Mitra Mahajana: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat 7(2), 2026, 328-336
ISSN 2747-1861 (print), ISSN 2747-187X (online)
https://doi.org/10.37478/mahajana.v7i2.7745 **mahajana@uniflor.ac.id**
Available online at: https://e-journal.uniflor.ac.id/index.php/mahajana/7745

ENHANCING DIGITAL CONTENT DESIGN LITERACY THROUGH CANVA TRAINING FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE 2026 PHASE 2 NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

Ferdinandus Lidang Witi[1*], Yosep Thobias Parera[2], Maria Adelvin Londa[3]
[1,3]Universitas Flores, Ende, Flores, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia
[2]Universitas Nusa Nipa, Maumere, Flores, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia
*Corresponding author, email: ferdylidang2017@gmail.com

Received: 03/03/2026 *Revised: 27/06/2026* *Accepted: 28/06/2026*

Abstract. *Digital transformation demands that the younger generation develop the ability to create creative and communicative digital content. One important skill to develop is digital content design with the easily accessible, user-friendly Canva platform. The 2026 National Community Service Phase 2, themed "Becoming a Digital Content Design Expert with Canva for High School Students," aims to improve participants' understanding and skills in digital content design. The activity was held online on May 16 and 23, 2026, through a collaboration between various universities and organizations in Indonesia. The implementation method included preparation, implementation, and evaluation stages. Learning was conducted through webinars, demonstrations, hands-on practice, interactive discussions, and questions and answers. The evaluation used pre-test and post-test instruments with a Likert scale of 1–5, attended by 344 participants in the pre-test and 277 participants in the post-test. The evaluation results showed an increase in the average score from 3.44 to 3.74, an increase of 8.72%. The highest increase occurred in the indicator of understanding visual design concepts, from 3.15 to 3.63. Furthermore, the understanding of information layout increased from 3.15 to 3.56, and the understanding of Canva usage increased from 3.89 to 4.06. These results indicate that the training was effective in improving participants' digital literacy, creativity, and visual communication skills. Participant responses also demonstrated high interest in developing advanced digital competencies, particularly Canva's integration with Artificial Intelligence (AI), AI-based content creation, digital marketing, and personal branding. This activity demonstrates that Canva-based digital content design training can be an effective tool to support the sustainable development of the younger generation's digital competencies.*

Keywords*: canva, digital content design, digital creativity, digital literacy*

Abstrak. Transformasi digital menuntut generasi muda memiliki kemampuan untuk menciptakan konten digital yang kreatif dan efektif. Salah satu keterampilan penting untuk dikembangkan adalah desain konten digital menggunakan platform Canva yang mudah diakses dan digunakan. Kegiatan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat (PkM) Nasional 2026 Tahap 2 bertema "Jago Desain Konten Digital dengan Canva untuk Siswa SMA" bertujuan meningkatkan pemahaman dan keterampilan peserta dalam desain konten digital. Kegiatan dilaksanakan secara daring pada tanggal 16 dan 23 Mei 2026 melalui kolaborasi berbagai perguruan tinggi dan organisasi di Indonesia. Metode pelaksanaan meliputi tahap persiapan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Pembelajaran dilakukan melalui webinar, demonstrasi, praktik langsung, diskusi interaktif, dan tanya jawab. Evaluasi menggunakan instrumen pre-test dan post-test dengan skala Likert 1–5 yang diikuti oleh 344 peserta pada pre-test dan 277 peserta pada post-test. Hasil evaluasi menunjukkan peningkatan rata-rata skor dari 3,44 menjadi 3,74 atau meningkat sebesar 8,72%. Peningkatan tertinggi terjadi pada indikator pemahaman konsep desain visual, dari 3,15 menjadi 3,63. Selain itu, pemahaman tata letak informasi meningkat dari 3,15 menjadi 3,56, serta pemahaman penggunaan Canva meningkat dari 3,89 menjadi 4,06. Hasil tersebut menunjukkan bahwa pelatihan efektif dalam meningkatkan literasi digital, kreativitas, dan kemampuan komunikasi visual peserta. Respons peserta juga menunjukkan tingginya minat terhadap pengembangan kompetensi digital lanjutan, khususnya integrasi Canva dengan Artificial Intelligence (AI), pembuatan konten berbasis AI, pemasaran digital, dan personal branding. Kegiatan ini membuktikan bahwa pelatihan desain konten digital berbasis Canva dapat menjadi sarana yang efektif untuk mendukung peningkatan kompetensi digital generasi muda secara berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: canva, desain konten digital, kreativitas digital, literasi digital

How to Cite: Witi, F. L., Parera, Y. T. & Londa, M. A. (2026). ENHANCING DIGITAL CONTENT DESIGN LITERACY THROUGH CANVA TRAINING FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE 2026 PHASE 2 NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM. *Mitra Mahajana: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat, 7*(2) 328-336. doi: https://doi.org/10.37478/mahajana.v7i2.7745

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed various aspects of human life, including communication, education, business, and social interaction. In the digital era,

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individuals are not only required to access information but also to create, manage, and disseminate information effectively through digital platforms (Kozyreva et al., 2020). Consequently, digital literacy has become an essential competency for students and communities in responding to the demands of the twenty-first century (Martínez-Bravo et al., 2022). According to Nasrullah (2015), digital literacy encompasses the ability to access, understand, evaluate, and produce information using digital technologies responsibly and productively.

One important component of digital literacy is the ability to create digital content. Digital content refers to information presented in electronic formats, such as text, images, audio, video, and multimedia elements (Yu & Zadorozhnyy, 2022). Among these forms, visual content has gained particular importance because it can communicate information more effectively and attract audience attention more efficiently than text-based communication (Gong et al., 2025). Visual representations help simplify complex information, enhance comprehension, and increase audience engagement (Arsyad, 2017). Therefore, the ability to design attractive and informative visual content has become a valuable skill in educational, organizational, and professional contexts.

The increasing use of social media and digital communication platforms has further emphasized the need for content creation skills among students (Shahid et al., 2025). Educational institutions increasingly encourage students to present ideas creatively through posters, infographics, presentations, and other visual media (Jaleniauskiene & Kasperiuniene, 2023). These activities not only support academic achievement but also foster creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills (Thornhill-Miller et al., 2023). However, many students still have limited knowledge and experience in graphic design, which may hinder their ability to produce effective digital content (Mohamed, 2025).

To address this challenge, various digital design platforms have been developed to facilitate content creation for users with diverse levels of expertise. One of the most widely used platforms is Canva, an online graphic design application that offers a user-friendly interface and a wide range of customizable templates (Rahma et al., 2024). Canva enables users to create professional-quality designs for presentations, posters, social media content, brochures, infographics, and promotional materials without requiring advanced graphic design skills (Canva, 2025). Its accessibility and ease of use make Canva particularly suitable as a learning tool for students who are beginning to develop digital design competencies. Given the growing importance of digital content creation skills, efforts to strengthen students' competencies in this area are highly relevant. Training programs that introduce basic design principles and practical applications of digital design tools can help students improve their creativity and digital communication abilities (Al-Rqaibat et al., 2026). Such initiatives are also aligned with the broader goal of preparing students to participate actively and productively in an increasingly digital society.

Based on these considerations, the National Community Service Program (PkM) 2026 Phase 2 organized a training activity entitled "Mastering Digital Content Design with Canva for Senior High School Students." This program aimed to enhance participants' understanding of fundamental design principles and develop their practical skills in utilizing Canva for digital content creation (Hinchcliff & Mehmet, 2023). Through interactive learning activities and hands-on practice, participants were expected to acquire the knowledge and competencies necessary to design engaging, informative, and visually appealing digital content (Sari et al., 2025). Furthermore, the training sought to foster creativity, innovation, and digital literacy among high school students as essential competencies for academic, personal, and future professional development (Maryam & Bagye, 2023; Priska et al., 2025).

METHOD

The National Community Service Program 2026 was conducted online through a virtual conferencing platform from March to May 2026. The program represented a national collaborative initiative involving educational institutions and professional organizations from various regions of Indonesia. The primary objective of the program was to enhance the digital

competencies of young people by providing knowledge and practical skills relevant to the demands of the digital era (Kiryakova & Kozhuharova, 2024).

The implementation of the program involved collaboration among several institutions, namely IndoCEISS West Nusa Tenggara Province, IndoCEISS East Nusa Tenggara Province, IndoCEISS Special Capital Region of Jakarta Province, IndoCEISS East Kalimantan Province, Bhayangkara Jakarta Raya University, Nusa Nipa University, Bumigora University, STIKOM Insan Unggul, STIKOM Artha Buana Kupang, Flores University, and Krakatau Polytechnic. This collaboration reflected a collective commitment to supporting digital literacy development and strengthening the capacity of students through community engagement activities (Sari et al., 2024).

The program was organized under the theme "Accelerating Youth Digital Competencies: National Collaboration of Higher Education Institutions to promote creativity, artificial intelligence, and Personal Branding through 2026." The theme was selected to address the growing need for digital skills, creativity, and technological adaptability among students and young generations in the context of rapid digital transformation (Van Vi, 2025). The implementation of the program consisted of three main stages: preparation, execution, and evaluation.

Preparation Stage

The preparation stage involved a series of coordination meetings among partner institutions to determine the objectives, schedule, and technical aspects of the program. During this stage, training materials were developed and adapted to the needs of participants. The organizing committee also selected qualified speakers and facilitators with expertise in digital literacy, content creation, artificial intelligence, and personal branding. In addition, evaluation instruments in the form of pre-tests and post-tests were designed to measure participants' knowledge improvement. Promotional activities were conducted through various digital communication channels to disseminate information about the program and attract prospective participants from different regions (Williams et al., 2022)

Implementation Stage

The implementation stage was conducted through a national webinar and interactive training sessions delivered online. The learning activities were designed to combine theoretical understanding with practical experience, enabling participants to actively engage in the learning process (Schmidt & Tawfik, 2022). The training consisted of several thematic sessions, including:
Digital creativity in the era of technological transformation, which introduced participants to the importance of creativity and innovation in digital environments (Selfa-Sastre et al., 2022; Timokhova et al., 2022)
Utilizing artificial intelligence for education and productivity, which explored practical applications of AI tools to support learning activities and improve productivity (EL Idrissi & Alami, 2026).
Digital content design using canva, which focused on developing participants' skills in creating attractive and effective visual content through Canva (Dmitrenko et al., 2024)
Strategies for building personal branding in digital media, which discussed methods for establishing a positive and professional online presence (Venciute et al., 2024).
Optimizing social media for personal and career development, which provided insights into the effective use of social media platforms for self-development and future career opportunities (Elenurm, 2022).

Various instructional methods were employed throughout the training program, including lectures, demonstrations, hands-on practice, interactive discussions, and question-and-answer sessions (Syawaludin et al., 2022). These approaches were intended to facilitate participant engagement, encourage active learning, and provide opportunities for practical application of the concepts presented during the sessions (Grijpma et al., 2024)

Evaluation Stage

The evaluation was conducted using pre-test and post-test methods to measure the participants' level of understanding of the materials presented during the program (Oh & Kim, 2023). The evaluation instrument employed a five-point Likert scale (1–5) covering several aspects, including understanding of digital platform utilization, creativity in digital content development, utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI), understanding of personal branding, and productive use of digital media. The number of respondents participating in the evaluation consisted of 344 participants in the pre-test and 277 participants in the post-test. The evaluation data were analyzed using a descriptive quantitative approach by comparing the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test results to determine the level of improvement in participants' understanding after participating in the program.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

To evaluate the effectiveness of the training program, participants were asked to complete pre-test and post-test questionnaires before and after the training activities. The questionnaires measured participants' perceptions and understanding of several aspects related to digital content design using Canva. The comparison of the average scores obtained from both assessments is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Comparison of pre-test and post-test results*

No.	Assessment Indicator	Pre-Test	Post-Test
1	Understanding of Canva utilization	3.89	4.06
2	Understanding of visual design concepts	3.15	3.63
3	Understanding of font and colour usage	3.41	3.67
4	Understanding of information layout	3.15	3.56
5	Efficiency in using Canva features	3.61	3.78
Average		**3.44**	**3.74**

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that all assessment indicators experienced improvement after participants attended the training program. The overall average score increased from 3.44 in the pre-test to 3.74 in the post-test, suggesting that the training contributed positively to participants' understanding and skills related to digital content design. The increase in scores across all indicators demonstrates that the learning objectives of the program were generally achieved and that participants benefited from both the theoretical and practical components of the training (Barthakur et al., 2022)

A closer examination of the data reveals that participants initially demonstrated a relatively high level of familiarity with Canva, as indicated by the pre-test score of 3.89 for Canva utilization. This finding suggests that some participants had previous exposure to the platform before attending the training. Nevertheless, the score increased to 4.06 in the post-test, indicating that participants gained additional knowledge regarding Canva's features and functionalities. The increase also reflects greater confidence in utilizing the platform to create professional and visually appealing digital content (Rahma et al., 2024).

Analysis of Participants' Learning Improvement

The effectiveness of the training was further analyzed by comparing the overall average scores obtained in the pre-test and post-test assessments. The percentage of improvement was calculated using the following formula: The calculation yielded an improvement of 8.72%, indicating that the training program had a positive impact on participants' understanding of digital content creation and visual communication. This increase demonstrates that the combination of lectures, demonstrations, discussions, and hands-on practice sessions successfully facilitated the learning process and enhanced participants' competencies (Qi et al., 2026).

Among all assessment indicators, the largest increase was observed in the understanding of visual design concepts, which improved from 3.15 in the pre-test to 3.63 in the post-test. This result suggests that participants acquired a deeper understanding of fundamental design principles, such as balance, contrast, alignment, proximity, and visual consistency. Before the training, many participants may have focused primarily on the aesthetic appearance of digital content without fully understanding the principles that contribute to effective visual communication (Merkulova & Pryshchenko, 2022). Through the training sessions, participants were introduced to these concepts and provided with opportunities to apply them directly in design activities (Zhang et al., 2023).

A substantial improvement was also observed in the understanding of information layout, which increased from 3.15 to 3.56. This finding indicates that participants became more aware of the importance of organizing visual elements and information systematically (Glassberg et al., 2025). Effective layout design helps audiences process information more efficiently and improves the overall readability of digital content (Mohamed, 2025). The improvement in this indicator suggests that participants were able to recognize and apply the concept of visual hierarchy, which is an essential element of successful communication design (Liu, 2025).



Figure 1. *Opening session and presentation of the Canva-based digital content design training*

Similarly, the indicator related to the understanding of font and colour usage increased from 3.41 to 3.67. This result demonstrates that participants developed greater awareness of how typography and colour selection influence the effectiveness of visual communication (Mohamed, 2025). Appropriate combinations of fonts and colours can enhance readability, strengthen visual identity and increase audience engagement (Buljat et al., 2024). Through practical exercises using Canva, participants were able to experiment with different design elements and understand their impact on message delivery (Rahma et al., 2024).

Overall, the observed improvements suggest that the training successfully enhanced participants' knowledge, skills, and confidence in digital content creation. These findings support the argument that technology-based learning environments can facilitate meaningful learning experiences by allowing participants to interact directly with digital tools and apply newly acquired knowledge in authentic contexts (Asad et al., 2026). The results are consistent with the findings of Arsyad (2017), who emphasized that technology-supported learning media can increase learner engagement and improve understanding through interactive and contextual learning experiences.

Participants' Responses

In addition to measuring learning outcomes through pre-test and post-test assessments, participant feedback was collected to gain deeper insights into their perceptions of the training program. The feedback revealed that participants considered several topics particularly beneficial and relevant to their needs. These topics included Canva and digital content design, creative idea generation and content planning, personal branding, and the utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for learning and productivity purposes (Seneadza et al., 2025).

The positive responses toward Canva and digital content design indicate that participants recognized the practical value of acquiring digital design skills (Rahma et al., 2024). Many participants viewed Canva as an accessible tool that could support their academic activities, organizational involvement, entrepreneurial initiatives, and personal projects (Pepin et al., 2024). The interest shown in content planning and creative idea generation suggests that participants not only sought technical skills but also desired a deeper understanding of the creative process behind effective content development (Chavula et al., 2024).

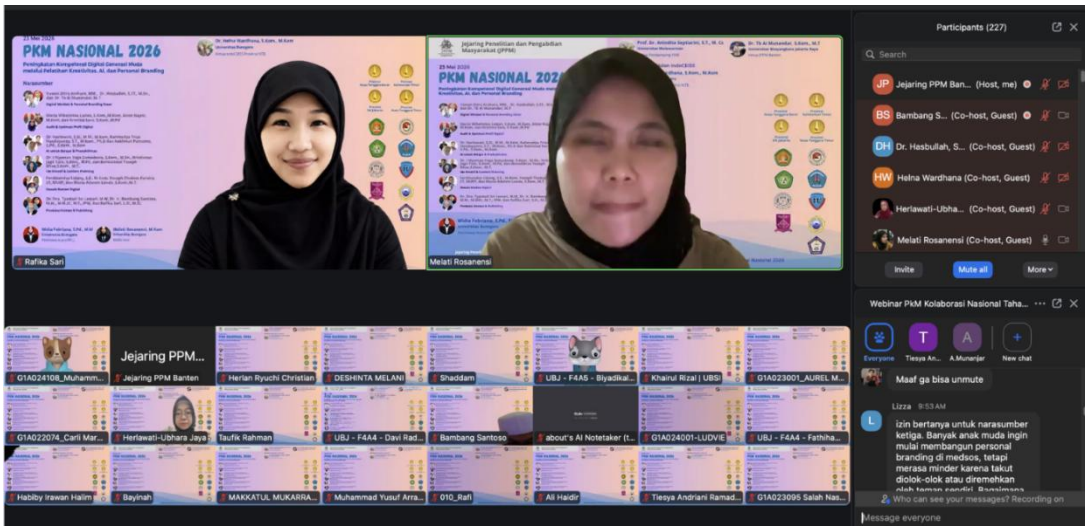


Figure 2. *Interactive discussion and participant engagement during the online Canva training session*

Another notable finding was the strong interest in Artificial Intelligence (AI). Participants expressed appreciation for learning how AI tools can support educational activities, improve productivity, and assist in content creation (Wang et al., 2023). This response reflects the growing relevance of AI technologies in contemporary education and professional environments. As AI becomes increasingly integrated into daily life, students are becoming more aware of its potential applications and benefits (Lin & Chen, 2024). Participants also highlighted the importance of personal branding as one of the most valuable topics discussed during the training. This finding suggests that students recognize the significance of establishing a positive digital identity and maintaining a professional online presence (Quintas-Mendes & Paiva, 2023). In today's interconnected digital environment, personal branding has become an important factor influencing educational opportunities, career development, and professional networking (Venciute et al., 2024)

Overall, the evaluation findings and participant feedback demonstrate that the training program successfully achieved its objectives of enhancing digital literacy, improving digital content design skills, and fostering interest in emerging technologies. The positive outcomes highlight the effectiveness of collaborative community service initiatives in supporting the development of digital competencies among young people. Furthermore, the results suggest that similar programs should be continued and expanded to address emerging technological trends and equip students with the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly digital society.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions that can be drawn from this activity are as follows. The National Community Service Program (PkM) 2026 Phase 2, with the theme mastering digital content design with Canva for senior high school students, successfully improved participants' understanding of digital content design and the use of Canva. The evaluation results showed that the average participant score increased from 3.44 in the pre-test to 3.74 in the post-test, indicating an improvement of 8.72%. The training was proven to be effective in enhancing

participants' digital literacy, creativity, and visual communication skills. Therefore, similar activities should continue to be developed with more advanced materials, particularly those related to the integration of digital design with Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology and future digital content development strategies. As a form of program sustainability, participants were provided with access to the training materials, certificates of participation, and information regarding advanced digital competency development programs organized by the partner universities and IndoCEISS. This collaborative and technology-based implementation approach is expected to expand the reach of community service activities and continuously improve the digital competencies of the younger generation.

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