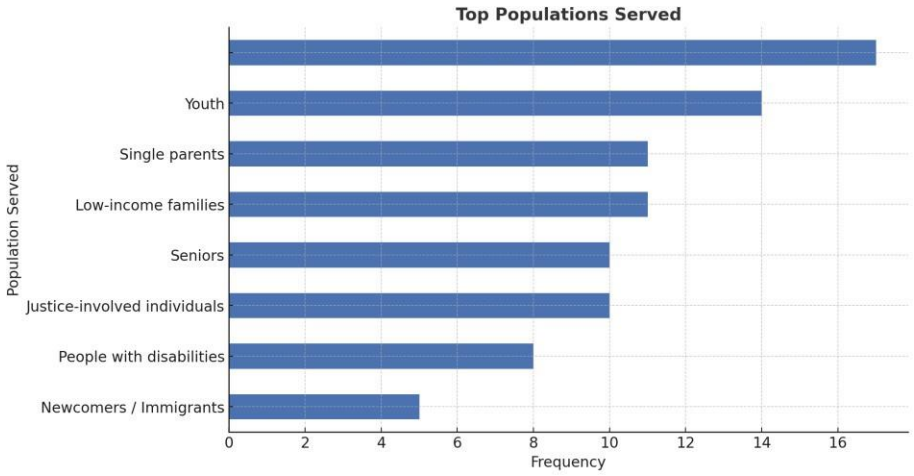



Figure 9 Populations Served

This mix underscores the importance of designing training that is accessible to both younger and older learners, while addressing the specific challenges of families with limited resources.

## 8.2 AI AND DIGITAL SKILLS PRIORITIES

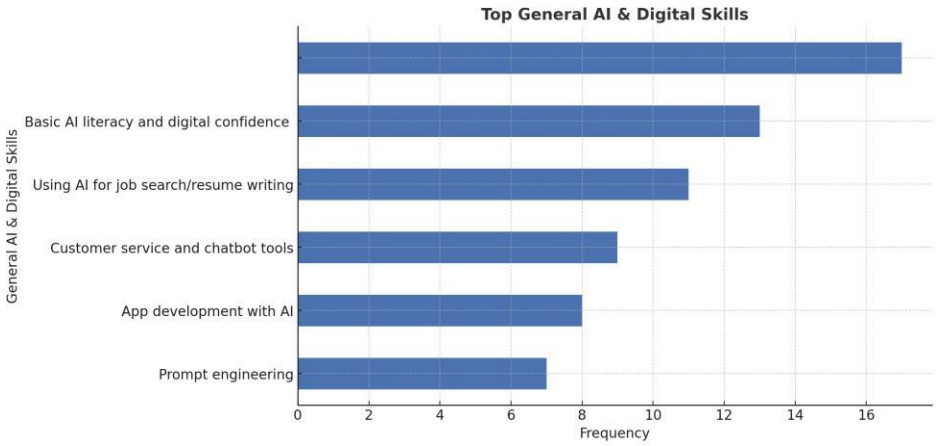



Figure 10 AI Skills prioritized

Across the board, **basic AI literacy and digital confidence** emerged as the top training need, identified by nearly all respondents. Agencies also stressed the value of **using AI for everyday tasks** and **prompt**

**engineering**, with more than **70% of organizations** selecting these as high priorities. These findings suggest that introductory, confidence-building modules must remain central to the curriculum.

## 8.3 ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS SKILLS

AI was also viewed as a tool for economic empowerment. **Over 75% of respondents** identified **AI for business planning, operations, and marketing** as critical skills for their clients, reflecting Detroit's strong base of small businesses, solopreneurs, and entrepreneurs.

## 8.4 CREATIVE AND GIG ECONOMY APPLICATIONS

Creative uses of AI were highlighted by **65% of organizations**, particularly **writing with AI, video/audio content creation, and AI-generated art**. These skills were seen as key to supporting local creatives, gig workers, and side hustles—roles that are increasingly central to community resilience and identity.

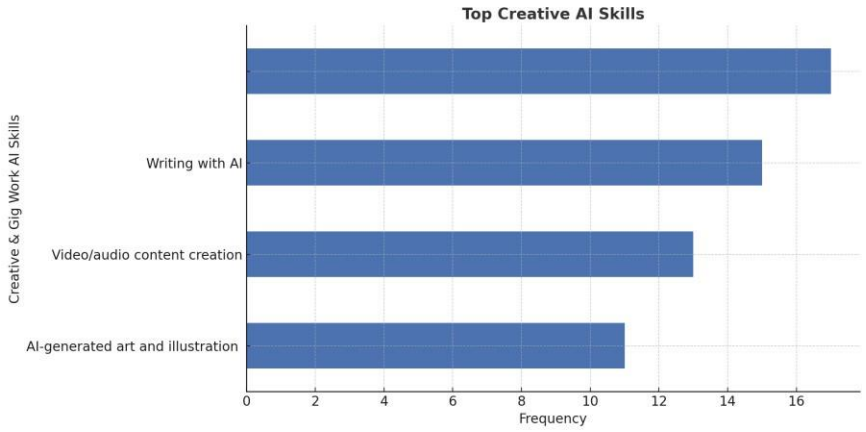



Figure 11: Creative Applications

## 8.5 COMMUNITY IMPACT ROLES

In addition to business and creative work, agencies identified **education, community health work, and data labeling/microtasks** as important AI applications. **More than half of organizations** saw these roles as opportunities to empower residents to contribute directly to their neighborhoods through digital skills.

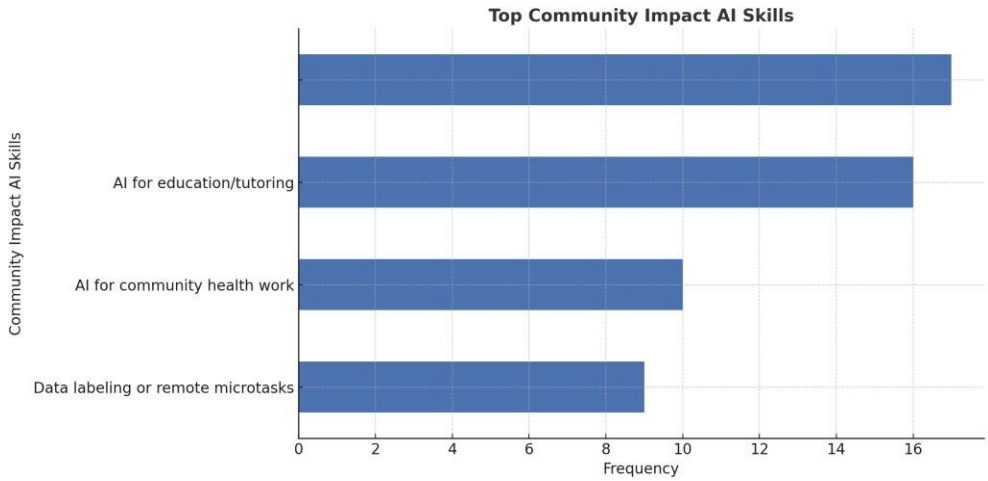



Figure 12: Community Impact Roles

## 8.6 PREFERRED TRAINING MODELS

When asked about delivery formats, the majority favored **hybrid or blended models (over 70%)**, often paired with **in-person sessions (nearly 60%)** or **on-site training at community organizations (40%)**. This reflects a strong demand for flexible learning that combines digital accessibility with hands-on, locally grounded instruction.

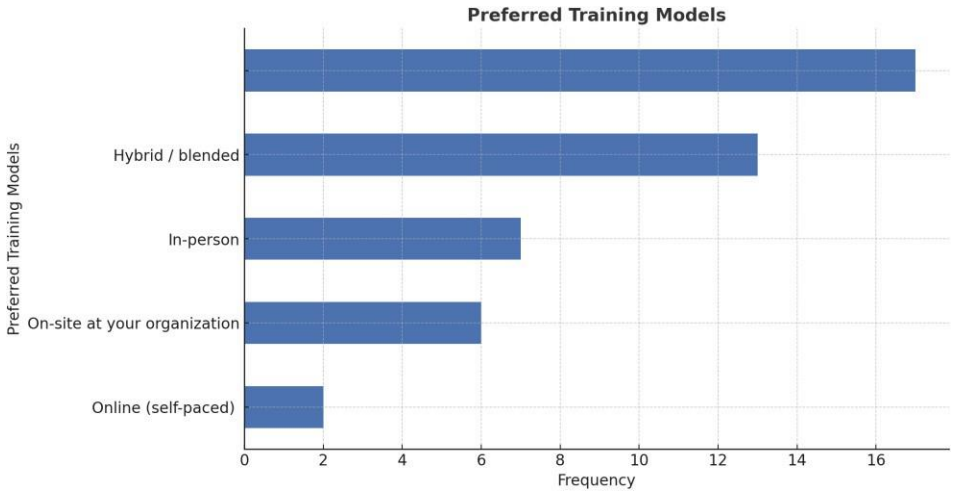



Figure 13: Preferred Training Models

## 8.7 BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

The most common barriers reported were **low digital literacy (76%)** and **lack of time (65%)**, followed by **transportation and childcare (35% each)**. These insights point to the need for supportive measures such as beginner-friendly modules, flexible scheduling, and training sites embedded in local neighborhoods.

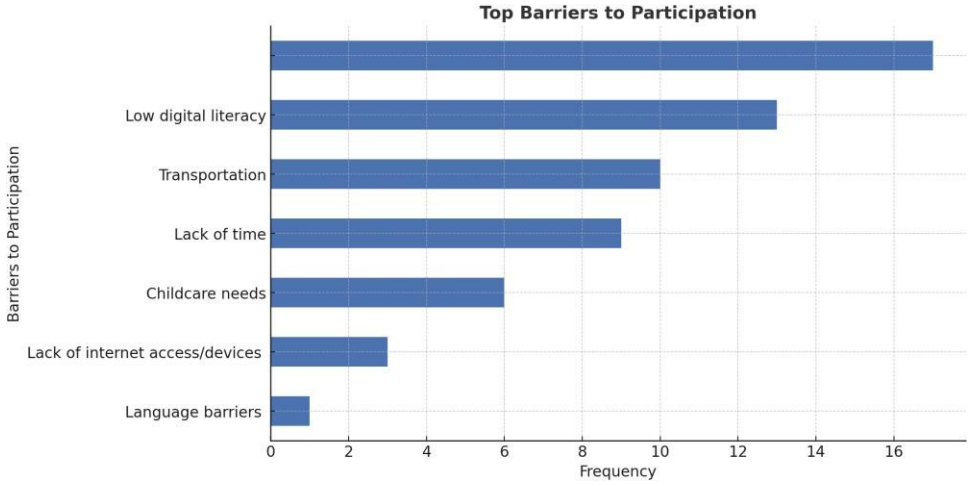



Figure 14: Top Barriers to Participation

## 8.8 OVERALL INSIGHTS

The survey results confirm that Detroit residents need **foundational AI literacy paired with practical, community-driven applications**. At the same time, agencies envision AI as a tool for entrepreneurship, creative expression, and civic impact. By tailoring content to these needs and addressing barriers, the initiative can ensure that AI literacy is both inclusive and transformative.

# 9.0 CONCLUSION

The *AI Literacy and Upskilling Initiative* set out to address a pressing need: to ensure that Detroit's underserved communities are not left behind in the age of artificial intelligence. Through a culturally grounded, community-co-designed co-learning model, the project provided not only essential digital literacy but also a replicable framework for scaling these efforts across neighborhoods.

By engaging residents as co-creators, delivering hands-on micro-courses using the LSD instructional model, and emphasizing peer learning and practical application, the initiative built lasting confidence in participants. The creation of a flexible, mobile-first curriculum and an AI Upskilling Toolkit ensures that this work can extend beyond the initial cohort, reaching new learners through a forthcoming Train-the-Trainer rollout.

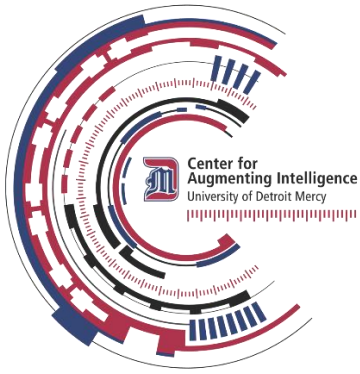
Key achievements include:

- Training 30+ residents and MACH staff with real-world AI tools and prompt-based skills
- Co-creating a community-aligned curriculum that supports workforce development and civic engagement
- Launching a sustainability strategy via a Train-the-Trainer model and digital toolkit
- Demonstrating that microlearning and localized co-design can bridge the AI equity gap

This work affirms that when AI education is shaped by and for the community, it becomes a tool not just for inclusion, but for transformation.

# 10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the Mama Akua Community House and Zone 8 residents for their leadership, the University of Detroit Mercy and Center for Augmenting Intelligence for guidance and support, and our advisory group of residents, solopreneurs, and creatives for shaping culturally relevant training. We also acknowledge MSU EDA University Center for REI for their funding and technical assistance, and the community trainers and participants whose commitment ensures this initiative's lasting impact.



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# 12. APPENDICES

The following appendices contain tools, curriculum components, evaluation data, and project documentation that support the implementation and scalability of the *AI Literacy and Upskilling Initiative*. These materials are available as editable files and can be shared with partner organizations and community trainers.

# Course Overview and Catalog

***OPENING NOTE FROM DR. PHILLIP OLLA***

***Dr. Phillip Olla*** *is a professor and innovator with over 20 years of experience teaching in academia and industry. As Executive Director of the Center for Augmenting Intelligence, he specializes in AI tool development and workflow optimization. Creator of the Co-Learning Plan* ***"Community-Based AI Literacy Training Initiative****" and the* Learn it, See it, Do it *(LSD) framework, Dr. Olla is dedicated to helping professionals apply AI ethically, effectively, and with cultural relevance.*

Artificial Intelligence is reshaping how we work, learn, and connect with one another. Yet for many Detroiters, access to AI skills and opportunities remains limited. This microlearning series—*Think. Prompt. Build.*—was created to help close that gap. By equipping learners with foundational and applied AI skills, we aim to build digital confidence and prepare participants for emerging educational, career, and entrepreneurial pathways.

These community-centered courses empower individuals to actively participate in the AI-driven future, ensuring Detroit voices are not just included, but leading in innovation.

I would like to thank the supporters of this project, without their generous support and vision this project would not happen.

This initiative is made possible through the generous support of the Michigan State University EDA University Center for REI (Regional Economic Innovation) and the University of Detroit Mercy Center for Augmenting Intelligence (CAI). We thank you for your belief in inclusive, forward-thinking education.

### *StudyAid Platform*

All courses in this catalog are supported by the **StudyAid platform**, a digital tool designed to enhance hands-on learning with artificial intelligence. StudyAid provides:

- Guided prompt-based exercises for each module
- Access to curated AI tools, including chatbots, resume builders, image generators, and more
- Personalized feedback and revision suggestions based on learner input
- A Prompt Library where learners can store, reuse, and refine their best prompts


Learners will complete their assignments by logging into [www.studyaid.store](http://www.studyaid.store), where they can access interactive exercises aligned with the LSD framework. Whether generating a resume, writing a rap, or building a business pitch, the StudyAid platform allows learners to ex reflect, and grow. Each course will have an accompanying tool to use such as the Ma chatbot which is a tool to assist with prompt design.

MAMA AKUA CHATBOT

**Access Codes**

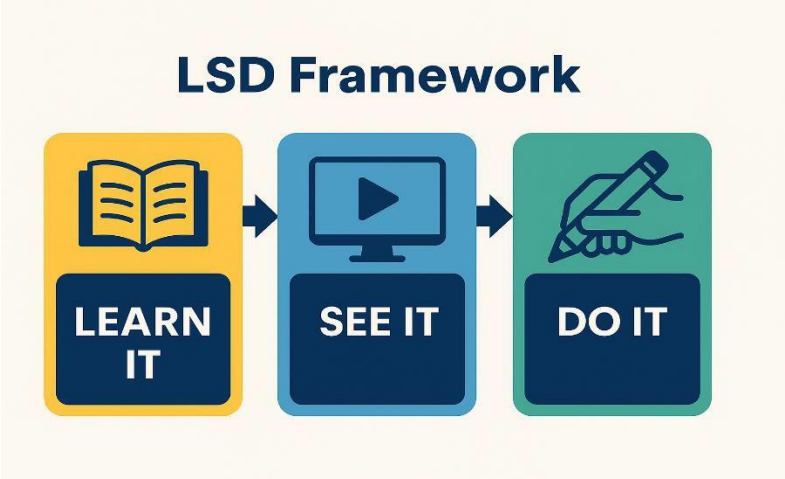
All learners and community groups must use the free Access codes to use the AI platform and access the training material. Access codes are provided by the community partner such as Mama Akua house or the community AI trainer. A fee of $20 is applied for non-community members to use the AI resources and cover the AI transactional fees to access the large language models such as open AI or Gemini. (We do not use Groq or Deepseek)

### *Catalog Overview*

The "Think. Prompt. Build." microlearning series offers AI upskilling courses designed to meet the evolving needs of Detroit-based youth, young adults, and community learners. These courses are tailored to support learners in understanding, applying, and ethically engaging with AI tools across personal, academic, professional, and civic contexts.

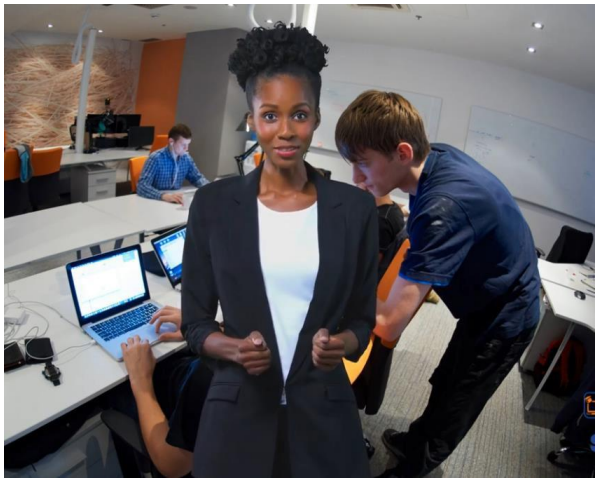
Each course is grounded in the **LSD Framework**:

- **Learn it** (Core concept/theory)
- **See it** (Real-world demonstration)
- **Do it** (Hands-on application using AI tools)




These short-format, accessible modules provide bite-sized, impactful training experiences to boost AI readiness and confidence.

**Watch the course overview by Judith**

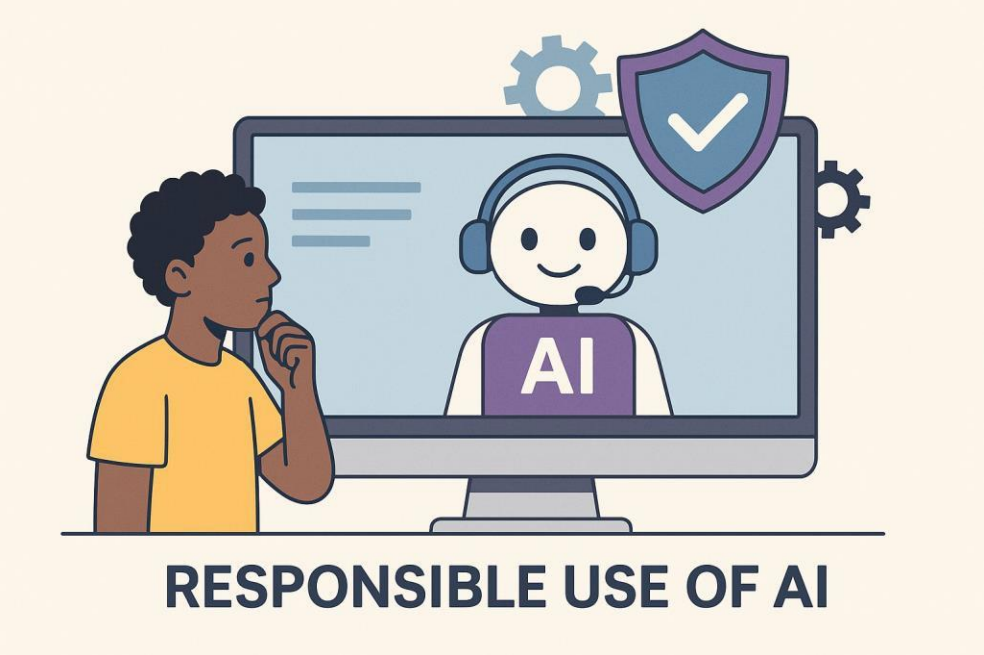


**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QFpa2xm7xQ&t=2s**

# COURSE 1: AI BASICS FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

**Target Group:** Beginners, youth and adults new to AI

**Rationale:** This course provides foundational understanding of AI and digital literacy. It addresses misconceptions, introduces tools, and helps learners navigate AI-driven spaces responsibly.




**Learning Objectives:**

- Define AI and describe its real-world applications
- Compare common AI platforms
- Recognize ethical considerations and privacy risks
- Detect AI-generated misinformation

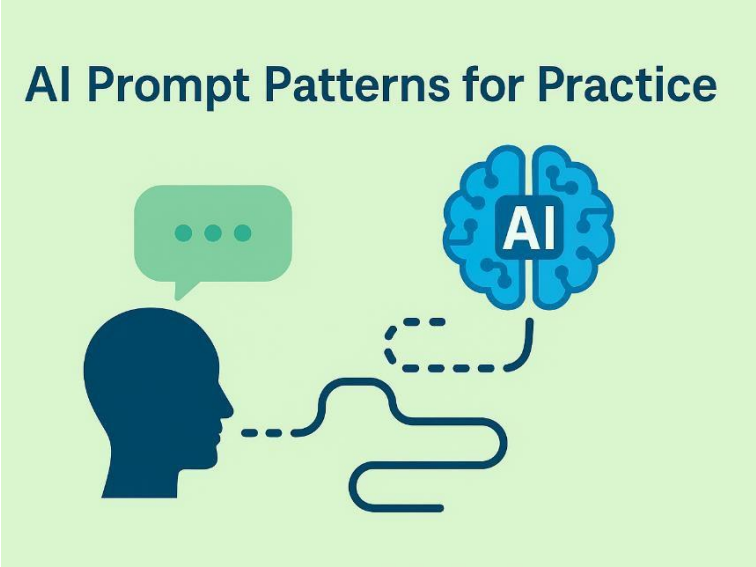
**Modules:**

1. What is AI, Really?
2. Understanding AI Platforms
3. Ethics, Privacy & AI
4. Spotting AI Fakes

# COURSE 2: PROMPT POWER – PRACTICAL AI SKILLS

**Target Group:** High school students, young creatives, job seekers

**Rationale:** Effective use of AI starts with good prompting. This course teaches prompt engineering basics to unlock creative, academic, and productivity-enhancing use of AI.




**Learning Objectives:**

- Write effective prompts for diverse tasks
- Use AI to improve writing and communication
- Express creativity using generative tools
- Organize life and work tasks using AI

**Modules:**

1. Prompt Crafting 101
2. Writing with AI
3. Creative Expression with AI
4. AI for Organization & Productivity

# COURSE 3: AI FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING & SOCIAL IMPACT

**Target Group:** Detroit youth, civic leaders, community storytellers

**Rationale:** Empowering communities with AI enhances storytelling, data sharing, and civic engagement. This course focuses on how AI can amplify local voices and support ethical innovation.


**Learning Objectives:**

- Use AI for local outreach and civic messaging
- Create stories that highlight changemakers
- Analyze community data with AI
- Apply ethical AI principles in community settings

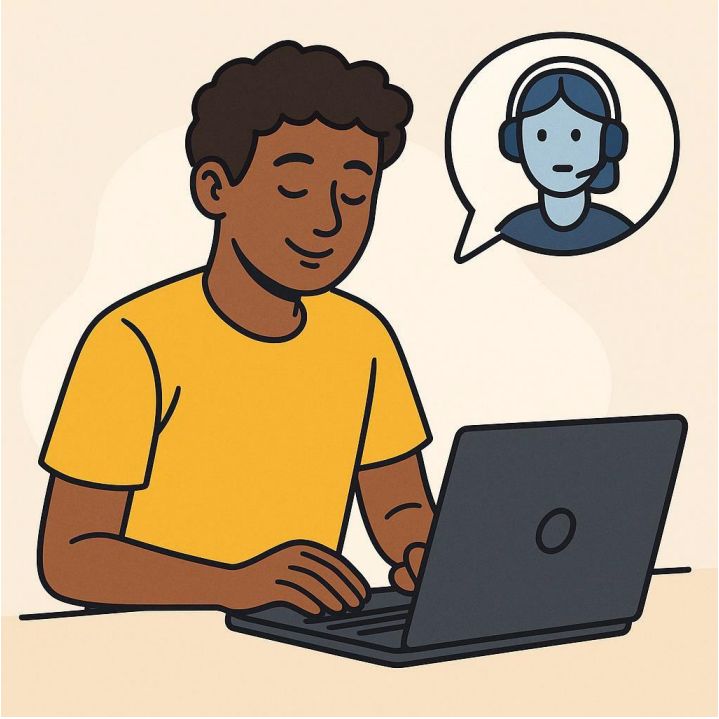
**Modules:**

1. AI for Civic Messaging
2. Storytelling for the Community
3. AI for Community Research & Data Sharing
4. Ethical Use of AI in the Neighborhood

# COURSE 4: AI FOR ENTREPRENEURS & DIGITAL BUILDERS

**Target Group:** Solopreneurs, creatives, small business owners

**Rationale:** AI can help reduce startup barriers by supporting digital content, brand messaging, and market analysis. This course shows how to launch and grow ideas using AI, including social media content creation to build digital presence and audience engagement.



**Learning Objectives:**

- Use AI to plan and brand a business
- Design a simple landing page using no-code tools
- Generate content for e-commerce, marketing, and social media
- Pitch ideas effectively with AI support

**Modules:**

1. Plan a Business with AI
2. Build a Landing Page (No Code Needed)
3. E-Commerce Content with AI
4. AI-Powered Digital Pitch

# COURSE 5: AI FOR JOB SEARCHING AND APPLICATIONS

**Target Group:** Young adults, job seekers, career changers

**Rationale:** This course prepares learners to leverage AI to navigate the job market—from exploring careers to writing tailored resumes and preparing for interviews.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Identify suitable career paths with AI assistance
- Analyze job descriptions to target applications
- Personalize resumes and cover letters using AI
- Practice and refine interview responses
- Evaluate job offers and follow up professionally
- Use AI to assess and improve application fit

**Modules:**

1. Discovering Career Paths with AI
2. Finding the Right Jobs Faster
3. Resume Personalization at Scale
4. Writing Effective Cover Letters
5. Preparing for Interviews with AI
6. Post-Interview Follow-Up & Offer Evaluation
7. AI-Powered Role Fit Analysis & Optimization

# COURSE 6: AI FOR MULTIMEDIA CREATION

**Target Group:** Creatives, influencers, educators, small business owners

**Rationale:** This course empowers learners to use generative AI to design impactful multimedia content, from images to avatars to videos, supporting storytelling, branding, and expression.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Generate high-quality AI images using prompt tools
- Create short videos and visual content using AI generators
- Design digital avatars for use in education, business, or social media
- Understand the ethics and limitations of multimedia AI tools

**Modules:**

1. Creating Images with AI Prompts
2. AI Video Generation and Editing
3. Building and Using AI Avatars
4. Ethical and Practical Tips for Multimedia AI Use

***CLOSING NOTE:***

These courses are designed to build confidence, competence, and community through AI. Learners not only gain technical knowledge but also cultivate ethical awareness and self-efficacy in applying AI to real-life scenarios.


## Access Course  Material

www.studyaid.institute

## Access Course AT Training platform

www.studyaid.store

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# APPENDIX B. PROMPT LIBRARY & CHEAT SHEETS

- 60+ customizable prompts organized by use case (writing, planning, entrepreneurship, etc.)
- Prompt structure templates using blanks (e.g., “Write a ____ for ____ to help with ____”)
- Quick-reference guides for:
    - Effective prompt design
    - Prompt tuning for tone, audience, and format

# APPENDIX C. COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

| | Top Populations Served | Top General AI Skills | Top Business AI Skills | Top Creative AI Skills | Top Community Impact AI Skills | Preferred Training Models | Top Barriers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | |
| Youth | 14 | | | | | | | |
| Single parents | 11 | | | | | | | |
| Low-income families | 11 | | | | | | | |
| Seniors | 10 | | | | | | | |
| Justice-involved individuals | 10 | | | | | | | |
| People with disabilities | 8 | | | | | | | |
| Newcomers / Immigrants | 5 | | | | | | | |
| All ages and backgrounds, | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Caregiver | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Basic AI literacy and digital confidence | | 13 | | | | | | |
| Using AI for job search/resume writing | | 11 | | | | | | |
| Customer service and chatbot tools | | 9 | | | | | | |
| App development with AI | | 8 | | | | | | |
| Prompt engineering | | 7 | | | | | | |
| AI for business planning | | | 14 | | | | | |
| AI for sales & marketing | | | 13 | | | | | |
| AI for operations | | | 13 | | | | | |
| Writing with AI | | | | 15 | | | | |
| Video/audio content creation | | | | 13 | | | | |
| AI-generated art and illustration | | | | 11 | | | | |
| AI for education/tutoring | | | | | 16 | | | |
| AI for community health work | | | | | 10 | | | |
| Data labeling or remote microtasks | | | | | 9 | | | |
| Hybrid / blended | | | | | | 13 | | |
| In-person | | | | | | 7 | | |
| On-site at your organization | | | | | | 6 | | |
| Online (self-paced) | | | | | | 2 | | |
| Low digital literacy | | | | | | | 13 | |
| Transportation | | | | | | | 10 | |
| Lack of time | | | | | | | 9 | |
| Childcare needs | | | | | | | 6 | |
| Lack of internet access/devices | | | | | | | 3 | |
| Language barriers | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | | | | | | | | |

APPENDIX D. TRAIN-THE-TRAINER GUIDE

# Facilitator Guide for AI Literacy Trainers

## Overview

This guide is for trainers and facilitators preparing to deliver AI literacy workshops using the AI Upskilling Curriculum. It offers a structured approach to planning, delivering, and evaluating training sessions based on the LSD Framework (Learn it, See it, Do it).

## 1. Preparing for the Workshop

- Review the selected course modules and adapt to your audience.
- Test AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini) and ensure access to Wi-Fi.
- Prepare slides and print materials if needed.
- Con□irm location, attendance, and available tech support.
- Arrange for participant devices or plan for shared activities.

## 2. Session Structure (LSD Framework)

Each session should follow this progression:

- Learn It – Present key concepts using slides.
  - Tip: Use real-life examples to demystify AI.
- See It – Demonstrate a prompt live using StudyAid or other tools.
  - Tip: Narrate your thinking and show both good and bad outputs.
- Do It – Invite participants to try on their own using prompts.
  - Tip: Provide printed or digital prompt libraries.

## 3. Engagement & Inclusion Techniques

- Use small group activities and pair sharing.
- Ask open-ended questions: 'What surprised you about that output?'
- Normalize mistakes and emphasize experimentation.
- Encourage culturally relevant use cases.
- Allow re□lection time with journaling or discussion.

## 4. Materials & Equipment Checklist

- Laptop or tablet for facilitator
- TV or projector with HDMI cable
- Whiteboard or □lipchart with markers
- Copies of prompt libraries or QR codes to access digitally
- Participant sign-in sheet
- Backup internet access (e.g., hotspot)

## 5. Evaluation Tools

Use the following tools for gathering feedback:

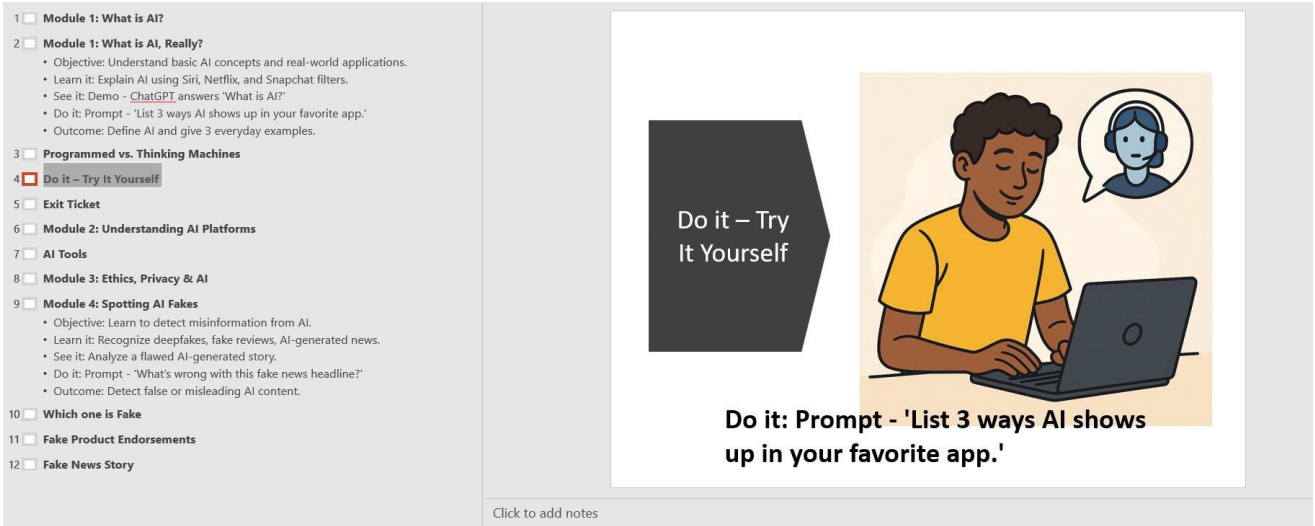
- Pre-session survey: Ask about comfort with AI tools.
- Post-session re□lection: What did you learn? What would you try next?
- Short quiz or demo task: Evaluate comprehension of key concepts.
- Verbal feedback circle: One takeaway from each participant.

## 6. Tips for New Peer Trainers

- Start small: Co-facilitate or lead one section □irst.
- Use the facilitator notes in the slide decks.
- Practice your prompts beforehand.
- Build your con□idence by running a test session with friends.
- Bring your community stories into the lessons—it makes the content more powerful.

# APPENDIX E. SAMPLE MATERIALS

| | |
|---|---|
| www.studyaid.store | Access Courses including lectures and course material |
| www.studyaid.institute | Access Course AT Training platform which contains chatbots, templates and prompt library |
| https://www.youtube.com/@Studyaid-fy | Training Videos |
| https://studyaid.institute/catalog/ | Course Catalog |

1 Module 1: What is AI?

2 Module 1: What is AI, Really?
- Objective: Understand basic AI concepts and real-world applications.
- Learn it: Explain AI using Siri, Netflix, and Snapchat filters.
- See it: Demo - ChatGPT answers 'What is AI?'
- Do it: Prompt - 'List 3 ways AI shows up in your favorite app.'
- Outcome: Define AI and give 3 everyday examples.

3 Programmed vs. Thinking Machines

4 Do it – Try It Yourself

5 Exit Ticket

6 Module 2: Understanding AI Platforms

7 AI Tools

8 Module 3: Ethics, Privacy & AI

9 Module 4: Spotting AI Fakes
- Objective: Learn to detect misinformation from AI.
- Learn it: Recognize deepfakes, fake reviews, AI-generated news.
- See it: Analyze a flawed AI-generated story.
- Do it: Prompt - 'What's wrong with this fake news headline?'
- Outcome: Detect false or misleading AI content.

10 Which one is Fake

11 Fake Product Endorsements

12 Fake News Story


Click to add notes

1 Module 1: What is AI?

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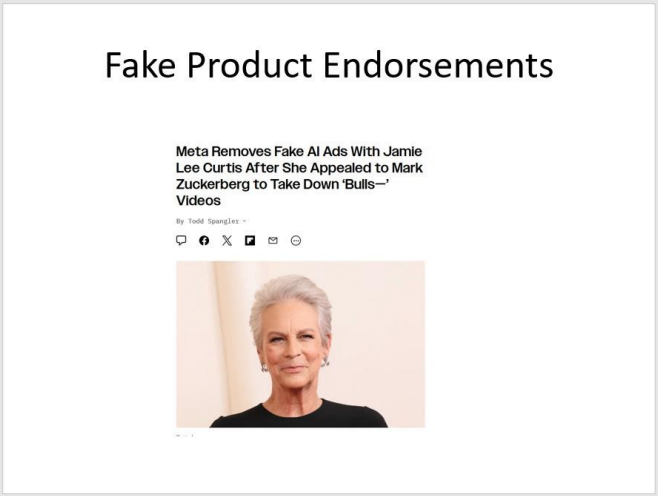


Click to add notes

The MSU EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) seeks to identify and develop new economic development tools, models, policies, and practices to support innovative economic development, high-growth enterprises, and job creation in distressed regions across the state. REI is establishing a new economic development ecosystem to cope with the ever-changing global and regional dynamics. Through this ecosystem, REI engages innovative and creative minds which results in new economic development practices.

The REI University Center was established in 2011 with support from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, and in collaboration with the following Michigan State University offices:

Office of the Provost
Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation
University Outreach and Engagement
MSU Extension
College of Communication Arts and Sciences

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