

The Atollo Project - European Consortium Launches Groundbreaking Project to Revolutionise Digital Education for Learners with Disabilities.

Press Release | 11/04/2024.

In an ambitious move to transform the landscape of digital education, a consortium comprising members from Croatia, Bulgaria, Austria, Germany, Iceland, Norway, Ireland, and Australia, including leading EdTech companies, universities, and educational institutions, has announced the launch of the Atollo Project. Officially titled "Building Digital Education Environment for Learners with Special Education Needs" (DigiEdu4SEN), the initiative is set to empower learners with disabilities by developing innovative, inclusive digital materials and tools tailored to their unique needs.

The project, which spans 32 months, is supported by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency and involves an international partnership designed to bring about systemic change in digital education for learners with special educational needs (SEN). By leveraging a user-centred design approach, the Atollo Project aims to ensure that digital materials are accessible, engaging, and effective for various types of disabilities, fostering an inclusive learning environment where all learners can thrive.

Central to the project's mission is the collaborative development of a cutting-edge digital education toolkit. This comprehensive resource will offer advice, instructions, and best practices for educators, policymakers, and institutions, guiding the creation and use of digital educational materials for children with SEN. Through extensive analysis, pilot testing, and scientific evaluation, the consortium will refine these materials, ensuring they meet the highest standards of quality and inclusivity.

The Atollo Project also focuses on capacity building for educators, providing them with the tools and knowledge to effectively utilise digital materials in their teaching. This initiative is not only about creating digital content but also about establishing a sustainable network of stakeholders dedicated to advancing inclusive education across the globe.

Expectations are high for the Atollo Project, with outcomes projected to include a comprehensive set of digital learning materials, an inclusive digital education toolkit, and enhanced capacity among teachers and education institutions. The project's innovative approach and dedication to inclusivity promise to set new standards in digital education for learners with disabilities, making a significant impact on schools involved and the broader educational landscape.

By sharing findings and outcomes through various channels, the Atollo Project aims to reach a wide audience, including policymakers and educational institutions, raising awareness about the critical importance of inclusive digital materials. This initiative represents a significant step forward in the effort to ensure equal access to education for all learners, regardless of their abilities.

Think Tank Workshop in Iceland

The Atollo Project team is currently gathering in Iceland for a pivotal Think Tank Workshop and PMT meeting, hosted at the University of Iceland - School of Education, from 10th to 12th April 2024. This strategic assembly in Reykjavík is not just a meeting of minds but a beacon of progress, featuring insightful presentations on good practices from across our international partnership, including Croatia, Bulgaria, Austria, Germany, Norway, Australia, Ireland, and Iceland. Key highlights include an array of sessions dedicated to showcasing digital education templates, good practices from various countries, and workshops aimed at refining our framework for inclusive digital education. The event underscores our commitment to collaborative innovation, setting the stage for the next steps in our journey towards creating a more inclusive digital education landscape. The gathering is marked by days filled with productive discussions, culminating in study visits to special schools in Iceland, providing practical insights into the application of digital education for learners with special educational needs.

"I'm so excited that we have started working on this project. This project unites a diverse range of stakeholders in the education sector, each bringing a wealth of expertise in the education of children with special educational needs. The project has many ambitious goals, but the central concept revolves around building foundational groundwork for a modern, inclusive, digital educational environment tailored for students with special education needs. It is important to mention that we have now decided at the University of Iceland to focus our project on learners with intellectual disabilities. This is a truly important decision, as this group has historically been overlooked in educational research and faces significant barriers in the educational system."

Kristina Ferara Blašković, Profil Klett d.o.o.

The University of Iceland was extremely pleased to host the first meeting of participants of the Atollo-Project, an Erasmus Plus collaboration with 24 representatives from EdTech companies, universities, special schools and educational authorities from Croatia, Bulgaria, Austria, Germany, Norway, Ireland, Australia and Iceland. The group met at the School of Education in Stakkahlíð for 3 days, 10–12th of April 2024. The presentations of best practices from each country were informative and enabled us to start analysis of a framework that will serve as a guide or a blueprint in our tasks ahead. We will be analysing curricula from all partner countries as well as competences in subjects of ICT and mathematics, and digitalisation in general. We have discussed the different ways of approaching teaching and learning of students with special needs and visited special schools in Iceland. We are looking forward to future steps in designing learning materials and pedagogies that they build on.'

Skúlína Hlíf Kjartansdóttir and Anna Magnea Hreinsdóttir , University of Iceland

'The essence of our mission lies not just in the creation of inclusive digital education materials, but equally in ensuring that our breakthroughs reach and resonate with educators, policymakers, and institutions across the globe,' says Jeff Sheridan, representative of Matrix Internet who are leaders of Work Package 5 on Communication and Dissemination. 'This week's Think Tank Workshop and PMT meeting in Iceland marks a pivotal moment for us. It's where we strategise on amplifying our impact and ensuring that the fruits of our collaboration inspire systemic change in digital education for learners with special educational needs.' Matrix Internet is committed to not only facilitating a dialogue within our consortium but also fostering a broader conversation that advances the cause of inclusive education worldwide.'

Jeff Sheridan, Matrix Internet







Further information

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Or visit the project website – www.atolloproject.eu

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