Collaborative Trust Charter for Education in the Digital Age

(Public) Education & Private-Public Collaborative EdTech Trust & Trustworthiness, as Enablers

WHY

A. Equal access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, is a basic human right[1]. It is not only essential, but also Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4)[2]. Effective learning environments is one of the ten (10) official targets of SDG4. Making sure such (public) education is future-proof in this Digital Age, is an essential as well[3].

B. Education and the digital world are now inextricably linked, whether at home, at school or in other settings where digital tools and technologies are used to support learning[4]. With that, education institutions increasingly rely on the private sector to support digital learning environments[5]. Hence, robust educational technologies are a crucial factor in ensuring the success of the digitalisation of (public) education.

C. Learners, teachers, education institutions and other stakeholders deserve consistent such robust and otherwise trustworthy educational technology (EdTech). Having the right set of values in places is a prerequisite[6]. EdTech providers that display consistency in the appropriate level of trust deserve equally trustworthy procurers and customers to collaborate, co-create and work with to build long-lasting relationships. Trust equals consistency over time. It's a two-way street.

D. Trust and trustworthiness are enablers in building, achieving, and sustaining collaborative ecosystems of private-public EdTech. By putting learners and teachers at the centre of such digital ecosystems, trust and trustworthiness empower and defend key values, including human, educational and related societal values, in particular futureproof autonomy of people

FOR WHOM

A. Where any market or ecosystem consist of both demand side, supply side as well as users' side, other stakeholders are society, policy makers, authorities, taxpayers, investors and others. This Charter aims to empower each of these stakeholders (and the various perspectives each may have) and facilitate collaborative trust. For instance:

  a. Customers are supposed to be able to understand, appreciate and ascertain the appropriate levels of trust and related trustworthiness of public-private collaborative educational technology and related (eco)systems, data flows and services ('*Collaborative EdTech*');

  b. Procurement organisations and departments need guidance to understand, appreciate and ascertain these, in order to be able to procure, co-create and help implement, sustain and improve such Collaborative EdTech in an equally trustworthy and collaborative way;

  c. Collaborative EdTech providers, including designers, engineers, integrators, content and other providers, as well as (other) partners, need equal guidance to understand, appreciate and invest in these, in order to be able to co-create, implement, provide, sustain and improve such Collaborative EdTech in a trustworthy and collaborative way;

  d. Policy makers and authorities are supposed to be able to understand, give guidance and monitor which appropriate contextual (existing, upcoming or envisioned) policy initiatives and instruments make sense, are feasible and should be implemented.

B. It brings quite some positive value and increased trust for and between customers, users, procurers, providers, policy makers and others to have a common understanding of collaborative trust in Collaborative EdTech and related engagements. This Charter is non-binding for a stakeholder until adhered to by such shareholder (as explained on the next page).

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[1] The right to education, UNESCO: https://www.unesco.org/en/right-education
[2] SDG4, UNESCO: https://www.unesco.org/en/education2030-sdg4
[3] Digital Education Action Plan, European Commission, https://education.ec.europa.eu/sr/node/1518
[4] Education & Private Sector, CoE: https://rm.coe.int/guidelines-to-support-equitable-partnerships-of-education-institutions/1680a4408b
[5] Digital Citizenship Education & Private Sector, Council of Europe: https://www.coe.int/en/web/digital-citizenship-education/dce-privatesector
[6] Value Compass, SURF: https://www.surf.nl/en/about-surf/value-compass-supports-discussion-on-public-values-in-digital-transformation

WHAT

A charter such as this one generally is a document recognising and promoting a certain main mission and outlining the related values, principles, stakeholders, functions, roles and responsibilities. This particular charter, the Collaborative Trust Charter for Education in the Digital Age ('*Charter*') provides for a symbiosis of seven (7) key values ('*Key Values*') for (public) education stakeholders mentioned above ('*Stakeholders*') to endorse, implement and be accountable for in a collaborative way. These Key Values are principle-based and technology neutral. The seven Key Values are:

1. **Futureproof Autonomy:** Freedom of choice, digital literacy, digital (self) sovereignty, dynamic and evolutionary taxonomy.

2. **X by Design:** Committing to designing technologies that are functional, useful, safe, secure, open and privacy-preserving while making sure that individuals are in control of their data. Ensure the integration of ethics, integrity, and resilience by design.

3. **Information & Knowledge Society:** Drive and encourage a human-centric and data-centric approach while safeguarding human agency and identity, considering data life cycles, data fairness and data strategy readiness.

4. **Living & Learning (Eco)Systems:** Facilitate holistic, inclusive, innovative, interoperable & dynamic educational ecosystems. Undertake continuous risk and impact assessments to ensure business continuity and facilitate vendor/data switching and portability.

5. **Market Acceptance & Uptake:** Promote student and stakeholder awareness, understanding, appreciation, adoption, acceptance, and attention through providing appropriate levels of trust, implementability and consistency.

6. **Feasibility & Value Distribution:** Ensure that digital education remains affordable. Promote social, financial, and economic feasibility through dynamic double-looping.

7. **Collaborative Partnership:** Working with private-public partnerships, leadership, interdisciplinary management, and co-accountability while leaving room to improve and pivot, ensuring adherence to the principle of no surprises.

Deployable Principles

Based on these Key Values, this Charter includes deployable principles and related rulesets ('*Deployable Principles*'). These Deployable Principles can be endorsed, implemented, and included in contractual arrangements by Stakeholders (from any side of the market) and serve as self-assessment, auditing, and accountability mechanisms.

The rolling release version of the Deployable Principles, including the most recent version thereof can be found online[7]. Deployable Principles are intended to guide each Stakeholder to endorse, implement, self-assess, audit, include in contractual arrangements, and hold itself and each other accountable.

NOW WHAT

Adherence & Commitment

Adhering is voluntary, but each Stakeholder that adheres to this Charter (A) commits the Deployable Principles as adhered to, bearing responsibility and anchoring accountability within scope of this Charter, throughout the lifecycle of the design, procurement, implementation, deployment, use and optimising of Collaborative EdTech and related engagements, and (B) intents to ensure that it is up to date with any updates or upgrades to these Deployable Principles. On the latter, it is at the sole discretion of such Stakeholder to commit to such new version(s) thereof whenever those are made available.

For the avoidance of doubt, this Charter does not, under any circumstances, override European or member state mandatory applicable law. This also includes rights offered to individuals respectively micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises in this Digital Age[8].

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[7] Collaborative Trust Framework: https://www.trustframework.eu/
[8] The European Union Digital Decade Policy Programme 2030 envisiones that micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises (MEs & SMEs) are additionally empowered and protected. For instance, Article 13 of the (proposed) EU Data Act caters for the protection of MEs & SMEs from certain unfair contractual terms (as defined therein) regarding data sharing, data use and related liability and other remedies.