

A mentoring framework for the EdTech Talents project: fostering collaboration among EdTechs & Academia

The **EdTech Talents project** addresses the need for a stronger collaboration between Academia and the Educational Technology (EdTech) sector to effectively integrate technology into modern education. By fostering cooperation among university researchers and the private sector, the project aims to reinforce the EdTech innovation ecosystems of Estonia, Hungary, and Serbia through long-term knowledge transfer with experts. This knowledge transfer is supported via dedicated mentoring and training, ensuring a continuous and impactful flow of innovation, expertise and best practices between researchers and EdTech companies. The present document proposes a mentoring framework to enhance collaboration between EdTech companies and researchers by identifying the best matches between company needs and academic expertise.

Secondments & mentoring

Work Package 3 (WP3) of the EdTech Talents project coordinates series of secondments of researchers from universities in Austria, Germany, and Spain to collaborate with EdTechs in Estonia, Hungary, and Serbia. It facilitates networking, mentoring and consulting, in a process designed to demonstrate how EdTechs can benefit from academic expertise. This way, WP3 focuses on matching companies with experts with different backgrounds, developing a structured mentoring framework, and providing follow-up online mentoring to ensure long-term impact and financial benefits. This approach strengthens the collaboration between the EdTech and Academia worlds and fosters a sustainable exchange of knowledge, paving the way for future EdTech-Academia collaboration processes.

Methodology

The EdTech Talents project employs a structured approach to foster collaboration between researchers and EdTech companies. First, **match-making events** couple researchers and EdTechs based on expertise, interests, and specific company needs. Also, EdTechs conduct a **guided self-analysis** to identify key areas where external support from researchers can drive growth, such as long-term goals and challenges. Next, a **micro-mentoring system** offers targeted support in areas ranging from theoretical insights to practical applications, such as product testing & validation, product usability, establishment of R&D plans, participation in EU research programs, entering specific markets, etc. Moreover, structured in-depth **needs assessments** help refine consulting efforts, detect new areas for mentoring, and ensure tailored guidance, while **multidisciplinary research teams** offer comprehensive support, further enhancing the effectiveness of the mentoring process. Finally, to boost engagement and visibility, the project **showcases success stories** through its website, LinkedIn, and other media channels, highlighting the impact of academia-EdTech collaboration.

Additional comments

This document is a working paper of an on-going project, remaining subject to modifications as the project evolves. Feedback from stakeholders, including researchers, EdTechs, and umbrella organizations – among others - will be incorporated to refine the proposed mentoring framework. As insights emerge from match-making events, mentoring sessions, and practical implementations, adjustments will be made to enhance effectiveness and ensure alignment with the needs of both Academia and Industry. This framework is designed to be flexible and adaptable, allowing for improvements based on participants' real-world experiences and best practices.