D3.3 Plan for Exploitation & Dissemination of Results (PEDR)

Month 22

DELIVERABLE INFORMATION

Contract No.	871275
Work Package	3
Responsible Organisation	ISDI
Date	30 September 2021
Deliverable Type	Report
Confidentiality level[1]	PU
Authors	Emily Carroll, ISDI
Reviewers	Romane Léauté, Molly O'Connor EUN
Filing code	IMPACTEdTech_D3.3_PEDR.docx

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Date	Author	Organisation	Description
1.	24 September	Emily Carroll	ISDI	First draft
2.	27 September	Romane Léauté, Molly O'Connor	EUN	Revisions
3.	29 September	Emily Carroll	ISDI	Final version
4.				
5.				
6.				

---

[1] 1 Confidentiality level:

PU = Public

PP = Restricted to other programme participants (including the EC services);

RE = Restricted to a group specified by the Consortium (including the EC services);

CO = Confidential, only for members of the Consortium (including the EC services).

INN - Internal only, only the members of the consortium (excluding the EC services)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

EU	European Union
OC1	Open Call 1
OC2/RS	Open Call 2 / Remote Schooling
OC3	Open Call 3
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
FSTP	Financial Support to Third Parties
SEN	Special Educational Needs
MVP	Minimum Viable Product
DLSG	Digital Learning Stakeholders Group
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
PEDR	Plan for Exploitation and Dissemination of Results
B2B	Business to Business
B2C	Business to Consumer
VET	Vocational Education and Training
HE	Higher Education
IT	Information Technology
VC	Venture Capital
SME	Small or Medium Enterprise
NGI	Next Generation Internet
DIH	Digital Innovation Hub
MoE	Ministry of Education
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
GA	Grant Agreement

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF FIGURES

TABLE OF TABLES

1. Introduction

The IMPACT EdTech project was created with the purpose of setting up a hybrid incubator-accelerator to boost 43 of Europe's best start-ups in the educational technology (edtech) field. The project aimed to do this through tailor-built business and educational support. The business support was to help start-ups refine their product and take it to the market in the most effective way. The educational support was to make sure the start-ups had a strong pedagogical element that truly supported the start-up's learning goals, whether those were focused on the K-12 classroom or on a wider audience. Furthermore, from its inception, the project had a strong focus on personalised digital learning and an aim to foster inclusive solutions that could help bring equity in gender, ability, and other areas to education.

The principal IMPACT EdTech values laid out in the Document of Work are four: challenge-driven, transparency, high performance, and continuous improvement.

- **Challenge-driven** means that the project was focused on identifying problems in an open, honest way, and then in directing energy toward overcoming those problems. Defining the challenge before launching into work means that time and resources will be used in the most efficient and effective way.

- **Transparency** is shown in the methodology proposed by the IMPACT EdTech project, in which processes and results will be visible to all relevant stakeholders, from Ministries of Education to participants in the programme. This open honesty not only guarantees fair treatment to all applicants and participants. It also allows the programme managers to gather feedback, learn from mistakes, and implement improvements on the go.

- **High performance** has a two-pronged meaning. It indicates that the project will expect exceptional effort and outcomes from all participating start-ups. It also means that the project consortium itself will hold the project to the highest standard, being satisfied delivering nothing less than the best possible programme.

- Finally, **continuous improvement** refers to the constant gathering of feedback and ongoing self-reflection in order to identify weak points in the programme and to find potential solutions.

In order to successfully carry out these ambitious goals and truly make an impact on the start-ups selected for the incubation-acceleration programme, it was necessary to offer a support programme which was both well-designed and well-executed, built on the values described above.

However, even if these objectives were met and the hoped-for excellence achieved, the project's success would count for little if its insight, knowledge imparted and lessons learned extended no farther than the 43 participants in the programme. Therefore, the stated aims of the IMPACT EdTech exploitation and dissemination strategy, as explained in the Grant Agreement, are to try to maximise the project impact through the following two pillars:

- Widely promoting the new personalised and inclusive EdTech solutions supported within IMPACT EdTech and fostering interaction with the digital learning ecosystem.

- Positioning IMPACT EdTech, at a European level, as a 'MVP Builder' model for EdTech solutions to be replicated.

The first pillar is covered in the **dissemination strategy**, in section 3. The second pillar is covered in the **exploitation strategy**, in section 4.

To these two pillars, we add a third: to report, describe and analyse the project's progress so far, using the established programme KPIs as a benchmark. This is covered in the **performance analysis** in section 2.

1.1. Definition of key terms

Before discussing the results, actions taken and actions planned, it is worthwhile stopping a moment for some definitions. As previously mentioned, this report focuses on dissemination and exploitation. However, there is a third term which is often linked with these two, and that is communication.

Communication, in the context of this project, refers to actions planned and efforts expended in order to spread the word about IMPACT EdTech and in order to attract third parties to the project. Most specifically, communication efforts in this project are centred around attracting relevant edtech start-ups to apply for the open calls. Additional communication actions have the purpose of building a large and active community of edtech disruptors. These actions are crucial to the project. They are discussed in great depth in the deliverables D1.1 Communication and Dissemination

Plan (M2), D1.2 Communication and Dissemination Plan - Update (M15), D1.3 Open Call Dissemination Report, Open Call 1 (M8), and D.14 Open Call Dissemination Report, Open Call 2 and 'Remote Schooling' Open Call (M20). As this report is focused on dissemination and exploitation, communication actions will not be covered and the interested reader is advised to refer to the aforementioned reports.

Dissemination refers to actions planned and efforts expended to spread the word about the project itself. As opposed to communication, which has a narrow focus such as attracting start-ups to apply to the open call, dissemination has the objective of sharing knowledge and insight gained during the undertaking of the IMPACT EdTech project as a whole. This has two parts: sharing information about the participating start-ups, such as highlighting individual journeys and use cases, and sharing information about the planning, management and execution of the programme, including its successes (and failures, in the forms of lessons learned). The former can inspire other start-ups in the European edtech community and contributes to the general knowledge base of edtech start-ups. The latter will improve the overall quality of support offered to start-ups throughout Europe, most specifically in the edtech field, thereby contributing to Europe's competitiveness in this vertical. Dissemination of project results is discussed in this report in depth in section 3.

Exploitation takes dissemination one step further. Beyond merely sharing information about the project and its results, exploitation focuses on the actions that will be taken to further the work done during the course of the IMPACT EdTech project, to make sure that the momentum built up during the project is fully taken advantage of. Exploitation is discussed in this report in section 4.

2. Performance analysis

The IMPACT EdTech project's primary aim is to provide an edtech-specific incubation ecosystem that can reach a wide range of disruptive start-ups across Europe, offering support to facilitate business consolidation and improve pedagogical results, ultimately encouraging the rapid uptake of emerging technologies by the market.

In order to monitor the project's progress, KPIs (key performance indicators) are tracked on multiple levels. On the one hand, each start-up monitors its own KPIs. These fall into two broad categories: product KPIs and impact KPIs.

Product KPIs measure the success of the product itself. The specific KPIs vary greatly from start-up to start-up, depending on the maturity level and business model, and could include metrics such as number of schools using the product, units sold, and so on. These KPIs are measured closely throughout the programme and are discussed in detail in deliverables D4.1 Report on EdTech Trials Incubation Stage 1 - batch 1, D5.1 Report on EdTech Trials Incubation Stage 2 - batch 1 and batch 'Remote Schooling, and the forthcoming D4.2 Report on EdTech Trials Incubation Stage 1 - batch 2 (in M26) and D5.2 Report on EdTech Trials Incubation Stage 2 - batch 2 (in M32).

The second category, **impact KPIs**, is broader, and measures the total potential impact of the solution and the communications around the solution. KPIs in this category could include the number of people exposed to the start-up's disruptive new technology/methodology, type of user impacted, and so on.

Figure 1. Start-up impact and product KPIs

These KPIs are essential to the success of the IMPACT EdTech programme as a whole; if the start-ups don't succeed on an individual level, the project can't be

considered a success. These are monitored as part of the Exploitation Strategies, and the results are discussed later in this report.

However, on a higher level, the IMPACT EdTech programme itself monitors certain **meta-KPIs**. These ensure that the project offers high quality support to the start-ups. They also measure the impact of the programme itself beyond the participating start-ups. They gauge whether the consortium was effective in disseminating information about the aims and activities of the project, and how the work carried out in this project can be used to the benefit of the wider European edtech community.
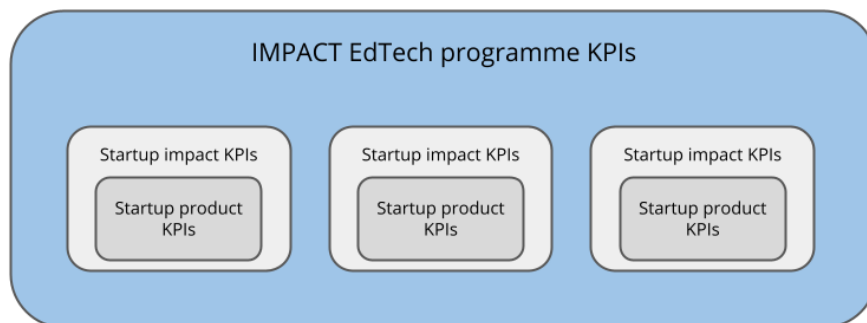
Figure 2. IMPACT EdTech meta-KPIs

2.1. Project impacts and KPIs

The programme's meta-KPIs are divided into areas based on how they contribute to expected impacts. In this section, each impact will be examined separately, along with the relevant KPIs, results achieved so far, work done to achieve those results, and lessons learned.

2.1.1. Impact #1: uptake of technology for inclusive learning

Impact #1 states that the programme will contribute to a significant *Increase in the overall uptake of technology for personalised and inclusive learning for all, regardless of their age, gender or other socioeconomic factors*. In order to achieve this impact, KPIs in this area focus on the number of stakeholders (teacher, educators, schools, learners, countries) directly involved in various aspects of the programme and the number of stakeholders (same as above, plus experts, ministers and policy makers) informed about the project and its outcomes.

While the IMPACT EdTech programme focuses primarily on the supply side of the market — that is, by helping build up the offering — these goals place emphasis on the demand side — that is, the end user. It is essential to keep the final user in sight while building an effective support programme. This is done by incorporating end users into initial product testing, facilitating early deals with demand-side agents through piloting, portfolio management of the start-ups selected for Stage 2, and promotion of the 'Best-in-Class' start-ups recognised as the top of the top at the end of Stage 2.

The purpose of the IMPACT EdTech programme is broader than simply creating a portfolio of start-ups that attract users' attention. The programme must also be built with integrity, making sure that learners' best interests are placed at the heart of the project. By bridging the gap between end users and pedagogical experts (educators, heads of schools, etc), this project aims to fulfil this purpose.

Progress made so far on these KPIs can be seen in Table 1. KPIs related to impact #1. (Please note that the numbering follows that of the Grant Agreement, which is erroneous - there are two KPIs with the number 1.3.)

Table 1. KPIs related to impact #1

#	KPI Name	Target	Achieved so far	Comment
1.1	Number of teachers and educators involved in trainings and focus group activities	54	45	Teachers and co-creators who participated in MVP live testing from OC1 and in the strand A piloting and co-creation activities from OC1 and OC2/RS are counted in this KPI. So far, we have achieved more than 80% of the target, and we expect to easily surpass this KPI during OC3, always striving for a balanced group of teachers of different countries, subjects, and age levels.
1.2	Number of schools and countries participating in K12 School pilots	25-27 different schools	39	These KPIs measure the participant schools and countries in the piloting carried out by start-ups in Strand A.1. Both KPIs have been well exceeded already, and the numbers will continue to grow in OC3.
		At least 9 countries	16	
1.3	Number of K12 School pilots sustaining or extending deployment in the year after the project ends if the solution is sustainable	At least 4	-	It is too early to monitor this result.

1.3	Number of representatives or experts from national/regional authorities informed of 'Best-in-Class' outcomes	At least 60	33	This KPI ensures the proper promotion of Best-in-Class start-ups among experts and authorities at a regional or national level. Thus far, 56% of the target has been met. Reaching the entire goal will be a focus during OC3.
1.4	Number of learners participating in pilots and engaging with disruptive technologies during the 5-month short-cycle of piloting	More than 420	1,387	This KPI has already been extremely successfully met, as we have achieved over three times the target and the numbers will continue to grow in OC3. Furthermore, this figure only takes into account piloting by Strand A.1 start-ups. Start-ups in other Strands also engage learners with their technology, although that number is not taken into account here.
1.5	Number of national and regional policy and decision makers informed about the technologies piloted.	More than 30	33	This KPI has been met and exceeded, and the numbers will continue to grow in OC3.
1.6	Number of teachers, educators, school directors and decision makers informed about the technologies piloted.	More than 1,000	6,350	This KPI ensures that the partner's network of educators and decision makers are informed about the IMPACT EdTech piloted solutions from Stage 2. This KPI has been met and exceeded.

Results and lessons learned

The KPIs in this group are focused on ensuring that the project has a wide educational impact, measuring teachers, educators, learners, schools, countries and policy makers impacted by IMPACT EdTech activities. It is safe to say that the results have been highly successful so far. KPIs 1.1, 1.2, 1.4 and 1.5 have been exceeded, KPI 1.3 is very close to being met, and it is too early to measure KPI 1.3 (1). The only KPIs that are significantly lagging behind are KPI 1.3 (2), the number of representatives or experts from national/regional authorities informed of 'Best-in-Class' outcomes, and KPI 1.6, the number of stakeholders informed about the technologies piloted. Both of these will be a focus for the rest of the programme, ensuring that all start-ups, but particularly the top-performing 'Best-in-Class' are given visibility in front of relevant entities.

2.1.2. Impact #2: learning solutions for children with special needs

Impact #2 states the project's intention to contribute to an *Increase in the number of*

distributed learning solutions for children with special educational needs (SEN). As new educational technology develops, it is essential that learners with special needs are not left behind. Therefore, this project explicitly seeks to identify and support those start-ups that offer personalised, individual learning solutions for children with SEN. The KPIs in this section address that goal.

Progress made so far on these KPIs can be seen in Table 2. KPIs related to impact #2. (Please note that the numbering follows that of the Grant Agreement, which is erroneous - there are two KPIs with the number 1.3.)

Table 2. KPIs related to impact #2

#	KPI Name	Target	Achieved so far	Comment
2.1	EdTech Trials developing solutions for children with SEN	At least 6	2	This KPI measures the number of EdTech Trials that have participated in the IMPACT EdTech Jury Days, which focus on developing solutions for children with SEN. To date, two SEN-focused start-ups have participated in the Jury Days for OC1 and OC2/RS. Five further EdTech trials developing solutions for children with SEN will participate in the OC3 Jury Days.
2.2	Validated MVPs for children with SEN	At least 4	2	This KPI measures the number of MVPs which are validated during stage 1 of the programme, which are focused on SEN. To date, 2 SEN-focused start-up MVPs were validated during stage 1 of OC1 and RSOC. It is anticipated that at least 2 more MVPs will be validated in Stage 1 of OC3.
2.3	Piloted MVPs for children with SEN	At least 3	2	This KPI measures the number of SEN-focused solutions which were piloted during Stage 2 of the programme. To date, two SEN-focused MVPs were piloted during stage 2 of OC1 and RSOC. It is anticipated that at least one more MVP will be piloted in Stage 2 of OC3.
2.3	EdTech Trials developing solutions for children with SEN successfully piloted and/or obtaining early deals to start commercialisation	At least 1	1	This KPI measures the number of solutions which are SEN-focused and that have successfully piloted their solution, or have obtained an early deal to begin commercialisation of their solution, following Stage 2 of the programme. This KPI has been achieved in full. Key2Enable successfully piloted their solution in stage 2 of OC1, and were subsequently awarded Best-in-Class.

Results and lessons learned

These KPIs are well on track. Not only is the IMPACT EdTech programme attracting SEN start-ups, but the SEN start-ups that enter the programme are of a high quality, as can be seen from the fact that Key2Enable was selected as a Best-in-Class. To date, all of the KPIs have been at least partially reached, and it is foreseen that they will be fully reached or exceeded during the coming months of the IMPACT EdTech programme.

2.1.3. Impact #3: deploying to the market

Impact #3 aims *to Increase the number of start-ups/SMEs deploying personalised and inclusive learning solutions to the market*. The incubation-acceleration programme was designed to meet the challenges presented in this impact. Support given during the programme focuses on three basic elements: technology, business, and education. All three of these elements must be worked on in parallel during the programme in order to achieve a functional, marketable solution that is also pedagogically sound.

The programme moves the selected start-ups through various phases. Stage 1 focuses on completion of the MVP (minimum viable product). Stage 2 addresses Go-To-Market and includes the following services: specific training on networking and exploitation strategies; introduction to early adopters, key business partners, accelerators or potential investors; pilot operational implementation or MVP improvements on promising Stage 1 MVPs requiring a longer maturation/specific roll-out planning. A funnel approach is adopted, which means that not every start-up that enters the programme is expected to reach full readiness by the end of the nine-month programme. However, many start-ups are expected to come out of the programme completely market-ready.

The KPIs under this impact are related to the number of start-ups that reach each stage of the "readiness funnel". Progress on the KPIs so far can be seen in Table 3. KPIs related to impact #3. For more information about technology readiness level achieved in the programme, please see section 2.1.5.

Table 3. KPIs related to impact #3

#	KPI Name	Target	Achieved so far	Comment
3.1	Prototype High-Fidelity MVPs	24	15	This KPI measures the number of start-ups considered to have successfully completed Stage 1. All 15 start-ups from the first batch reached this milestone. As the second batch

				began with Stage 2, those start-ups are not accounted for here. It is expected that at least 15 start-ups from batch three will reach this milestone (Jan 2022).
3.2	Introduction to business partners, accelerators and early investors	At least 27	50	Stage 2 start-ups were surveyed regarding their fundraising needs. They were then introduced to relevant investors on a tailor--made basis. This accounts for 15 of the introductions. The other 35 came from business and educational mentors, who introduced their mentee start-ups to potential business partners, schools and investors in their personal networks. Both types of introductions will continue in the third batch, leading to potentially another 25 introductions.
3.3	Start-ups/SMEs having an early deal closed during the project/one year after the project closes	At least 10	-	It is too early to monitor this result.
3.4	Start-ups/SMEs reaching high maturity levels at the end of the programme	At least 6	5	This KPI measures the number of start-ups selected as 'Best-in-Class' at the end of the programme. From the first batch, two start-ups were selected and from the second batch, three were selected. These five start-ups represent the pinnacle of excellence in the IMPACT EdTech programme. It is expected that up to three start-ups will be selected as 'Best-in-Class' at the end of the third batch's Stage 2 (July 2022).

Results and lessons learned

The results of these KPIs so far look promising. Start-ups are clearly moving through the programme in a fruitful way. They are provided with helpful support and they are working hard, with the result that many of them are quickly reaching a high maturity level. Furthermore, they are working on building up connections as they grow — an essential aspect for any ambitious start-ups or SME.

It's worth pointing out that the KPI related to introductions has already been more than exceeded. This is primarily due to the mentors' eagerness to introduce their mentee start-ups to contacts in their networks. Approximately 50% of the mentors did this during the programme. This indicates a high level of trust in the start-ups. However, what remains to be seen is the outcome of these introductions. It is too early to have any information on that at this point. This will be addressed in the update to this report, D3.4 Plan of Exploitation and Dissemination of results (PEDR)

- update, due in M32.

2.1.4. Additional Impact #4: verticalised support

The fourth impact is an "additional impact". It aims to *Contribute to verticalise support that is being given to European EdTech start-ups*. There are many start-up support programmes, both incubators and accelerators, throughout Europe. Many of these focus on specific verticals, such as automotive, finance, manufacturing, energy or health. However, sector-specific support in education technology is rare in Europe. One of the aims of the IMPACT EdTech project is to develop a framework and a methodology for supporting edtech start-ups which can be shared with stakeholders across the continent. The work done in this project can be built upon and reused in other programmes. Progress on the KPIs so far can be seen in Table 4. KPIs related to impact #4.

Table 4. KPIs related to impact #4

#	KPI Name	Target	Achieved so far	Comment
4.1	Validated incubation methodology for EdTechs	1	1	The aim of this KPI is to validate the methodology used in the IMPACT EdTech programme - taking start-ups from MVP to short-cycle piloting and to the market. The good results achieved so far speak for themselves in supporting the conclusion that this KPI has been reached.
4.2	Number of stakeholders engaged in open innovation strategies for education	At least 30 members	27	At present, the Digital Learning Stakeholders Group (DLSG) has 27 active members. It is foreseen that further members will be added to the DLSG over the coming project months, in order to achieve the target of having more than 30 members.

Results and lessons learned

As commented in the table, the results achieved so far in this programme indicate that the methodology is already solidly validated (without excluding the need for further analysis and implementation of improvements). Furthermore, the Digital Learning Stakeholders Group (DLSG) is almost entirely in place. This indicates that the project is ready for the next phase: to disseminate and exploit the work done on the methodology so that other stakeholders across Europe can take advantage of and build on the progress made. This aspect is crucial at this point in order to keep the momentum set in motion during the first year and a half of the project.

More information on how this will be done can be found in section 44 of this report.

2.1.5. Start-ups' technology readiness level (TRL)

A key aspect of assessing the real impact the IMPACT EdTech programme had on participating start-ups is by looking at technology readiness level (TRL)[2]. The objective, clearly stated in the Grant Agreement, is that start-ups entering Stage 1 of the programme would have an initial TRL of at least 5, and that they would reach TRL 7 or beyond by the end of Stage 2. This includes the first batch of start-ups and will include the third.

Start-ups entering Stage 2 of the programme — that is, the second batch or 'Remote Schooling' open call — were expected to have an initial TRL of 7 or 8, raising it to 8 or 9 during the course of the programme.

The average starting and ending TRL for each batch can be seen in Table 5. Starting and ending TRL of start-ups. This information was obtained via the "end-of-programme feedback survey" that each start-up completing Stage 2 was asked to fill out regarding their experience in the programme.

Table 5. Starting and ending TRL of start-ups

First batch	
Average starting TRL (beginning of Stage 1)	6.2
Average ending TRL (end of Stage 2)	8.3
Second batch	
Average starting TRL (beginning of Stage 2)	7.7
Average ending TRL (end of Stage 2)	8.3

Results and lessons learned

In both batches of start-ups, a clear improvement can be seen. Almost all start-ups moved from a relevant testing environment to a complete and qualified system and/or deployment on the market during the course of the programme. Therefore,

---

[2] TRL is a scale that goes from 1 to 9, where 9 indicates the highest level of technology readiness. The European Commission's definition of each level can be seen at https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014_2015/annexes/h2020-wp1415-annex-g-trl_en.pdf

the result of this KPI can, so far, be understood as a success. We will do our best to replicate this result during the third batch of incubation-acceleration.

2.1.6. Gender equality

An important aspect of the open and inclusive learning stressed in this project is gender equity. While recent decades have seen strides being made in this area, the fact remains that women and girls face negative stereotypes and exclusion in many aspects of education. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the IMPACT EdTech project is actively working to combat these biases. This is done in two ways: by ensuring the under-represented gender constitutes a minimum percentage of decision-making groups, including the consortium managing the IMPACT EdTech project and the composition of the selected start-ups themselves; and by paying attention to inherent biases that might be present in the learning solutions.

Composition of groups by gender

The objective established in the Grant Agreement was to have at least 40% of the governing bodies be composed of women. In addition, the pool of mentors (external experts) was to be at least 40% female.

Table 6 shows the number of total employees involved in the IMPACT EdTech project from all consortium partners, as well as the number of these which are females.

Table 6. Number and percentage of female employees working on IMPACT EdTech

total employees on the project	total females on the project
63	41
	65%

Females constitute 65% of the people involved in the management and execution of the IMPACT EdTech project — well over the established threshold of 40.

Table 7 shows the number of total follow-up mentors, both business and educational, involved in the IMPACT EdTech project (for the OC1 batch and the OC2/RS batch), as well as the number of these which are females.

Table 7. Number and percentage of female mentors

Total mentors	Female mentors
52	24
	46%

Again, the threshold of 40% has been cleared, although by a smaller margin in this instance. It will be important to make sure this balance is maintained or improved during the mentor matching process for the third batch of start-ups.

Finally, the start-ups themselves were surveyed regarding the number of female employees working on their solutions. At the end of Stage 2, they were asked to state the total number of employees and the number of female employees when they entered the programme and when they finished the programme. For the OC1 start-ups, this covered the nine-month period of both Stages. However, only the Stage 2 start-ups were surveyed, making the data pool smaller. For the OC2/RS start-ups, this covered only the five-month period of Stage 2.

Table 8. Female employees in OC1 start-ups

Start of programme (Oct 2020)		End of programme (June 2021)	
total employees	female employees	total employees	female employees
50	13	77	27
	26%		35%

Table 9. Female employees in OC2/RS start-ups

Start of programme (Nov 2020)		End of programme (April 2021)	
total employees	female employees	total employees	female employees
73	34	98	45
	47%		46%

As can be seen, the start-ups from OC1 did not meet the threshold of 40% female employees. Nevertheless, the percentage of female employees did improve over the course of the programme, from 26% at the beginning of the programme to 35% at the end, a total increase in 14 female employees.

The start-ups from OC2/RS did meet the threshold of 40% female employees, although the percentage of females went down slightly over the course of the programme, from 47% female to 46%. However, 11 females were hired at OC2 start-ups during the programme, which is positive.

In conclusion, representation of females in all aspects of IMPACT EdTech is on the right track. We will make an effort during the third batch to ensure that it continues on this path or improves, particularly as regards the number of female employees on the selected start-ups.

Detection and correction of biases in the learning solutions

In addition to making sure that balanced teams are working on the IMPACT EdTech project and the selected learning solutions, it is important to verify that the start-ups themselves are addressing potential gender bias in the implementation of their solutions.

To address this, all start-ups that reached the end of Stage 2 were asked to describe problems identified, actions taken, and planned next steps in order to correct any issues of gender bias.

Some of the start-ups did not seem to be aware of the existence of potential problems. The consortium's assessment does not align with these start-ups' affirmations. There is a great deal of bias inherent in society, particularly as regards maths. Start-ups that are not actively aware of and working against this bias are not going to help solve the problem. These start-ups need more awareness of the problems faced by women and girls in education, particularly STEM education.

However, the majority of the start-ups were well aware of the issues that are currently plaguing the educational field. Furthermore, most of these start-ups had detailed plans for how they were going to overcome these issues.

Possible next steps to consider would be to make a discussion of gender bias and exploration of hidden biases more explicitly a part of the IMPACT EdTech curriculum.

2.2. Lessons learned and next steps

This section compiles the lessons learned from the previous sections and presents possible next steps to address those lessons. These suggestions will be brought in front of the Steering Committee, where concrete actions will be decided on. Results from those actions will be reported in D3.4 Plan of Exploitation and Dissemination of results (PEDR) - update (M32).

Informing national or regional authorities of Best-in-Class outcomes

- Lesson learned. The KPI related to informing representatives or experts from national/regional authorities of the Best-in-Class outcomes (KPI 1.3 (2)), is only about halfway to completion. It is true that the Best-in-Class start-ups were not nominated until April 2021 (OC2/RS) and July 2021 (OC1). Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that very little meaningful contact is

generally had with authorities of the type described during the summer months (June, July and August). Nevertheless, this KPI should be flagged as one to which extra attention should be paid.

- Next steps. As the school year gets underway, the consortium — led by European Schoolnet, in this instance — will organise events and carry out other outreach in order to continue to promote the Best-in-Class start-ups among a variety of authorities and stakeholders.

Involvement of SEN start-ups

- Lesson learned. It was found that the KPIs relating to SEN start-ups in this project are on track. Furthermore, the SEN start-ups are of high quality, as evidenced by the fact that one of them was selected as a Best-in-Class. It is believed that the reason for this success lies in the outreach performed around the open call. We successfully targeted SEN start-ups. Furthermore, the value proposition was interesting enough to the start-ups that they were motivated to apply.

- Next steps. No next steps are needed here. However, this point is highlighted as this is a success case for the programme. The consortium should consider sharing information about the successful campaigns — how they were planned, who was targeted, how quality was assured — so that other stakeholders in the wider community can learn from it.

Outcomes of introductions of start-ups by mentors

- Lesson learned. Approximately 50% of the mentors introduced their mentee start-ups to investors, potential business partners, schools, corporations and other members of their personal networks. At a first glance, this appears to be a good result. However, it is too early to know what the actual outcome of these introductions are.

- Next steps. It is suggested that the consortium follow up with the OC1 and OC2/RS start-ups 9-12 months after the end of their respective programmes to ask about outcomes from these introductions. If this course of action is followed, results should be reported in D3.4 Plan of Exploitation and Dissemination of results (PEDR) - update, due in M32.

Increase in average TRL during the programme

- Lesson learned. It was discovered that the average TRL increased from 6.2 to 8.3 for OC1 and from 7.7 to 8.3 for OC2/RS. This is aligned with project

goals and can be considered a success. After analysis, it appears that this is due to two key factors: (1) the ambitious and rigorous framework of the programme itself, and (2) the high-quality support offered by the mentors.

- <u>Next steps</u>. In order to replicate this success in OC3, the same course of action must be followed. First, the ambitious demands of the programme should be correctly communicated to the start-ups. One opportunity for this is during the Stage 1 kick-off bootcamp, when start-ups are first exposed to the programme and its demands. Second, mentor matching should be carried out with the same care and attention that was spent on it during OC1 and OC2/RS. Mentors should be selected who can help advise on product development and who will push the start-ups to evolve quickly and achieve at a high level.

Gender balance of mentors involved in the programme

- <u>Lesson learned</u>. The target for percentage of female mentors participating in the programme was 40%. This target was reached, but by a thin margin. Therefore, it is worth pointing out that this is an important criterion when identifying and onboarding mentors for the programme.

- <u>Next steps</u>. ISDI and European Schoolnet, the two organisations leading mentor matching, should be sure to have this criterion in mind when carrying out mentor matching. In cases when there are multiple possibilities, both equally good, preference should be given to females.

Gender balance of participating start-ups' employees

- <u>Lesson learned</u>. While the start-ups from the OC2/RS batch did meet the threshold of 40% female employees (having 47% female employees at the beginning of the programme and 46% at the end), the start-ups from OC1 did not (having 26% female employees at the beginning of the programme and 35% at the end). Although it is cheering to see the huge improvement in the OC1 percentage during the programme, it would be ideal if that threshold of 40% could have been crossed.

- <u>Next steps</u>. The aspect of gender balance was not clearly brought to the front during OC1 and OC2/RS. During OC3, it should be more explicitly stated as an aim of the programme. Start-ups should be more clearly encouraged to think about the gender balance in their own employees, and support should be offered to help the start-ups identify and hire females. One way this can be done is through specialised mentoring.

Fighting gender bias in implemented solutions

- <u>Lesson learned</u>. As described above, some of the start-ups are fully aware of the possible gender bias in their solutions and are taking active steps to combat this. However, others do not seem to understand the issue at all.

- <u>Next steps</u>. Possible next steps to consider would be to make a discussion of gender bias and exploration of hidden biases more explicitly a part of the IMPACT EdTech curriculum. A good space for this could be during the Stage 2 bootcamp, which covers topics related to hiring and culture.

3. Dissemination of project results

Dissemination is concerned with the spread of project results, in order to communicate to the wider community the work that was done during the project. The objective is to instruct and inspire through examples of work performed, results reached and successes achieved.

Dissemination consists of the following steps.

- Identify the material to be disseminated — success cases, start-up profiles, learnings, etc.

- Understand the target audience for the dissemination — other start-ups, product users, investors, policy makers, etc.

- Determine the proper channels to be used for reaching that audience — social media, websites, blogs, media, direct outreach, etc.

- Finally, calculate the impact resulting from the dissemination efforts — how many stakeholders were reached, in which geographic regions, to what effect, etc.

In IMPACT EdTech, dissemination has two prongs. The first is dissemination of the **portfolio of MVPs resulting from bottom-up projects** (the start-ups selected as beneficiaries for the programme). This is done by the IMPACT EdTech consortium and also by the start-ups themselves, as they strive to make a name for themselves and to have an impact on the community. This report covers efforts already carried out, as well as efforts that are planned.

The second dissemination prong is the **IMPACT EdTech blended incubator-accelerator programme** itself. Here, dissemination is primarily carried out by the IMPACT EdTech consortium, with support from the beneficiaries. This report covers efforts carried out and efforts that are planned, with an emphasis on the latter.

3.1. Portfolio of MVPs resulting from bottom-up projects

The portfolio of MVPs results from bottom-up projects was carefully selected

through a rigorous process: Interested parties applied to the open calls. From there, the most qualified applicants were invited to pitch at a Jury Day. The best of these were invited to join the programme, subject to background checks. Selected start-ups were expected to perform at a high level. The best of this group were invited to progress from Stage 1 to Stage 2. Finally, the very top were selected as 'Best-in-Class'. (More information on this process and results can be seen in D4.1 Report on EdTech Trials Incubation Stage 1 - batch 1 [M14] and D5.1 Report on EdTech Trials Incubation Stage 2 - batch 1 and batch 'Remote Schooling [M20].)

Throughout each stage of this process, information about the participating start-ups is disseminated by both the start-ups themselves and the consortium.

3.1.1. Dissemination by the projects themselves

As part of the IMPACT EdTech programme, each start-up is required to build its own dissemination roadmap, using the following template as a guide.

Table 10. Start-ups' dissemination roadmap

	during or before [start of programme]	[during programme]	[one year after programme end] (projected)
Stakeholders impacted by your start-up			
Approximate # stakeholders impacted by your start-up (per stakeholder type)			
Channels used to communicate your start-up and/or reach users			
# Countries in which your users are based			

In the different rows, start-ups identify:

- The type of stakeholder that is impacted by the start-up — e.g. schoolchildren of a certain age, teachers, heads of studies, etc.

- The approximate number of stakeholders impacted

- The channels used to reach these stakeholders

- The number of countries in which the impacted users are based

The template also has a time dimension — the three rightmost columns — which show the progression in the start-up's reach and impact over the course of many months. Ideally, the start-up's reach increases as time goes on.

Each start-up's dissemination plan is different, depending on the goals and maturity level of the start-up. However, some general figures can be seen below. This report covers only the first batch (OC1) and second batch (OC2/RS) of start-ups. Results and projections from the third batch (OC3) will be covered in the D3.4, Plan of Exploitation and Dissemination of results (PEDR) - update, due in M32.

OC1 (first batch of start-ups)

Stakeholders impacted.

- At the start of the programme (September 2020), the estimated number of stakeholders being impacted by all seven Stage 2 start-ups was 5,125, with the average start-up reaching 730 stakeholders.

- By the end of the programme (June 2021), the estimated number of stakeholders being impacted by all seven Stage 2 start-ups was 22,450, with the average start-up reaching 3,200 — an increase of more than 400%.

- Projected figures for one year after the end of the programme (June 2022) show that the estimated number of stakeholders that will be impacted by all seven Stage 2 start-ups will be 533,000, with the average start-up reaching 76,100.

Countries reached.

- At the start of the programme (September 2020), the average start-up reached stakeholders in just 4 countries.

- By the end of the programme (June 2021), the average start-up reached stakeholders in 12 countries.

- Projected figures for one year after the end of the programme (June 2022) show that the average start-up will reach stakeholders in 31 countries.

OC2/RS (second batch of start-ups)

It is important to note that the OC2/RS start-ups entered the programme directly in Stage 2. By design, nearly all of them had significant traction prior to the start of the programme. Thus, one can see a noticeable difference between the numbers of the previous batch and this one.

Stakeholders impacted.

- At the start of the programme (October 2020), the estimated number of stakeholders being impacted by all start-ups was 7,917,600, with the average start-up reaching 880,000 stakeholders.

- By the end of the programme (April 2021), the estimated number of stakeholders being impacted by all start-ups was 9,190,231, with the average start-up reaching just over 1,000,000.

- Projected figures for one year after the end of the programme (April 2022) show that the estimated number of stakeholders that will be impacted by all start-ups will be 14,674,140, with the average start-up reaching 1,630,000.

Countries reached.

- At the start of the programme (October 2020), the average start-up reached stakeholders in 77 countries.

- By the end of the programme (April 2021), the average start-up reached stakeholders in 84 countries.

- Projected figures for one year after the end of the programme (April 2022) show that the average start-up will reach stakeholders in 89 countries.

The type of stakeholder targeted and the channels used to do so vary widely from start-up to start-up.

Conclusion

It is clear that the start-ups are, in general, on a positive upward path towards achieving significant impact with their dissemination efforts. They have benefitted from marketing, communication and dissemination support during the programme, including sessions in both Bootcamp 1 and Bootcamp 2, availability of specialised mentors, and support from their business follow-up mentors.

However, what is not studied here is the type of content shared in the disseminations. It is not known whether the content focuses only on the product itself or whether it also addresses the start-ups' entrepreneurship journeys, specifically as part of the IMPACT EdTech incubation-acceleration programme. In the future, this project will investigate that aspect, encouraging start-ups to share their own success stories and lessons learned in real time.

As stated above, D3.4 Plan of Exploitation and Dissemination of results (PEDR) - update, due in M32, will cover results and projections from OC3.

3.1.2. Dissemination by the IMPACT EdTech consortium

The IMPACT EdTech consortium itself also takes into account the content/audience/ channels/impact framework when preparing dissemination. In the case of dissemination about the selected start-ups, this framework can be seen in Table 11.

Table 11. Framework for dissemination of portfolio start-ups

Portfolio of disruptive EdTech solutions			
Areas	**Users (target audience)**	**Channels**	**Impact**
- K12 Education - Non-formal/informal learning - Others to be defined as result of the Open Calls (i.e. VET, HE, at workplace)	- Educational Establishments - Training companies - Digital content providers - IT corporates with Education verticals - Learners, Teachers, Tutors (B2C)	- Media (storytelling) - Web - Crowdfunding platforms - Others To be defined as per the nature of each bottom up project	- Users adopting the services/products - Geo-coverage of users - Public/Private Funds committed for deployment - Net effect of externalities linked to the resulting service/product

What follows is an in-depth description of each area, target user, channel and impact listed on this table. After that, a roadmap of next steps is detailed.

Areas

The "areas" that were previously defined are closely related to the IMPACT EdTech Strands.

- *K12 Education* refers to Strand A start-ups, those which rely on a B2B (business to business) business model, focusing their pedagogical solutions to be implemented by teachers in the context of a primary or secondary classroom.

- *Non-formal/informal learning* refers to Strand B start-ups, those which adopt a B2C (business to consumer) business model, selling directly to the end users, whether those be parents, other caretakers, or the learners themselves.

- *Others to be defined as result of the Open Calls (i.e. VET, HE, at workplace)* is a broad category which leaves the door open for future areas that might arise during the course of this programme. Thus far, this catch-all category has not been necessary, as all start-ups have fit into either Strand A or Strand B.

Users (target audience)

It is essential to understand who the target audience, or "user", is from the initial planning stages of dissemination. Knowing who the content is intended for and the use that they are expected to get out of that content helps shape the creation of that content for maximum efficacy.

The users addressed in the context of this programme are the following.

- *Educational Establishments*. Content intended for this user would target heads, directors, boards, teachers, and other stakeholders at schools, universities, academies, day cares, and educational institutions. These users might be targeted so that they can learn about the specific offering presented by various IMPACT EdTech portfolio companies. They might then be inspired to adopt that start-up's solution or to implement other innovative changes.

- *Training companies*. This category of target user includes directors or decision makers at vocational schools, some universities, certain academies, and other organisations that focus on reskilling, upskilling, and/or providing training focused on concrete outcomes. These people could be interested in adopting specific solutions offered by IMPACT EdTech start-ups, or they might simply be inspired to learn more about innovation in education.

- *Digital content providers*. Digital content providers offer services such as copywriting, editing, translation, and content creation. People who run these organisations could be considered a target audience for certain content. The purpose of targeting these people might be, again, to share information about specific solutions offered by the IMPACT EdTech portfolio start-ups, or to inform about advances in the field of digital content as it overlaps with education.

- *IT corporates with Education verticals*. Recent years have seen more technology companies wading into the education market, as the overlap between tech and education becomes stronger. IT companies that develop educational tools, products or solutions could be interested in

dissemination about the IMPACT EdTech portfolio start-ups. They could potentially form partnerships with relevant start-ups, contract them, or even acquire them.

- *Learners, Teachers, Tutors (B2C).* Some content may directly target the learners themselves, or their teachers or tutors. This content is most likely to be focused on B2C solutions, promoting the offering of IMPACT EdTech's Strand B start-ups.

- *Start-up founders*. This target audience was not originally taken into account, but it has emerged as an important group. Founders and key employees at start-ups have a difficult job. They often seek and benefit from hearing from fellow start-up founders. They can learn from others' failures and successes, and they can be inspired by the journeys others have taken.

Channels

Once the target audience is established, the next step is understanding the channel that can be used to best put the content in front of that target user's eyes.

- *Media (storytelling).* One way to achieve a wide, general reach is by using the media. This can include sending out press releases about the start-ups' activity to journalist contacts in relevant publications. An important aspect of using the media is carefully-curated storytelling. This refers to the cultivation of a particular narrative surrounding the IMPACT EdTech programme and its participating start-ups.

- *Web*. The Internet is a powerful tool for reaching many users. One of its greatest features is the ability to segment the audience, thereby impacting a specific, pre-defined group of people with certain features or shared interests. This ensures that each action taken is highly effective, as it is not wasted on users who are not interested in the content being disseminated. There are many ways to use the web to share information.

  o *Website*. IMPACT EdTech has a website which is used to share general information about the programme, as well as periodic updates.
  o *Social media*. IMPACT EdTech manages several social media accounts on different platforms, including Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook. While all IMPACT EdTech's accounts are unified in messaging and storytelling, each account has a slightly different focus depending on the "personality" of the platform. Effective use of social media is one way to segment users and reach the desired target audience.

- o *Paid advertising*. IMPACT EdTech occasionally deploys paid ads on social media and on search engines to reach a hyper-segmented audience for specific purposes, such as communication about the open calls. Paid advertising can also be used for dissemination purposes.
- o *Online newsletters*. IMPACT EdTech sends out regular newsletters, in which start-ups are highlighted and information about their solutions and achievements is disseminated.
- o *Online events*. For nearly two years, all events have moved online due to the ongoing global pandemic. This has enabled the IMPACT EdTech consortium to participate in many events at low cost, including third-party events and events put on by the IMPACT EdTech consortium itself. These events are used to disseminate information about the IMPACT EdTech portfolio of start-ups.

- *Crowdfunding platforms*. One idea considered at the inception of the IMPACT EdTech project was to use crowdfunding platforms such as CrowdCube or KissKissBankBank for the dissemination of information about IMPACT EdTech's portfolio of start-ups. This has not turned out to be a useful channel, as, to date, none of the start-ups incubated and/or accelerated have been interested in crowdfunding. Nevertheless, this remains a dissemination option for start-ups from the third batch.

- *Others to be defined as per the nature of each bottom up project*. A channel not originally anticipated that has turned out to be of great use is the network of partners connected to the IMPACT EdTech project. Information about the IMPACT EdTech portfolio of start-ups is shared with dissemination partners, and these partners are asked to spread the news among their own networks.

More information about the channels used in the IMPACT EdTech project — and the project communications and dissemination actions planned and carried out, and their results — can be found in D1.1 Communication and Dissemination Plan (M2), D1.2 Communication and Dissemination Plan - update (M15), D1.3 Open Call Dissemination Report, Open Call 1 (M8), and D1.4 Open Call Dissemination Report, Open Call 2 and 'Remote Schooling' Open Call (M20).

Impact

Finally, the effects achieved by dissemination efforts must be measured. The resulting data can show whether actions are effectively reaching the target audience, how many people are being reached, and whether they are prompting users to take the desired action, if relevant. This valuable information can shape

future dissemination actions.

- *Users adopting the services/products*. This information is measured and reported by the start-ups themselves and can be seen in section 3.1.1.

- *Geo-coverage of users*. This information is measured and reported by the start-ups themselves and can be seen in section 3.1.1.

- *Public/Private Funds committed for deployment*. This refers to the amount of funding achieved by the IMPACT EdTech portfolio start-ups, during or shortly after the programme ends. This result is closely linked with KPIs 3.3 and 3.4 in section 2.1.3. Funding could come from business angels, VCs, public grants, crowdfunding, or other similar sources.

- *Net effect of externalities linked to the resulting service/product*. An externality is an effect that is caused by one party but experienced by another party. The externality could be negative (as in the case of pollution caused by factories but suffered by the nearby population) or positive (as when scientific research is carried out in labs but then has a practical application that benefits the wider populace). It is assumed — and hoped — that the externalities caused by the solutions offered by IMPACT EdTech start-ups are all, or nearly all, positive.

Dissemination carried out

Dissemination of the IMPACT EdTech portfolio start-ups has already been underway since early in the project. A non-comprehensive list of dissemination actions taken can be seen in Table 12.

Table 12. Non-comprehensive list of dissemination actions taken

Description of action	Area(s)	Target audience	Channel(s) used
Published several articles and press releases on IMPACT EdTech blog[3] showcasing the start-ups selected at each stage of the IMPACT EdTech journey, with a brief description of each solution and links to their websites. (Various dates)	Strand A Strand B	All	Web (website)
Published article on IMPACT EdTech blog highlighting women founders of portfolio start-ups in honour of International Women's Day[4] (8 March 2021)	Strand A Strand B	Start-up founders Other, general	Web (website)

---

[3] https://accelerator.isdi.education/impact-edtech/impact-edtech-news/
[4] https://accelerator.isdi.education/8m-international-womens-day-impact-edtech/

Hosted public webinars to showcase individually each OC1[5] and OC2/RS[6] start-up that completed piloting in schools	Strand A	Educational establishments Learners, teachers, tutors Start-up founders Other, general	Web (events)
Featured portfolio start-ups in online events designed to attract attention for the open call[7]	Strand A Strand B	Start-up founders Other, general	Web (events) Web (social media)

A full list of dissemination events and resulting impacts will be featured in D3.4 Plan of Exploitation and Dissemination of results (PEDR) - update (M32).

Future dissemination roadmap

Our objectives from now until the end of the programme are the following:

- **Continue to promote all portfolio start-ups via a balanced range of channels throughout the programme.**

  - We aim to create at least five different pieces of content about the various steps of the journey through IMPACT EdTech. This is aligned with feedback received in the Interim Review from external evaluators. Instead of waiting for one big story at the end, the consortium was advised, we should try to make visible what happens step by step, day by day. We hope to fulfill this by creating more pieces of content about the various steps. In addition, we aim to share this content over at least four different channels.

  - We will also showcase the solutions themselves, highlighting the products and sharing success cases. This will be done through at least four different channels, targeting at least three different audiences to make sure we are impacting a wide range of users. In addition, we will give portfolio start-ups more prominence on the IMPACT EdTech website. This is aligned with feedback received in the Interim Review from external evaluators. We will make it easier to find our current and past cohorts on the website. We will be clearer about who has gone through the process and what they've achieved

---

[5] https://accelerator.isdi.education/impact-edtech-wrap-up-webinar-series/

[6] https://accelerator.isdi.education/impact-edtech-remote-schooling-pilots-public-webinar-series/

[7] https://twitter.com/IMPACTEdTechEU/status/1404812325358551040

so far, making sure our start-ups are "front and centre" in our dissemination efforts.

- **Carry out an internal audit of our dissemination tools and channels to ensure maximum effectiveness.**

  o We will review all current channels keeping in mind the following questions:
    - Are we communicating the intended messages effectively?
    - Are we reaching the intended audience?
    - What could we be doing better?
  o An example of a change to be implemented is highlighting the past and current start-ups on the IMPACT EdTech website. We expect to find at least three other opportunities for changes.
  o In addition, we will consider the channels themselves. Are any of the channels no longer effective? Should we abandon any of the channels? Should we add any channels that we are not currently using?

3.2. IMPACT EdTech blended incubator-accelerator programme

In addition to promoting the portfolio of IMPACT EdTech start-ups, many dissemination actions will be dedicated toward promoting the incubator-accelerator programme itself. This section analyses the different components involved in this dissemination process — areas, users, channels and impact — and describes actions already completed while also laying out a roadmap for dissemination to be done during the rest of the programme.

Table 13. Dissemination roadmap for the incubator-accelerator programme

IMPACT EdTech blended incubator-accelerator programme			
Areas	**Users (target audience)**	**Channels**	**Impact**
- Knowledge transfer - Ecosystem building	- Researchers and Innovators (entrepreneurs, Start-ups, SMEs)	- Media & social media (storytelling) - Partner's Communities - Digital Learning Stakeholders Group - NGI Community - Digital Innovation Hub Network	- New EdTech & MVP solutions - Technology transfer from Research to Education & Training Markets

Areas

When speaking of programme-level dissemination, there are two main areas to be considered.

- *Knowledge transfer*. This refers to the transfer of knowledge among organisations. It is not as simple as writing a report or a white paper. It is more complex because "knowledge resides in organizational members, tools, tasks, and their subnetworks and much knowledge in organizations is tacit or hard to articulate".[8] However, it is essential for the IMPACT EdTech consortium to attempt to describe the work done, the organisational structures used and the lessons learned. In this way, other programme managers, innovations directors, and policy makers can benefit from the work done in IMPACT EdTech.

- *Ecosystem building*. Much of the focus in programme-level dissemination is on the creation of a large network of related stakeholders. Once links are established among members, knowledge can be shared more easily and there's more fertile ground for partnerships and collaboration to spring up.

Users (target audience)

As described previously in this report, any dissemination material is more effective if it is prepared with a specific target audience in mind. In this case, the target audience is the following.

- *Researchers and innovators (entrepreneurs, start-ups, SMEs)*. These users are individuals who are working in the field of innovation. Some are carrying out research, while others are working on building their own businesses or disruptive start-ups. In all cases, they can benefit from lessons shared about the IMPACT EdTech programme and its innovation methodology.

Additional target audiences have also been identified. They were not previously considered, but it is key to tailor content to them if the above-described areas are to be sufficiently addressed.

- *Incubator/accelerator managers, innovation directors*. These users are the recipients and primary beneficiaries of the dissemination focused on knowledge transfer. Those of them who are building their own incubation or acceleration programmes, particularly if they are in the field of EdTech, can learn from the experiences shared by the IMPACT EdTech consortium.

---

[8] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge_transfer

They can integrate good ideas into their own programmes, and they can build on and improve other aspects of the IMPACT EdTech programme.

- *Innovation and entrepreneur community leaders*. These users are the centres of large innovation hubs. They already have contact with a group of innovators, entrepreneurs, and/or programme managers. Not only can this group help disseminate programme-level information about IMPACT EdTech to relevant parties, but they can link their communities and contribute to the ecosystem building.

- *Policy makers*. Finally, it's important that lessons learned and successes achieved are communicated to policy makers, who can use this information when taking decisions about the future of educational and technology policy.

Channels

The communication channels used are similar to the ones in section 3, with the addition of many more communities and groups.

- *Media & social media (storytelling).* These channels were previously described in detail.

- *Partners' communities*. IMPACT EdTech consortium members — European Schoolnet, ISDI and FundingBox — already have large and complementary networks of partners. These can be leveraged for dissemination activities. For more information on partners' networks, please see D1.1 Communication and Dissemination Plan (M2).

- *Digital Learning Stakeholders Group (DLSG).* This group of experts in the field of education and EdTech acts in an advisory role in the IMPACT EdTech programme. They can also be used to disseminate information to their networks, or to bring contacts and communities into the growing IMPACT EdTech ecosystem.

- *NGI Community*. The Next Generation Internet (NGI) community is a group of pioneers, entrepreneurs, researchers, and innovators blazing trails in innovative technology such as blockchain, distributed ledger technologies, artificial intelligence, digital identities, open-source, and more. FundingBox is actively involved in this initiative, leading the community-building efforts and hosting the community on their own FundingBox Spaces platform. They can tap into this lively group of innovators to help disseminate IMPACT

EdTech content and to facilitate the growth of the IMPACT EdTech ecosystem.

- *Digital Innovation Hub (DIH) Network*. Both ISDI and FundingBox are involved in the Digital Innovation Hub network, a European Commission-funded initiative to build "one-stop shops that help companies dynamically respond to the digital challenges and become more competitive".[9]

- *European Commission tools*. Another channel has arisen during the course of the programme so far, and that is the European Commission's own dissemination and exploitation tools. The ones we will specifically focus on are CORDIS[10] and the Horizon Results Platform[11].

Impact

The impact of these actions can be measured using the following metrics.

- *New EdTech & MVP solutions*. We will know the programme — and our dissemination about it — has been a success if we see new start-ups formed and/or nourished thanks to our work. This will be difficult to measure, as it's a long-term effect, sometimes without a clear path between cause and effect. However, we will do our best.

- *Technology transfer from research to education & training markets*. Dissemination about IMPACT EdTech could potentially contribute to technology transfer from research centres and institutes to education and training markets. As in the previous point, this is complicated to accurately measure, although we will share what data we can glean in D3.4 Plan of Exploitation and Dissemination of results (PEDR) - update (M32).

Dissemination carried out

Thus far, work in this area has been minimal. The focus is on future actions planned to take place during the rest of the programme.

Future dissemination roadmap

Our objectives from now until the end of the programme are the following:

---

[9] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/activities/edihs
[10] https://cordis.europa.eu/projects/en
[11] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/horizon-results-platform

- **Share relevant and transparent information about the planning, setup and management of the IMPACT EdTech programme.**

  o We aim to share at least six pieces of programme-level content on at least three different channels before the end of the programme. Examples of content are shown in Table 14 below, although the specific content shared could vary.

- **Engage the DLSG, NGI community and DIH network in ecosystem building.**

  o We aim to reach out to those communities that we have not previously contacted and to re-engage those we have not been in touch with for a while. The objective is to connect with all of these communities on at least a monthly basis. Examples of how to connect are shown in Table 14 below.

Table 14. Future dissemination actions

Description of action	Area(s)	Target audience	Channel(s) used
Create blog post analysing takeaways from the IMPACT EdTech programme	Knowledge transfer	Incubator/accelerator managers, innovation directors Innovation and entrepreneur community leaders	Web (website)
Compile 15-minute video describing the IMPACT EdTech programme from various points of view (consortium partners, participating start-ups, etc), being transparent about how the programme was built and lessons learned	Knowledge transfer	Incubator/accelerator managers, innovation directors Innovation and entrepreneur community leaders	Web (website) Web (social media) Web (newsletter)
Hold webinar in roundtable conversation format to discuss the experience of putting together the programme, encouraging Q&A from audience members	Knowledge transfer	Incubator/accelerator managers, innovation directors Innovation and entrepreneur community leaders Policy makers	Web (events)
Publish results of the IMPACT EdTech project on the Horizon Results Platform website	Knowledge transfer	Incubator/accelerator managers, innovation directors Innovation and entrepreneur community leaders Policy makers	European Commission Tools: Horizon Results Platform

Establish regular meetings (e.g. every two months) with contact point from NGI & DIH communities to discuss news and collaboration opportunities	Ecosystem building	Innovation and entrepreneur community leaders	One-to-one communication
Ask DLSG, NGI and DIH communities to help increase the number of registrations to the IMPACT EdTech newsletter	Ecosystem building	Innovation and entrepreneur community leaders	Web (newsletter)

All actions carried out, as well as their impacts, will be shared in D3.4 Plan of Exploitation and Dissemination of results (PEDR) - update (M32).

4. Exploitation

The IMPACT EdTech exploitation strategy focuses on how to position IMPACT EdTech at a European level as an 'MVP builder' model for EdTech solutions and other programmes to replicate.

This section will explore how the results achieved can be exploited for this purpose. First, there will be a discussion of how the participating start-ups themselves can be supported, and how they can contribute to the exploitation of the project. After this we build a viable plan for how the project's momentum can be continued even after the project's official end date.

4.1. Portfolio of MVPs resulting from bottom-up projects

Start-up business plans

As the IMPACT EdTech programme has a strong go-to-market focus, all start-ups that reached Stage 2 were asked to create a business plan, detailing how they would sustain their business activity after the IMPACT EdTech programme ended and they were no longer receiving financial support from the accompanying grant. In many cases, these business plans were created with the support and input of their business mentors.

Due to the public nature of this deliverable, these business plans are not shared here, as they contain sensitive information. However, the business plans are complete and detailed, containing the following information:

- Value proposition

- Product-market fit

- Go-to-market strategy, including pricing, acquisition channels, and target

- Team's capacity for carrying out this strategy

- Fundraising roadmap, where relevant

Through the creation of these plans, the start-ups are working to ensure their own continuity in the long term.

Funding support

Many successful start-ups adopt the strategy of investing in hypergrowth before

reaching a financial break-even point. This means that external investment is initially essential if the start-up is going to survive. Therefore, for many of the start-ups in the IMPACT EdTech programme, establishing contact with potential investors is key.

Introducing interested start-ups to custom-matched start-ups is an important part of this programme, as seen in KPI 3.2, Introduction to business partners, accelerators, and early investors. As described above, Stage 2 start-ups were surveyed regarding their fundraising needs via a form which asked about previous funding, funding sought, ideal timeline, profile of ideal investor, and so on. The start-ups were then introduced to relevant investors on a tailor-made basis. In this way, 15 introductions were made directly by the IMPACT EdTech consortium. In addition, the start-ups received a total of another 35 introductions from business and educational mentors, who introduced their mentee start-ups to potential business partners, schools and investors in their personal networks. As described in section 2.2, the outcomes of these introductions are not yet known. However, it is anticipated that outcomes will be analysed and reported in the update to this report.

We anticipate that both types of introductions will continue in the third batch, leading to potentially another 25 introductions.

- ISDI will continue to offer introductions to potential investors or business partners on a custom-matched basis. It is anticipated that 5-7 of the introductions will be made this way. (Stage 2 start-ups only.)

- In addition, mentors will be encouraged to introduce their mentee start-ups to relevant contacts in their networks. It is anticipated that around 20 introductions will be made this way. (Both Stage 1 and Stage 2 start-ups.)

Engagement of public authorities

In order for Europe to cultivate an ecosystem that supports and contributes to the success of edtech start-ups — both those start-ups who have participated in the IMPACT EdTech programme and those who have not — it may be necessary to have active engagement by public authorities.

The IMPACT EdTech programme has taken this into consideration from the conception of the programme. Throughout the course of the programme, EUN continuously and proactively keeps MoEs and DLSG members informed of the latest developments of the EdTech start-ups involved in the programme.

In addition to this, the Grant Agreement states that EUN "will furthermore seek a stronger involvement of both the DLSG as well as MoEs, to explore whether the early

engagement of public authorities in the development of EdTech start-ups and SMEs can effectively support this sector to thrive." The results of this investigation will be included in D3.4, Plan of Exploitation and Dissemination of results (PEDR) - update (M32).

Peer-to-peer learning

The effects of the learning done by the start-ups as part of the IMPACT EdTech programme can be multiplied through the use of peer-to-peer learning, among the start-ups in a given cohort, among the various cohorts, and between project start-ups and the outside world.

This type of engagement was not a focus of the programme as initially conceived, but the importance of it became clear early on, from observations by the IMPACT EdTech consortium members, from feedback from participating start-ups, and from comments from the external reviewers as part of the project's Interim Review.

In order to facilitate peer-to-peer learning, the following steps will be taken during the rest of the programme.

- **Among start-ups in a cohort**. The bootcamps that kick off each stage will incorporate many opportunities for knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning.

    o One of these will take the form of an open discussion. Start-ups will democratically select discussion topics on the day prior to the discussion. The discussion will be moderated by ISDI and will cover the topics in order. Start-ups can come prepared to share their experiences, insights, and questions with each other.
    o Another way in which start-ups will interact will be during small group coffee breaks. The cohort will be divided into groups of 4-5 start-ups. The same groups will meet each day of the bootcamp for a 20-minute conversation structured around the day's topics.
- **Among cohorts**. During the coming period, ideas will be explored for fostering inter-cohort connection and collaboration. Possibilities could include opening a shared channel on the FundingBox Spaces platform or holding periodic events to which all the start-ups are invited.

- **Between programme start-ups and the wider world**. Knowledge is shared between the programme and the wider world through activities such as webinars showcasing piloting experiences or through the planned success stories to be shared on social media and the website. Further ideas will also be explored during the coming period.

Certificate of quality

In order to help the start-ups to exploit the work done in the IMPACT EdTech programme, the consortium is creating badges to certify completion of each stage.

This action was begun around the beginning of 2021, but during the coming months of the programme, we will reflect on how the certification is communicated and carried out. As suggested by external experts in the interim review, a "quality label" could be an effective way to show investors and other interested parties that these start-ups have passed through an intensive and high-quality experience, thereby generating more confidence in the level of the start-ups.

Figure 3. Badges for Stage 2 and Best-in-Class start-ups

During the coming months, this initiative will be promoted widely.

4.2. IMPACT EdTech blended incubator-accelerator programme

Up until now, the IMPACT EdTech project has primarily focused on setting up incubation-acceleration, running the programme, and refining it. However, from now until the end of the project, a new area of focus will be added: that of exploring how the results of the project can be exploited and continuity of the project's aims ensured.

The first draft of a business plan for the continuing IMPACT EdTech venture has been elaborated in the Grant Agreement and can be seen in Figure 4.
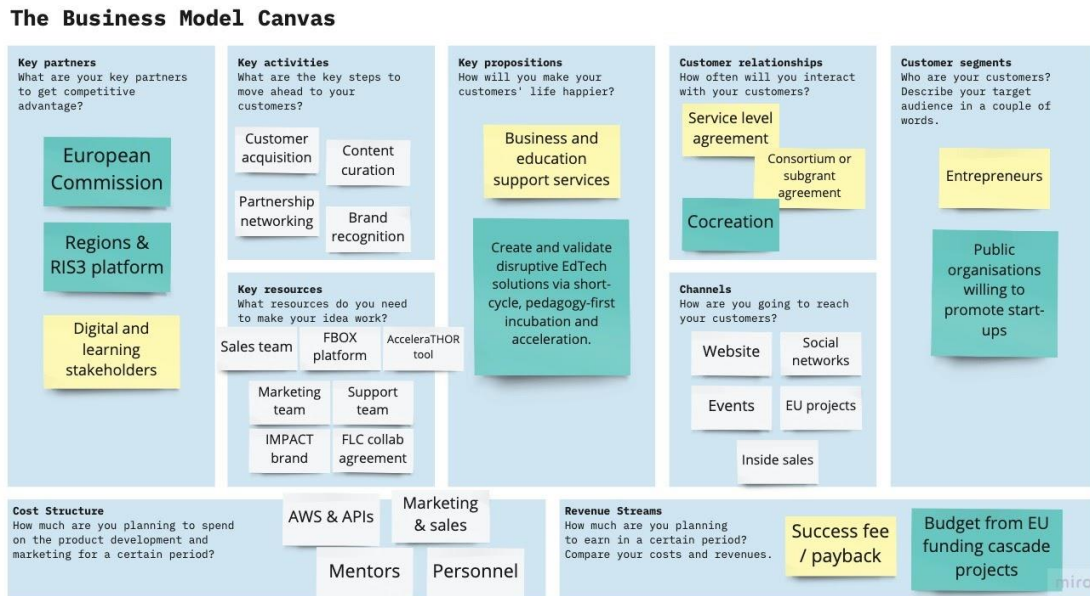

Figure 4. Draft business plan for IMPACT EdTech continuing venture

The business plan is presented in 'business model canvas' format. The business model canvas is often read from the middle out, as it is built putting the key information in the literal center of the plan. This business model canvas contains the following information:

- Purpose & key information

  - <u>Key value propositions</u>: Business and education support services, Create and validate disruptive EdTech solutions via short-cycle, pedagogy-first incubation and acceleration
  - <u>Key activities</u>: Customer acquisition, Content curation, Brand recognition, Partnership networking
  - <u>Key resources</u>: Sales team, FundingBox platform, Acceleration management tool, Marketing team, Support team, IMPACT brand, Future Lab Classroom collaboration agreement
  - <u>Key partners</u>: European Commission, Regions & RIS3 platform, Digital and learning stakeholders
- Customers

  - <u>Customer segments</u>: Entrepreneurs, Public organisations willing to promote start-ups

- o <u>Customer relationships</u>: Service level agreement, Consortium or subgrant agreement, Co-creation
- o <u>Channels</u>: Website, Social networks, Events, EU projects, Inside sales
- Costs
  - o <u>Revenue stream</u>: Success fee/payback, Budget from EU funding cascade projects
  - o <u>Cost structure</u>: AWS & APIs, Marketing & sales, Mentors, Personnel

Put into other words, the basic plan described here is that the IMPACT EdTech venture will continue to offer business and education support services to entrepreneurs, either at the current scale or at a reduced scale. Many essential elements of the current project are planned to continue as they have been for the past 22 months since kick-off, including the value propositions, communication channels, key resources, and basic costs.

However, the key questions are two: From what sources can funds be obtained to continue the programme? And how much funding can be obtained? The answers to these questions will determine the possible scope of the continuing IMPACT EdTech venture. The actions described below are all focused on discovering the answers to these questions. With this information, we can then create a viable business plan.

EdTech investment fund

One avenue that will be explored thoroughly is the possibility of establishing an EdTech investment fund. As a first step, ISDI will lead conversations with EUN and relevant members of the DLSG in order to discuss a co-funding scheme, during which funding would partially be contributed by sponsoring institutions, such as higher education institutions, research and technology organisations, digital learning leaders, venture capital or others.

Conclusions, outcomes, and actions taken as a result of these conversations will be reported in D3.4.

Public funding

In parallel, the IMPACT EdTech will explore the possibility of obtaining public funding in order to continue the IMAPACT EdTech venture. These public funds would be used alongside the private funding, if any, obtained by the investment fund described above.

FundingBox will therefore create a map of public funds available for this purpose. This map will be included in D3.4.

Next steps

D3.4, Plan of Exploitation and Dissemination of results (PEDR) - update (M32) will contain a detailed explanation of the plan for obtaining funding, as well as an updated business plan based on the estimated amount of funding available. If relevant, D3.4 will also include a plan for the next round of open calls.

Finally, regardless of the feasibility of obtaining public or private funds for the continuation of IMPACT EdTech, the remaining months of the project should be used to find ways to continue to amplify and share the work carried out.

- Greater care will be taken to publicly share documentation and learning material from the programme itself so that individual entrepreneurs can take advantage of it. One example, raised by the external reviewers in the Interim Review, is to put together a "bootcamp experience" - sharing relevant material from some or many of the sessions, constructing that material into a "self-learning" journey that is available online to anyone who wants to learn from it.

- As already mentioned, more effort will be put into dissemination and community building so as to build a vibrant ecosystem of stakeholders that continue to interact, collaborate and share even after the programme is over.

5. Management

5.1. Data management

In keeping with the description of work, EUN supervises all the procedures of data management. A Data Management Plan was elaborated by the Data Manager at EUN. It contains a risk assessment of data management issues, detailed information on the procedures that are implemented for data collection, storage, protection, retention and destruction, the Protection of Personal data, and confirmation that they comply with national and EU legislation. Each partner of the consortium acts as Data Controller in their specific field of Data collection for the project.

The first Data Management Plan was drafted by the Project Consortium as Deliverable 6.2. Following the commencement of project activities in April 2020 and EC recommendations, an updated version of the Data Management Plan was drafted and sent to the Project Officer in December 2020. The updated Data Management Plan can also be found here: https://files.eun.org/SciEduDept/IMPACT-EdTech/IMPACTEdTech-D6.2_DataManagementPlan_update_11.12.2020-final.pdf

The project consortium is awaiting the European Commission's approval of the final version of the Data Management Plan, following the project review in June 2021.

5.1.1. Data exploitation and/or shared/made accessible for verification and re-use

All data collected and stored in the two platforms, FBA's FundingBox Platform for Communities & Open Calls Management and ISDI's Acceleration Management System, as well as data gathered via surveys, interviews or focus groups, are protected according to the procedures for privacy and intellectual property rights defined in the consortium agreement. The IMPACT EdTech partners strictly follow the procedure for data exploitation (as described in the DA Technical Annex Section (a).3):

- Storage: The platforms provide a cloud-based environment located within EEA

- Protection: databases containing data deemed to be sensitive are encrypted using the current industry-standard level of encryption.

- Retention: All personal data collected within open calls are fully anonymised upon completion of the project, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR.

- Transfer: The exchange of data between partners are handled by a secure server to ensure maximum security during transmission.

- Destruction: Data used during the project will be destroyed after completion. Only data needed for compliance reasons will be kept.

5.1.2. Data curation and preservation

The processing of personal data that is absolutely necessary and takes place on a legitimate basis pursuant to Art. 6 Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR). Data is not retained for longer than what is necessary for the purposes of each processing activity.

5.1.3. Data management by EdTech trials

Each EdTech trial underwent an ethics assessment by the EUN Ethics Committee, aiming to evaluate any potential ethical issues that may be posed by the solution, considering

amongst other issues, the existence of adequate data management procedures during pilots, in consonance of the general criteria in terms of protection of personal data and data curation as well as, if applicable, the particularities required when managing data from children/minors and/or vulnerable groups.

The evaluation resulted in the ethics consensus report that was shared with each selected start-up at the beginning of the stage. The Ethics consensus report is composed of a series of requirements (which were added to the sub grant agreement for the start-ups), and recommendations. The Ethics Committee asked the start-ups to produce the following documents before the start of the piloting phase:

- A Risk assessment on any GDPR or ethical risks related to the implementation of the project. The risk assessment has to reflect on general points such as data protection structures, third party processors used, etc.; but also had to include the specific ethics requirements.

- Information sheets and consent forms for the pilot participants – students, their parents/legal guardians and teachers, and a Data Processing

Agreement with the school (if needed). To facilitate the preparation of these documents, the Ethics Committee had prepared templates.

Only when these two requirements were met and approved by the Ethics Committee, could the start-ups commence their classroom piloting.

The information sheet templates prepared by the Ethics Committee are available to consult in Annexes 3, 4 and 5 of Deliverable 5.1.

5.2. Knowledge management and protection

The following information regarding the Knowledge Management and Protection is in keeping with the information originally provided for the Grant Agreement. These considerations have been taken into account throughout the course of the project and will continue to apply beyond the completion of the project, with respect to the dissemination and exploitation of project results.

5.2.1. Project coordinator (EUN) will act as IPR manager

Over the course of the project, EUN Project Coordinators have acted as IPR Manager as planned, working in consultation with EUN's Data Management and GDPR internal expert.

5.2.2. Protection of results

To date during the project, due consideration has been given towards the protection of results of the project, which belong to the Disruptors, as stated in the GA. The project has consistently sought to balance the need for dissemination of results, with the need to protect the results of each Disruptor who participates in the IMPACT EdTech Programme. The consortium has put a strong focus on the dissemination and communication of project results, creating a cohesive communication strategy designed to reach as many relevant members of the project target audience as possible at various stages of the project. All partners exercise due consideration when preparing communications content to ensure that the confidential information of each start-up is not disseminated. Any information shared within large scale dissemination activities (in-depth interviews, webinars, events etc), has been disseminated by the disruptors themselves through their participation in the activity, or with their consent. This consideration will continue to be given beyond the end of the project.

5.2.3. Ownership of results

Due consideration regarding the intellectual property rights and ownership of results has been taken into account throughout the course of the project, with respect to each cohort of start-ups that participate in the IMPACT EdTech programme. Data and results deriving from Disruptors (beneficiaries) has remained their property only, and IPR has remained their exclusive property. Provisions regarding the ownership or results and intellectual property rights are specifically provided for in Article 27 the Sub Grant Agreement, which all disruptors must sign before entering the Programme.

5.2.4. Access to results

To date, there have been no official IMPACT EdTech publications. All results that are published within the project have been published through a variety of media, such as blog posts, newsletter, webinars, and social media posts. These results are available to view in Open Access, as indicated in the GA. These results will continue to remain open access following the end of the project.

5.2.5. EdTech disruptors funded (third parties)

In keeping with the GA, the project Consortium has provided dissemination opportunities to the beneficiaries throughout the course of the project, but final decisions on dissemination opportunities are made by the beneficiaries themselves. Each FSTP has been responsible for taking the appropriate steps for securing intellectual property of their results yielded during the project. The consortium has also supported the IPR protection of each beneficiary throughout the project. For example, this support has occurred through Bootcamp sessions which cover IPR, and specialised mentor sessions at the request of disruptors, which consisted of a one-time in-depth session that covered IPR for that disruptor.

For more information on Data Management and Knowledge Protection, please consult the Data Management Plan, as referenced above, in section 5.1.

6. Conclusion

The IMPACT EdTech programme has been running for 22 months, more than half the project duration of 32 months. In that time, nearly all of the project KPIs have been met, and many of those have already been exceeded. It seems fair to conclude that the project is currently well on track.

However, it is important to invest significant effort in ensuring that those good results spread beyond project partners and third-party beneficiaries. The way to do this is through solid communication, dissemination, and exploitation. The communication strategy for this project is discussed in other deliverables. However, this deliverable covers the strategy for dissemination and exploitation results.

Although much has been achieved already, a lot of work remains ahead. It is now the consortium's aim to focus on carrying out that work, so that the efforts invested in this project can continue to reap benefits even after the project comes to an end.