Spotlight: Child-Centred Learning

Report

JUNE 2025

hundrED

MONTESSORI
GLOBAL EDUCATION

Photo credit: Canopy Nepal

Contents

Foreword from
Montessori Global Education

Follow the Child

Child-Centred Learning is at the very core of everything Montessori Global Education does - consistently driving our mission, vision, values and practice. Maria Montessori's transformative educational approach puts the child at the centre of learning. Her urge to educators to "follow the child" naturally fosters learning environments full of creativity, curiosity and independence - all vital building blocks for innovation, in spaces where children feel valued, heard and seen.

Montessori Global Education is devoted to the Montessori principles, which emphasice supporting children as active learners, respecting their inner lives, and providing freedom within limits. These core principles are endlessly adaptable, naturally resulting in originality.

We know educators all around the world face barriers which limit their access to innovative educational practice and the ability to prioritise innovative thinking. It is our fundamental belief that all educators can use a child-centred, inquisitive, creative approach to overcome those barriers, whether financial, structural or cultural. In the words of Maria Montessori, "the key is the revelation of the psychology of the young child, the psychology of man in the first phase of his development. An effort must be made to direct this energy into something real, accessible to everybody. When this happens, I believe mankind will have ceased to be a victim of circumstance."[1] Our longstanding experience working with educators worldwide proves this is true.

> The child-centred innovators who applied have truly inspired us, and we're grateful for the opportunity to learn from them about the communities they serve, the impact they make, and the challenges that they all continue to face.

Collaborating with HundrED on this Spotlight on Child-Centred Learning has been a privilege. Their mission to help every child flourish through education innovation is a natural complement to our own: to make Montessori available wherever it's needed, all around the world. Likewise, the child-centred innovators who applied have truly inspired us, and we're grateful for the opportunity to learn from them about the communities they serve, the impact they make, and the challenges that they all continue to face. It was with great delight that we acknowledged evidence of the wide variety of work outside the traditional expectations of schooling or classrooms, in line with the perspective of Maria Montessori - "The school must be invigorated by a new spirit, animated by a wise teacher, wiser than any other human being because he knows and respects the laws of education."[2]

We support and encourage all kinds of educators - including families - to foster a child-centred approach to learning - prioritising equity, sustainability and social responsibility. We strive to break down barriers to ensure that children from diverse backgrounds can access holistic and inclusive learning, today, tomorrow and well into the future.

Karen Chetwynd

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
MONTESSORI GLOBAL EDUCATION

Photo credit: MyMachine

Foreword from HundrED

The Voyage of Child–Centred Learning

A ship rests in the harbour, its sails furled, ready to sail. It represents the educator, built to guide, explore, and adapt. The curriculum is the map, outlining known waters and uncharted territories, while the winds of society—shifting with culture and policy—shape the journey.

A ship is not meant to stay moored. Teaching is setting sail, navigating challenges, and guiding the child toward discovery and self-growth. The values of Child-Centred Learning provide the stability needed to remain true to the journey, no matter how turbulent the seas.

Before embarking on the voyage, educators must first embrace the philosophy of learning, just as sailors dream of their journeys in the springtime before setting sail. Juhani Hytönen, in his exploration of Child-Centred Learning, emphasises that education is about enabling a journey, not forcing a destination. Professor Hytönen's work holds a personal significance for me, as his book was the one I studied for my university entry exam. It was my first real encounter with the philosophy of education, making his ideas even more deeply meaningful in my own journey.

Hytönen draws on educational philosophers like Rousseau, Dewey, and Neill, focusing on the child's freedom and the educator's role in creating a conducive learning environment. The educator's authority should empower the child's journey, fostering curiosity and personal growth. He echoes modern thinkers' sentiments, highlighting that learning is a fluid, interactive process where children's curiosity and experiences guide the voyage. The child is not cargo but a voyager who must navigate and, in time, take the helm. The educator supports, adjusting the sails and fostering autonomy.

> The educator's authority should empower the child's journey, fostering curiosity and personal growth.

Photo credit: Curiosity Clubs

However, societal constraints—such as standardization, assessments, and rigid expectations—can hinder this journey. Financial, political, and personal challenges often act as headwinds, slowing progress. Yet, a skilled educator knows that true learning embraces uncertainty and fosters adaptability, trusting in the learner's capacity to seek and grow. The keel, grounded in respect, autonomy, and engagement, ensures the journey stays true even amidst adversity.

To those who teach, let us not fear the open sea. Let us trust the map but know when to adapt. Let us empower every child to find their way—not because we command them, but because we enable them to sail.

Heini Karppinen

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
HUNDRED

Introduction

CONTEXTUALISING CHILD-CENTRED LEARNING IN TODAY'S EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE AND GLOBAL EDUCATION ECOSYSTEM

Learning is an activity that lives a dual, and sometimes dichotomous existence in the human imagination. At its most basic, learning is inherent to our everyday survival, but on a deeper level, it informs and fulfills our journey through life. So what do we see when we imagine learner-centred education? A classroom full of children who are surrounded by the tools and materials for engaging with information and knowledge, actively creating and exploring? Maybe it is a single person, choosing from an online tutorial or documentary, discovering and engaging fully in a topic of their choice. Or perhaps it is a small team guided by one person, tasked with figuring out how to solve a problem, and gathering needed pieces along the way.

However we imagine it, if we define education as a life-long process in which an individual explores their interests, from the intellectual to the mundane, using them as an entrée to learning, as a means of enriching their lives, and ultimately flourishing - we must distinguish it from schooling. This is what HundrED innovator and Community Lead Dr. Sarah Aiono (Play-Based Learning Observation Tool (P-BLOT)) contends. She reiterates a Durkheimian social fact: historically, schooling is the method by which societies standardise and institutionalise education with the purpose of turning out productive, contributing members of society. Once we look at the institutionalisation process, which often puts the desires of the individual and the needs of society into stark opposition, we also must engage in a political, economic and social discussion about the benefits versus the costs of learner- or child-centred practices. In that discussion, child-centred and teacher-centred approaches are pitted against one another in a way that renders both in quite rigid and absolute terms rather than as flexible methods that can complement one another.[3]

Still, making this distinction between education and schooling is important not only because we use it to situate our work in this Spotlight on Child-Centred Learning, but also because it helps us to extract some of the politics and social implications present in this discussion, set them aside, and focus instead on the outcomes of learner-centred approaches. For the purposes of this Spotlight, we acknowledge and address the inequalities of access to learner-centred *schooling*, which are exacerbated by the unequal distribution of resources, social stratification, and cultural differences that are a global concern. While this conversation is important, **our aim in the Spotlight is to home in on the value that learner-centred education represents for children, and how the fourteen education innovations featured in this report make it more accessible.** We draw on the HundrED Advisory, Youth Advisory Board members', and Montessori Global Education community members' reflections on experiences to provide valuable personal perspectives to support the importance of making such educational opportunities available.

> Learning is inherent to our everyday survival, but on a deeper level, it informs and fulfills our journey through life.

MONTESSORI GLOBAL EDUCATION

Montessori Global Education is a global education organisation expanding access to Montessori to transform how we teach, learn and lead. We identify, support and spread Montessori-inspired educational solutions that will give a generation of children the skills to solve tomorrow's problems.

Committed to nurturing children's natural curiosity, creativity, and love for learning, we are proud of our rich heritage in Montessori philosophy and methodology and offer a comprehensive portfolio of educator training, resources and consultancy services tailored to meet the needs of diverse learners and educational institutions globally.

https://montessori-globaleducation.org/
connect@montessori.org.uk

HUNDRED

HundrED is a global mission-driven organisation transforming K-12 education. Its mission is to give recognition and visibility to practitioners who are driving innovative, impactful, and scalable approaches in education all around the world. HundrED believes that through identifying, amplifying, and facilitating the implementation of education innovations we can transform education systems, equip students with the skills to thrive as global citizens, and ultimately help every child flourish. HundrED Spotlights are organised with partner organisations, who help from their area of expertise. They are unique opportunities for both educational professionals and independent organisers of the Spotlight to gain a thorough insight into the education innovations taking place in either a specific area of education and/or within a certain geographic region. For each Spotlight, HundrED accepts applications from the brightest innovations in education, which then undergo a thorough evaluation by its Research Team in collaboration with partner organisations and an expert Advisory Board.

Photo credit: Destination Imagination Challenge Experience

NEW LENSES

RESISTANCE
TO CHANGE

ADVOCACY

SYSTEM
INFLEXIBILITY

CONNECTIONS

SUSTAINABILITY

TOOLS

RESOURCES

Main barriers to Child-Centred Learning

→ Resistance to change: Systems, schools, and educators sometimes need new lenses to see the opportunities for Child-Centred Learning

→ System Inflexibility: Advocacy can address the bureaucracy and inflexibility of existing practices

→ Sustainability: Developing supportive connections can ensure that child-centred approaches are adopted and/or adapted and continued.

→ Resources: Teachers need training, support, and tools to implement these practices

Opportunities

→ Innovators can change the lenses through which learning is viewed: When systems, schools, and educators see the results of child-centred practices, they realise their importance

→ Innovators can work with or disrupt the systems: Innovators warm up inflexible systems by leveraging community resources, supporting educators, and advocating for change

→ Innovations can connect teacher-centred and child-centred methods for ease of buy-in and transition

→ Innovations can provide frameworks and tools to simplify understanding and implementing child-centred approaches

Photo credit: Destination Imagination Challenge Experience

HundrED's Manifesto and Theory of Change

HundrED's goal is to help improve education and foster a movement through encouraging impactful and scalable innovations to spread across the world, while staying mindful of context.

We believe that the purpose of education is to help every child flourish, no matter what happens in life.

In a fast-changing world, focusing on traditional academic skills will remain important, but that is not enough. To thrive as global citizens, children must be equipped with a breadth of skills. We are advocates of a child-centric approach and personalised, passion-based learning, and support the essential relationship between an inspired teacher and a motivated student.

Education, as the world's most universal institution, has a unique role in shaping a more equitable and engaging future. It should inspire joyful, meaningful learning experiences that foster curiosity and creativity, guiding children toward becoming lifelong learners. Technology and policies must enhance accessibility while ensuring they do not reinforce inequalities, by considering the diverse needs of students, including language, cultural heritage, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

To make this happen, we need visionary leadership at every level of our education system with ambitious, impactful, and scalable education innovations that are effective globally. The world of education is full of hardworking specialists who are making this happen every day.

Our mission at HundrED is to give them the recognition and visibility they deserve.

ACTIVITIES

IDENTIFY

AMPLIFY

IMPLEMENT

OUTPUTS

RESEARCH

KNOW-HOW

CONNECTIONS

INSPIRATION

OUTCOMES

SYSTEM EVOLUTION

INNOVATION ADAPTATION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IMPACT

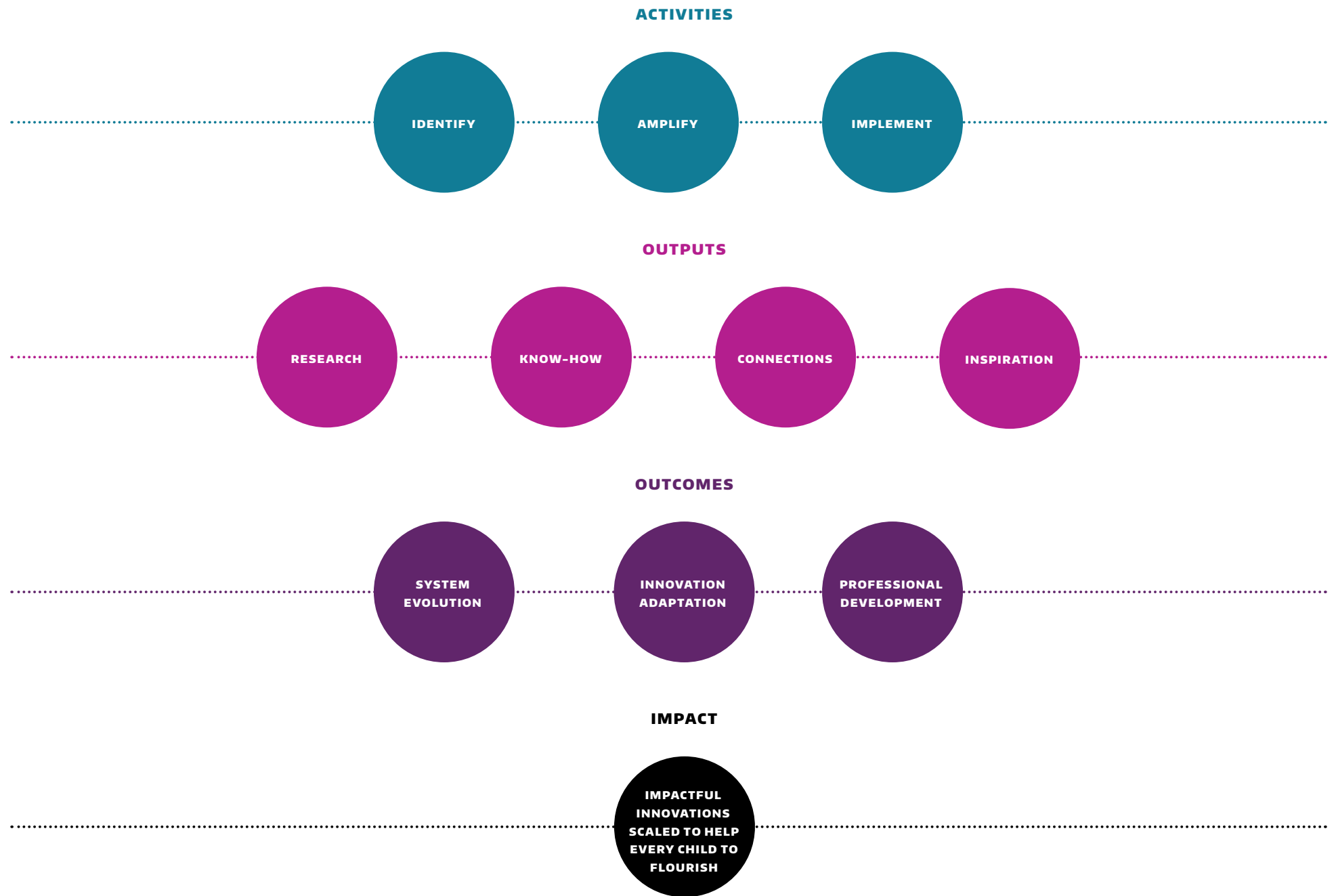IMPACTFUL INNOVATIONS SCALED TO HELP EVERY CHILD TO FLOURISH

Figure 1: HundrED Theory of Change

Chapter 1
Background

WHY CHILD-CENTRED LEARNING

Defining the roles of educator and learner is essential to our understanding of child-centred approaches. To this end, the etymology of the word educator, or one who "...promote[s] the intellectual and cultural development of the individual and, at the same time, [encourages] the learning of new concepts and skills," highlights the advisory nature of the position.[4] The learner has the positionality of acquirer, of one who is following or finding a track.[5] These definitions give us quite a lot of freedom to see educators and learners as co-constructors toward a common interest. The boundaries between educator and learner can even be seen as fluid based on context - each should inform the other.

So, why is it necessary to shine a spotlight on Child-Centred Learning practices, if educators and learners operate in the space described above, one that is rich with the potential for both to flourish through their interactions? The answer lies in the difference between schooling and education. Strictly defined, the institution of school requires that clear boundaries (of curriculum and of pedagogy) be set, and these boundaries have historically privileged the individual(s) at the front of the classroom, not out of a blatant disregard for the learner, but rather so that the system can be more easily replicable.[6] Chris Watkins and Peter Mortimore

model the complexities of pedagogy (and themselves choose to define it as a term inclusive of both teacher and learner roles) as "'any conscious activity by one person designed to enhance learning in another.'"[7] They contend that the complex interplay between the elements of teaching activities amplify the challenges teachers may face in carrying out approaches that see "...learners as active constructors of meaning..." who are capable of being part of "a community...engaged in the generation and evaluation of knowledge and in which the teacher makes explicit her knowledge at the same time as promoting access to other sources."[8] This explanation presents learner-centred practices as ones requiring a wealth of experience in other areas of teaching, as well as an intentional step into the role of facilitator, for successful implementation. While this is true, innovative ideas are equally essential, as co-founder of selected innovation HoloTracker, Aik Yang, states: "Teachers need the right tools to be the stewards of student growth."[9]

CHALLENGES OF PERCEPTION

One of the main roadblocks to child-centred approaches is the varying levels of autonomy and capacity for not only educators, but also learners. In regions where teacher education and professional development are less accessible or difficult to provide, equipping educators with the capability to act autonomously, curate, and co-create the learning experience, may not be within the realm of possibility. And in regions where the results and outputs of schooling are held under a microscope, the success of learners is measured by how well they perform on standardised methods of assessment, leaving educators with very little room to exercise their agency to engage children in interests that may lie outside of the curriculum or require specialised pedagogical knowledge. As one HundrED Advisory Board member, Meggie Fisher, commented: "[One of the biggest challenges to Child-Centred Learning is a] lack of understanding of how Child-Centred Learning can still meet curriculum expectations. Many [of the shortlisted] innovations included an element of teacher training or largely removed the teacher from the experiences so that they could see how the child can be the focus."[10] Learner agency is similarly stymied if the system in place has not encouraged the development of critical thinking and choice-making. These factors in combination can make child-centred approaches appear to be quite difficult to implement in schools, resource-strapped or not. While the outcomes of learner-centred education (independent and creative thinking, self-reflection,

Photo credit: Canopy Nepal

Photo credit: The Opentree Foundation

and problem solving, to name a few) are valued and rewarded by society, these same practices are labelled as resource-heavy, time-intensive, and difficult to implement in different cultural contexts. Innovations supporting teacher development clarify the practice, as innovator Dr. Sarah Aiono describes: "The P-BLOT has addressed the gap between what teachers know about Child-Centred Learning and how to actually do it in a school setting."[11] Innovations highlighted in this Spotlight surmount such barriers creatively (see Figure 2).

In a thought-piece about learner-centred education written for UNICEF, Michele Schweisfurth digs into the stories around learner-centred education in different contexts, especially ones considered low-resource or culturally 'unsuitable', noting that it is the "narratives" (not necessarily the truth) about learner-centred practices that limit the innovative adoption of such approaches.[12] While she acknowledges that the capacity building of teachers and the changing of policies to promote learner-centred teaching require support from administrators, teacher educators, and policy makers, she also provides seven "basic principles that can be adopted that draw on the best of learner-centredness while respecting context and avoiding failure." Three of these principles are of particular interest to the innovators selected for this Spotlight: finding novel methods or tools to engage and motivate learners, curating the curriculum to be realistically challenging, dialogic, and content-rich, and - very importantly - using assessments to evaluate "...a wide range of thinking skills" that are contextually relevant.[13] Giddy2School Education Initiative is an excellent example of how developing a cohesive programme that addresses key societal issues through different projects directed at basic skills, school participation, and learner-driven community problem solving can work. Founder and CEO Itunuoluwa Bamidele states that "at Giddy2School, we're not just providing education—we're unlocking possibilities. We empower conventional systems by connecting education to empowerment, making education a bridge to self-reliance, employment, sustainability, and national development. That's our model—child-centered, impact-driven, and future-focused. We believe every child holds the key to transforming their community. So we don't just teach—we inspire, guide, and co-create learning experiences that prepare them to lead. Our initiatives empower, not control; they elevate learners to become thinkers, problem-solvers, and change-makers."[14]

PERCEIVED REQUIREMENTS		INNOVATIVE APPROACHES
Enhanced Teacher and Learner Capacity for learner-centred pedagogies	→	Clear alignment of child-centred practices with immediate and long-term education goals
Individualised lessons and/or multi-leveled curricula	→	Open Framework(s) for CCL with different needs-based options
Reduced authority of teachers as the holders of knowledge	→	Teachers retain respect as guides and facilitators of learning
Learners given full authority without boundaries	→	Learners explore interests within boundaries and with supports
Outcomes difficult to assess with traditional methods	→	Alternative assessment methods, such as portfolios, projects, and the achievements of student-driven goals
Additional time allotment	→	Integration of child-centred practices within the existing schedules and systems

Figure 2. How innovative approaches to Child-Centred Learning address the perceived requirements

Photo credit: Play-Based Learning Observation Tool

CHILD-CENTRED LEARNING AND MONTESSORI

There are many pedagogical approaches that, in a long progressivist tradition, support Child-Centred Learning. The 19th century marked the development of methodologies, from the likes of Pestalozzi, Fröbel, and Bosco, that drew on the 18th century work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In the early 20th century notable developers of modern child-centred practices were Rudolf Steiner, Helen Parkhurst, John Dewey, and Maria Montessori.[15] The 20th century also produced the contrasting 'factory' model of schooling, designed for its efficiency in turning out matriculants who had achieved the system's requirements with little care for individual needs or strengths. As argued by Linda Darling-Hammond, the 21st century presents an opportunity for the revision of that factory model to systematically incorporate learner-centredness, if education is to keep pace with the demands of today's society.[16]

For more than a century, Montessori and Montessori-inspired education have been predominant options in the landscape of methodologies that support child-centredness. The foundational principles of these practices emphasise the learning environment, attention to the developmental appropriateness of materials, and the child's role in their own learning process. Additionally, "for Montessori the goal of education is to allow the child's optimal development (intellectual, physical, emotional and social) to unfold."[17] In that vein, this Spotlight draws its definitions of child-centred practices and pedagogical principles from Montessori, as described by Montessori Global Education (see Figure 3).

Innovations submitted to this Spotlight were not required to adhere strictly to what is believed to be 'traditional' Montessori principles and pedagogy. In fact, we believe that innovative interpretations of these principles play a crucial role in overcoming barriers and expanding the scope of child-centred practices, demonstrating their relevance across a variety of contexts. The National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector additionally outlines what they believe the minimum standards for successful practices outside of a Montessori licensed programme should be, stating that "[s]uccessful Montessori-Inspired practice calls for blending a child-centred, developmentalist orientation with specific pedagogical moves consistent with the orientation."[18] This Spotlight holds to an envisioning of Montessori and Montessori-based practice as one that is flexible, but stays true to Maria Montessori's philosophy, which requires freedom within boundaries for both teacher and learner, and allows for the inclusion of diverse communities regardless of socioeconomic background or ability.

FUNDAMENTALS	INNOVATIVE APPROACHES
Supporting the child as an active learner	Vertical grouping (multi-age cohorts)
Respecting the inner life of the child	The work cycle (uninterrupted time to engage in a given pursuit)
Trusting the child's inner motivation	The favourable environment (curated in accordance with the learners' objectives)
Providing freedom within limits	
Encouraging the child's inner discipline	

Figure 3. Key Fundamentals and Pedagogical Principles of the Montessori Approach, adapted from Montessori Global Education.[19]

Chapter 2
Curating the Collection

The Selection Process

As with all HundrED Spotlights, the selection process consists of four phases: discovery, shortlist, Advisory Board review, and final selection workshop. Each one relies on the evaluatory tool, HundrED's "Standards of Evidence," as innovations must demonstrate measurable impact and scalability. Appendix A provides definitions and detailed information on each phase.

The team of Montessori Global Education, a leading Montessori training provider of over seventy years of expertise in supporting Montessori educators and specialists in practice, were involved in the evaluation process of each innovation's alignment to the codified principles of Montessori.

PHASE 1 – DISCOVERY

Identifying innovations to apply to a Spotlight was a joint effort between the HundrED Research Team and Montessori Global Education. Both partners leveraged their networks to encourage global education innovators to submit their solutions. Additional research activities and outreach to the HundrED Community yielded **212 submissions.**

PHASE 2 – SHORTLIST

HundrED Research Team distilled the pool of innovations into a longlist of seventy solutions that were reviewed independently and then collaboratively with Montessori Global Education to make the shortlist. **The thirty-eight shortlisted innovations** adhered to the foci of the Spotlight, which included the five pillars of Child-Centred Learning identified in the call, as well as the quality of the evidence of impact and scalability.

PHASE 3 – ADVISORY BOARD REVIEW

In phase three, HundrED convened an **Advisory Board composed of 82 stakeholders in learner-centred education** (to see a full list, refer to Appendix C). Twenty-seven percent were students aged 13-19 years from HundrED's Youth Ambassador programme, and the remaining 73% were educators with Montessori or International Baccalaureate backgrounds, education innovators, academics, and other education professionals. This diverse group of stakeholders, which spanned six continents and thirty-five countries, evaluated the shortlisted innovations over a two week period in January 2025. Divided into three batches, each of the thirty-eight innovations received an average of 25 reviews; **967 in all**, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Nine-hundred-and-sixty-seven reviews by the Advisory Board

PHASE 4– SELECTION WORKSHOPS

Based on the Advisory Board's numeric impact and scalability scores, as well as written comments, HundrED Research Team and Montessori Global Education made the final selection during a structured workshop. Participants deliberated the adherence of each innovation to child-centred principles, strength of impact and evidence of scalability, and the Advisory Board's recommendations.

Fourteen innovations were selected to represent this Spotlight's focus. Their contributions to the area of child-centred education practice range from frameworks that support learner-led projects to programmes for educators to build environments that facilitate these types of approaches. The following chapter presents an overview of the innovations and an analysis of the way(s) in which they fulfill the principles of Child-Centred Learning and support educators and current systems in sustaining such practices.

Chapter 3
Selected Innovations

Over two hundred innovations applied to this Spotlight call, of which there were 169 eligible based on the criteria detailed in Figure 3 (see Chapter 1). Of those eligible innovations, thirty-eight were shortlisted and reviewed by the HundrED Advisory Board, and 14 were selected. Those innovations represent a variety of foci in child-centred practice (see Figure 5).

Innovation name	Teacher support (Whether through collaboration or communities of practice, mentorship, training, etc.)	Freedom within limits for both teachers and learners (activating both teacher and learner agency)	Developing creative ways to facilitate CCL in contexts that are challenging	Contextualised frameworks for what CCL can look like, bridging knowledge and best practices
Canopy Nepal		x		x
CLASS ONE Personalized Language Learning	x	x		
Content Creation Labs			x	
Curiosity Clubs			x	x
Destination Imagination Challenge Experience		x	x	
Flying Colors	x	x		
Giddy2School Education Initiative	x	x		x
HoloTracker	x			x
Learnlife: Pathways to Possibilities	x	x		
MyMachine	x		x	
Play-Based Learning Observation Tool (P-BLOT)	x	x		
PROYECTIVIDA			x	
Street Racket: Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere			x	x
Using Play to Better our World	x		x	x

Figure 5. Selected Innovations and Their Category Foci

Photo credit: CLASS ONE

During the submissions period, HundrED and Montessori Global Education expected that there would be quite a few Montessori programmes in addition to those that would declare their work Montessori-based. However, we received only seven (3% of the total submissions). Additionally, we anticipated that many innovations would focus on the target audience of learners in the Early Childhood demographic, but received only twenty (less than 10%) submissions.

In curating the collection, the partners strove to not only highlight innovations that met the requirements of the Spotlight, but also represented a diversity of approaches, target groups, and funding models.

Innovations addressing the needs of learners in basic education (usually identified as 1st-8th grades) formed the bulk of those sent to the HundrED Advisory Board (see Figure 6). Thirty-nine percent of the shortlisted were not-for-profit organisations, followed by for-profit organisations (26%) (see Figure 7). The vast majority of submitted innovations were focussed on the cultivation of 21st century skills and creative thinking, were conducted via digital programming and games, and prioritised sustainable resources. Just as with the Target Audience and Organisation Type, the categorical trends filtered through to the final selection, as shown by Figure 8.
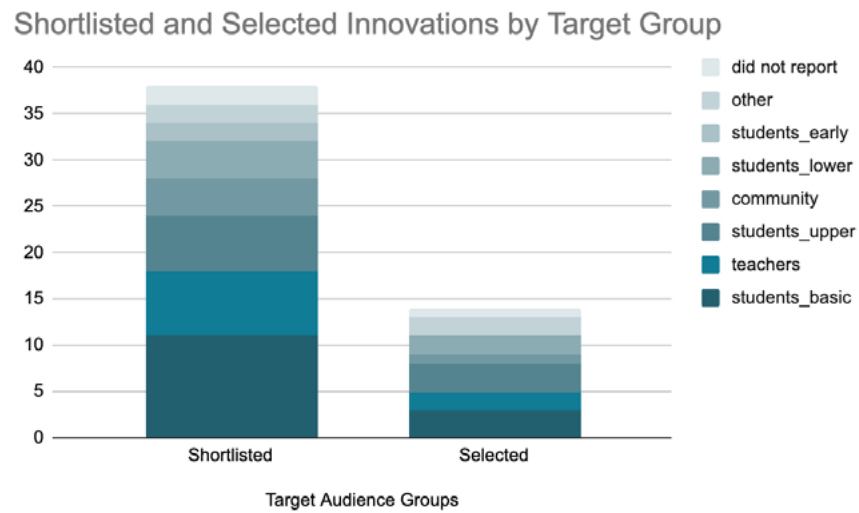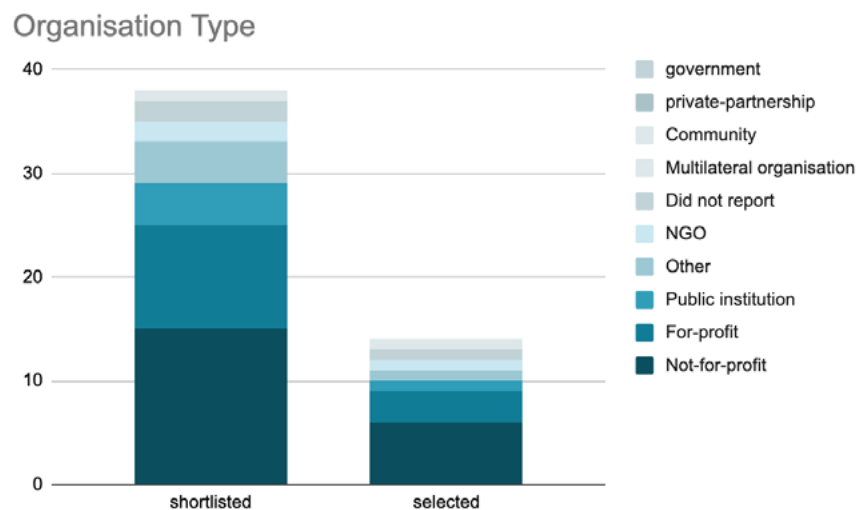
Shortlisted and Selected Innovations by Target Group

Figure 6. Shortlisted and selected Innovations by Target Group

Organisation Type

Figure 7. Shortlisted and Selected Innovations by Organisation Type

TREND IN CATEGORIES FROM SUBMISSION TO SELECTION

CATEGORIES

21st Century Skills — 30% → 43%
Digital Programming — 27% → 36%
Creative Thinking — 25% → 14%
Games — 16% → 14%
Sustainable Resources — 20% → 29 %
Books — 18% → 7%
Project Based Learning — 18% → 14%
Play — 16% → 14%
Student Voice & Agency + Student Led — 25% → 29 %
Access to Education — 16% → 14%

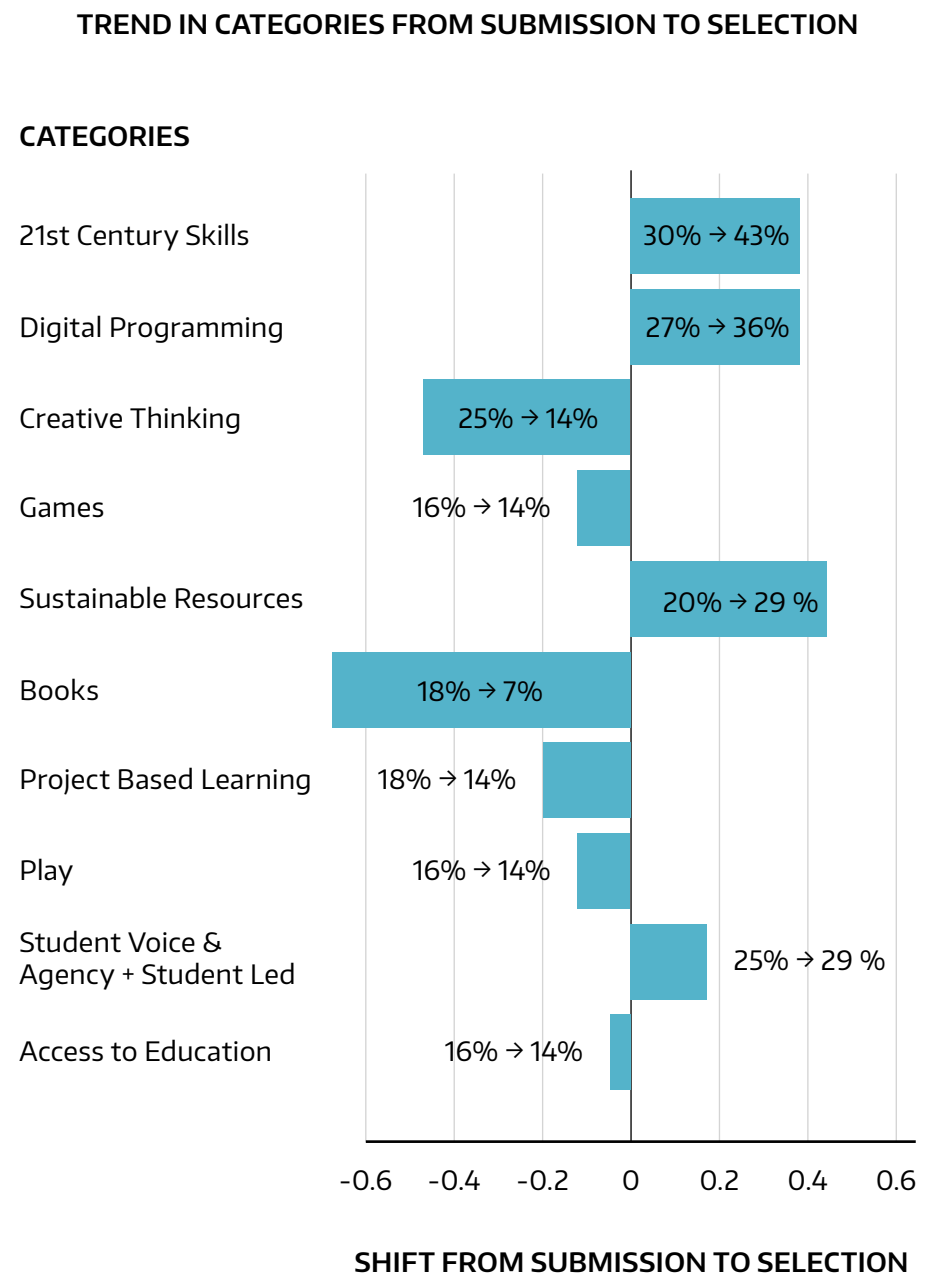**SHIFT FROM SUBMISSION TO SELECTION**

Figure 8. Top Categories (%), from Submissions Represented by the Fourteen Selected Innovations

Collection of Voices

Placing learner agency at the forefront of educational experiences necessarily centres each individual's learning path, passions, and interests. The Spotlight innovators and education stakeholders who shared their insights for this project confirm that the challenges to the acceptance and implementation of child-centred approaches stem from perceived notions about the time, resources, and capacity necessary to make such practices successful. Still, they point to the fundamental understanding that child-centred approaches result in positive outcomes from increased engagement to the development of behaviours and skills necessary for the workplace, and are essential to life-long learning and adaptation to the fluctuating demands of adult life. Through identifying impactful and scalable grassroots education innovations in child-centred practices and gathering their stories, we dispel many of the misconceptions and demonstrate that child-centred approaches are not only practical and implementable, but are also successful and transferable across contexts; child-centred philosophies are globally relevant and answer to contemporary needs.

The purpose of this section is to provide a more specific context on the subject of the Spotlight and to give readers a view into stakeholder experiences. Quotes have been included from selected Innovators, Advisory Board Members, the HundrED Community, and in this case, the Montessori Global Education Community.

COLLECTION OF VOICES

Mindset shift: Innovators first need to help systems, administrators, and educators change the lens through which teaching and learning are viewed.

"I believe that one's mindset and will of action are some of the biggest obstacles when it comes to implementing Child-Centred Learning in my context (Panama). Innovators are those that take the first step to try opening a closed door. They're the ones that have seen or experienced the necessity of a change in the education system globally. With their help, change becomes more possible."

–Kelly Michelle Wu, HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum and Advisory Board Member

"Most students lose interest if teaching is only done in knowledge transfer mode. Allowing students to understand what it is for —by letting them apply knowledge— drastically changes how students experience school. Education done right delivers young people a growth mindset, allowing them to dream and think bigger and become better in who they are. Wherever life takes them, one of the most instrumental skills for bringing you happiness and thriving is learning how to bring your ideas to life."

– Piet Grymoprez, MyMachine

"If we don't change our mindset, our children will face the same struggles we did—learning a language because they have to, not because they are inspired."

–Yap Yee Yee, CLASS ONE Personalized Language Learning Program

"We do bottom-up work which means that we directly work with the students to bring a change in their lives but the way that we do it is from a top-down approach so that it can also remain sustainable because when the government, the teachers, and the kids know about our programme, it means that every layer understands what's happening. We don't aim to replace the system—we work with mayors and officials to fill gaps in existing education plans."

– Monal Battarhai, Canopy Nepal

"We have seven challenges we create each year: engineering, science, fine arts, service learning, and technical. Educators look at these and think: 'This makes sense! This aligns with school STEAM learning.' They begin connecting Child-Centred Learning to their teaching, so they adopt our challenges. But then, using them, they realise: 'This approach fits many subjects, not just these challenges.' That's where the great mind shift happens!"

– Johnny Wells, Destination Imagination Challenge Experience

"In all of my roles, I have been able to deepen my understanding of the meaning and effect of Child-Centred Learning. I have learned that the adults' ability to apply different lenses, accept that a range of perspectives always exists and be sympathetic to each child's unique developmental journey is key to supporting children to learn at their own pace."

–Diana Bradley, Executive Director, The Montessori Society AMI UK and Advisory Board Member

"Project-based or play-based learning fundamentally do not have to be time or resource intensive if the design is conscious and keeps in mind the constraints that teachers functioning in these settings experience. We notice that teachers will easily connect those dots and make sense of it because Flying Colors is designed in such a way that the materials required for the programme are all in and around the school; even the whole technology based element that's involved is not heavily internet dependent and works on any devices that are available."

–Revanth Voothaluru, Flying Colors

"A lot of schools think they're already implementing Child-Centred Learning, but it's really hard to do it within the framework of the school and the classroom that exists at the moment. We realised the clubs are not for the schools, they're for the students, for the learners, and for the guides."

–Ron Berlinski, Curiosity Clubs

Child-Centred practices require careful planning, consideration, and support. The innovations provide frameworks and best practices to help teachers, and bridge traditional teacher-centred practices and child-centred ones.

"Teachers think they have to do something very different, but all we're saying through our Conscious Play® approach is: you need to play more meaningfully, more purposefully."

-Shweta Chari and Trupti Abhyankar, Using Play to Better our World

"Child-Centred Learning isn't impractical—it's just dynamic. You can plan 200%, but you still have to adapt in the moment."

– Monal Battarhai, Canopy Nepal

"One of the key things we knew was important was to build a community of practice for teachers so they can support each other."

-Revanth Voothaluru, Flying Colors

"It is not about having one idea, but about creating a context in which a myriad of ideas can flow, and the desire and grit to grab hold of them and test them out."

-Piet Grymonprez, MyMachine

"Los rectores han estado muy al tanto y han apoyado muchísimo la experiencia. Desde que el rector ya quiera que se haga algo en la institución, pues ahí para abajo es mucho más fácil hacerlo." / "The principals are directly familiar with and support the experience. It's important that the leading figures at each institution agree; with their support, it's much easier to achieve the objectives."

–Andrés Camilo Cardona Franco, PROYECTIVIDA

"Street Racket is simple, barrier-free, and self-explanatory, making it easy for teachers and students to implement."

–Marcel Straub, Street Racket

"Can child-centered learning only happen in small classrooms? What if technology helps refocus our gaze to see every student, even in large classes?"

– Aik Yang, HoloTracker

Child-Centred Learning "follows the child," but is also thoughtfully structured.

"One of the biggest misconceptions is that learner-centred education means students are left alone to figure things out. That's not true. Our educators work in teams, and their role is to scaffold learning in a way that allows students to grow in independence: students create artifacts—whether research projects, designs, or prototypes—that showcase their learning in a way that is meaningful to them and to the world."

–Stephen Harris, Learnlife: Pathways to Possibilities

"In primary school, we had one lesson per week in which everyone could decide individually which topic they wanted to work on. This allowed for each child to work depending on their interests and encouraged them to structure their work individually. I think child-centred practices encourage each child to learn about themselves while also exploring new content in a way that makes sense to them."

–Freddie Schneider, Student and HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum

"Child-Centred Learning shaped me beyond academics—it encouraged critical thinking, global awareness, and a sense of responsibility toward my community. I didn't just learn math, science, or literature, I learned how to apply them to real-world challenges and see education as a tool for impact. This experience reinforced my belief that Child-Centred Learning creates not just knowledgeable students, but engaged citizens who use their education to drive change. If more schools embraced this model, we'd have a generation of leaders ready to shape a better world for everyone."

–Angel Jesús Tello Vargas, HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum and Advisory Board Member

"We really emphasise having youth create the content itself—not just engage with knowledge, but determine what information is important."

–Katie Cox, Content Creation Lab

Learner-centred practices benefit everyone, and work in school settings.

"Cuando trabajamos en un problema centrado en el estudiante no estamos perdiendo esos esfuerzos entonces estamos viendo los frutos eso me parece súper importante en esos términos porque hemos decidido elegir este la falta de un proyecto de vida que está muy asociado a la motivación." / "When we work on a student-centred problem, we don't waste any effort; on the contrary, we see the rewards, and that's why we've decided to work on the lack of a life project that is closely associated with motivation."

–Andrés Camilo Cardona Franco, PROYECTIVIDA

"Studying in a child-centred environment equips us with essential life skills for adulthood, ensuring we thrive beyond school. Most importantly, there is balance—neither academics nor social life, physical health, or emotional well-being is neglected. We become individuals with a strong sense of community and purpose."

**–Dawa Seldon, HundrED Youth Ambassador and Advisory Board Member**

"Education innovators serve as facilitators in enhancing intrinsic motivation among students with special educational needs (SEN) by developing impactful and inclusive learning experiences tailored to each student's unique strengths. By employing adaptive curricula and advanced technologies, they empower educators to cultivate supportive environments that foster active participation and encourage lasting independence for all learners."

–Jessie Au Wing Yee, Elementary School Teacher and Advisory Board Member

"People assume only a certain type of student can do this work, but we recruit for diversity. Students who struggle in traditional settings often contribute the most."

–Katie Cox, Content Creation Lab
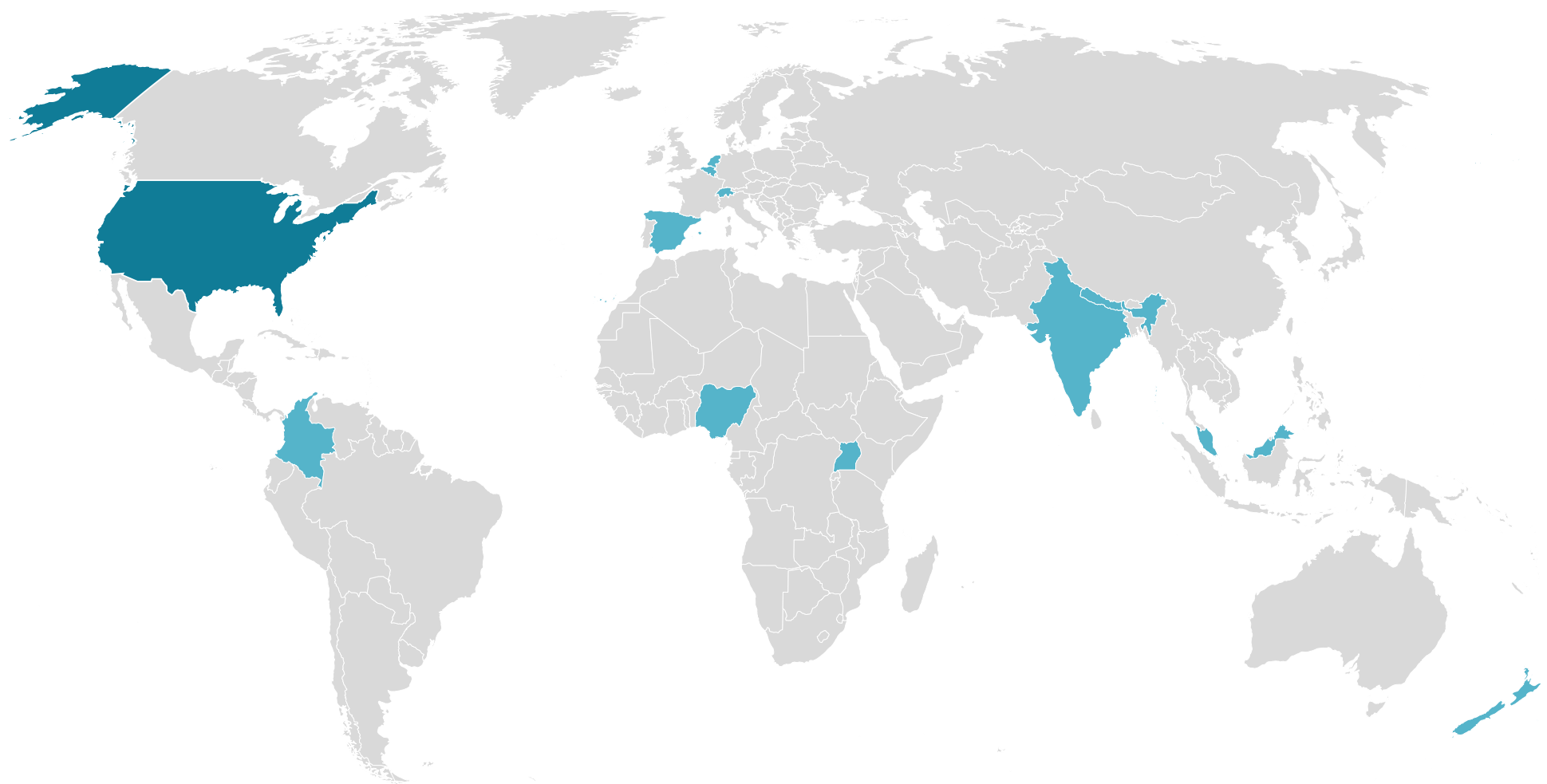
● 1 innovation
● 2 innovations

Figure 9. Map of the Country Spread of the Fourteen Selected Innovations

SELECTED INNOVATIONS

Canopy Nepal

CLASS ONE Personalized Language Learning

Content Creation Lab

Curiosity Clubs

Destination Imagination Challenge Experience

Flying Colors

Giddy2School Education Initiative

HoloTracker

Learnlife: Pathways to Possibilities

MyMachine

Play Based Learning Observation Tool (P-BLOT)

PROYECTIVIDA

Street Racket - anyone, anytime, anywhere

Using Play to Better our World

Photo credit: PROYECTIVIDA

Reshaping Education

Canopy Nepal

Nepal

Canopy Nepal provides equitable accessibility to education to underprivileged children in Nepal and promotes interactive learning practices used to make informed life decisions.

2016
YEAR ESTABLISHED

140K
CHILDREN / USERS

5
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

Canopy Nepal focuses on supporting the child as an active learner, customising curriculum based on students' interests and backgrounds. Teachers engage students in interactive learning, adjusting the classroom environment and lesson approaches as needed. Equally important is respecting the inner life of the child: encouraging self-expression, creativity, storytelling, and supporting children in discovering and communicating their own perspectives.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

The programme works on-site to help students transition from rote learning to critical thinking and self-expression. Canopy Nepal also works beyond the classroom, integrating with local governments to create systemic change, so that the policies around Child-Centred Learning can continue to evolve and make a sustainable impact.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

Child-Centred Learning requires adaptability, and Canopy Nepal trains teachers to adapt, incorporating student interests into their teaching, making learning engaging rather than rigid. The programme enhances classroom relationships and reduces student fear of teachers.
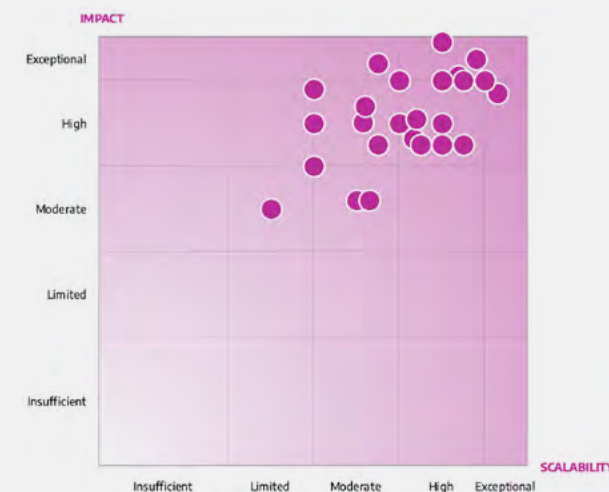
AB comment Impact

"Canopy Nepal takes a holistic view of a student, addressing each component of their needs to ensure impact, from academic and psychosocial support, to meals and engaging parents; these students benefit from various angles."

AB comment Scalability

"The programme's scalability is enhanced by its comprehensive design and adaptability. The scholarship model can be replicated in diverse regions with underserved populations, leveraging local partnerships to address unique challenges."

Innovator Quote

"We actively customise the curriculum based on students' learning styles and interests—some love video games, others love Korean music…Our goal is to unleash the child within themselves—letting them be as creative as they want, writing and presenting their stories."

Explore, Learn, Connect: Online Interactive Language Learning

CLASS ONE Personalized Language Learning

Malaysia

CLASS ONE Language Learners provides personalised one-to-one online language learning for kids. Our platform tailors lessons to each child's interests and pace, enhancing confidence and fluency. Interactive activities and dedicated tutors ensure fun, effective learning that meets individual needs.

2020
YEAR ESTABLISHED

10K
CHILDREN / USERS

1
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

The programme integrates all five pillars of Child-Centred Learning. The programme's active learning and freedom within limits are developmentally appropriate and adapted to children's attention spans and language comfort zones. The multicultural and multilingual context of Malaysia requires respect for each individual's unique experience. Teachers are trained to trust and respect the child's inner motivation for learning the target. Simultaneously, teachers encourage inner discipline to persist in learning despite the challenges.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

In Malaysia, most language learning programmes are rigid and don't adapt to individual students. CLASS ONE recognises that each student has their own language background, learning style, motivation, and speed, and the teachers adapt accordingly.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

Many teachers resist change because they were not taught with personalised methods themselves, so the program trains them to understand why Child-Centred Learning is necessary and how it benefits students. Creativity is key, as different methods work for different children, and teachers must be flexible. Seeing the positive effects of Child-Centred Learning approaches encourages teachers.

AB comment Impact

"What strikes me about CLASS ONE is how language tutoring is tailored to the interest of the child, making it specific to their needs, useful as well as playful. Targeting this age group means they are more likely to wish to continue learning."

AB comment Scalability

"CLASS ONE has demonstrated potential for scalability through strategic partnerships with schools and effective online marketing. The innovation's open-source nature could allow other organisations to replicate and customise its approach."

Innovator Quote

"When the student comes to us, we can see that very genuine instant positive response from the child; they tell the parents that they love our class because they can feel the respect from the teacher, and that student-centred is totally different from teacher-centred."
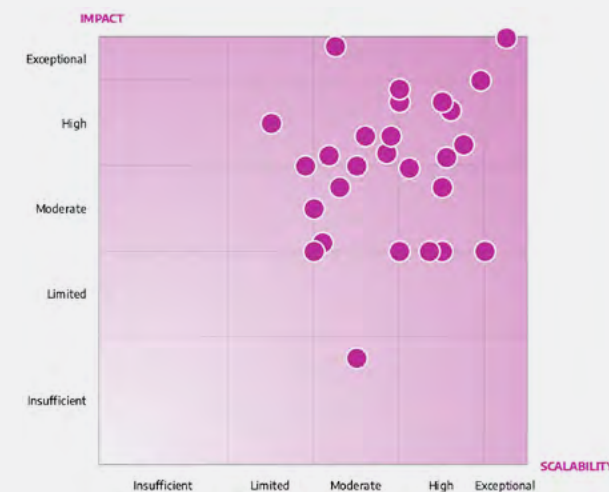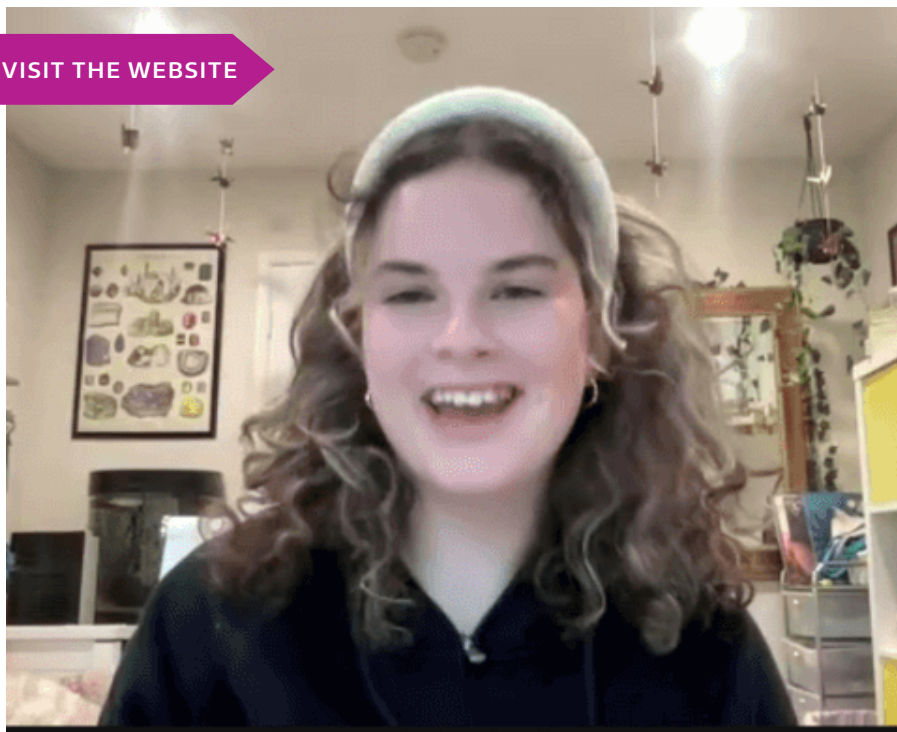
Global Virtual Internship

Content Creation Lab

United States

GNG created the Content Creation Lab to counter youth isolation during the Pandemic. Global youth were reaching out, looking for a virtual "third space" (not school or home) where they could find purpose and a sense of belonging. The innovation has endured well beyond the Pandemic lockdown period; multiple youth reach out daily to inquire about opportunities to join this powerful youth community.

2020
YEAR ESTABLISHED

5.4K
CHILDREN / USERS

16
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

Participants in Content Creation Lab (CCL) shift from passive recipients of knowledge to active content creators, determining what information is important and producing resources for their peers. CCL respects the learner's inner motivation, supporting them to contribute in ways that feel meaningful to them. The programme sets creative limits that guide learning, teaching students to work within real-world challenges while allowing room for self-expression. CCL treats students as professionals, fostering a sense of ownership, which leads them to exceed expectations in their research and engagement.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

Content Creation Lab recognises course design as an important site of learning and knowledge-making. Youth bring their lived experiences as students to the design, creating more compelling, relevant, and appropriate content for their peers, for whom there is increased engagement and impact compared to adult-designed courses.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

CCL structures activities to naturally engage students, reducing the need for forced participation and extra effort towards motivation. The programme dispels the notion that only 'high achieving' learners can succeed with child-centred approaches by actively recruiting diverse learners, including those who struggle in traditional settings.

AB comment Impact

"Content Creation Lab centres youth, enabling them to design curricula that enhance 21st-century skills while inclusively integrating marginalised and underprivileged groups for more meaningful educational experiences."

AB comment Scalability

"Content Creation Lab's model uses widely available technology platforms and has a clear structure that can be replicated across different contexts. The peer-to-peer approach also creates a multiplier effect as participants become future facilitators."

Innovator Quote

"The ability to integrate the youth-driven Content Creation Lab approach within school settings is determined by what we believe the purpose of schools is. If we prioritise supporting young people to learn how to learn in ways that are deeply engaging and relevant to them, then we can carve out space within a more complicated context to integrate the essence of Child-Centred Learning."
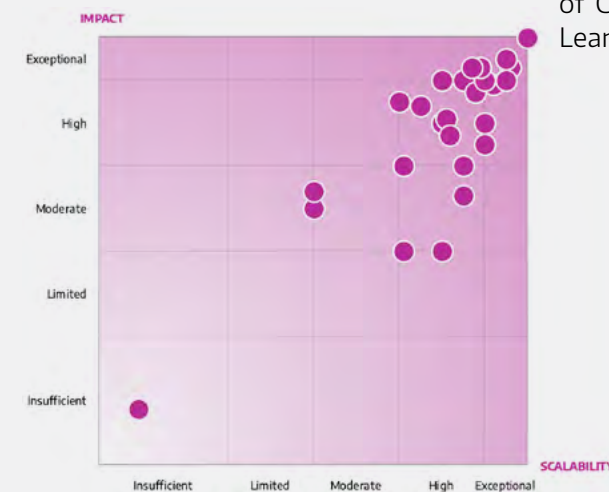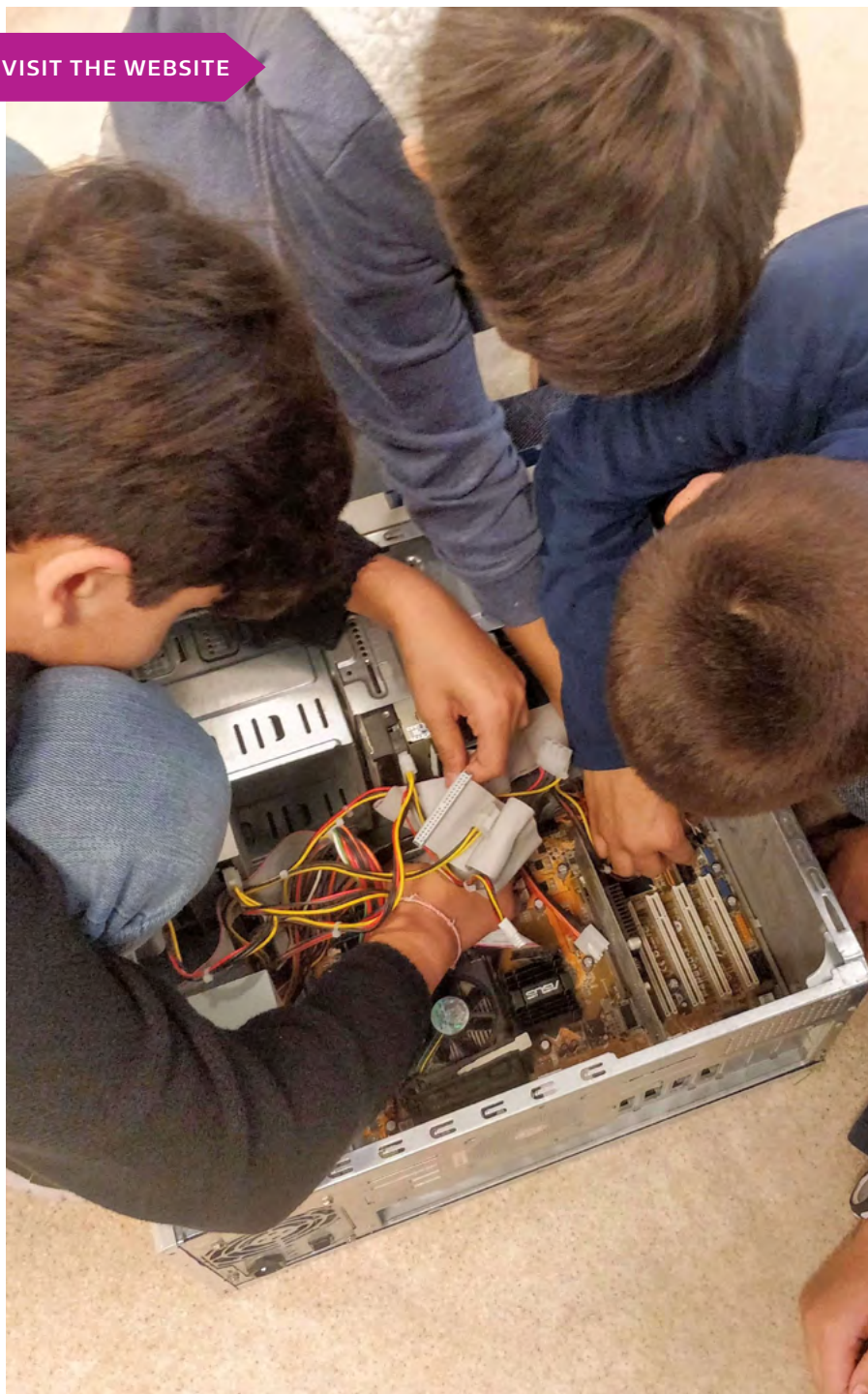
Nurturing the curiosity we are all born with.

Curiosity Clubs

Netherlands

Schools crush the curiosity we are all born with... What if we created a space to nurture it? A space to learn, explore, and create -- together. Coding, psychology, painting, neuroscience, you name it! A space led by youth for youth, where learning is driven by curiosity, not grades. By empowering youth to run these clubs in their communities, we spark a lasting love for lifelong learning.

2020
YEAR ESTABLISHED

150
CHILDREN / USERS

4
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

While Curiosity Clubs address all of the pillars of Child-Centred Learning, the driving force is trusting the inner motivation of the child. It was the impetus for developing the after school programme; if the child is not trusted to know what they want to learn, their inner motivation fizzles away, and that is what Curiosity Clubs seek to prevent.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

Curiosity Clubs are extra-curricular so any school can reap the benefits of Child-Centred Learning. Anyone can start a Curiosity Club in an existing school, community space, or anywhere else, and in this way, those who need it most can take part. Initially, Curiosity Clubs started in schools, but over time, shifted to focus on the guides who wanted to start a club, and include older youth. It is a place of life-long excitement about learning.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

The misconception is that if given choice, young people will gravitate toward being on their cell phones all day. Curiosity Clubs demonstrate that if children are trusted to choose what and how they learn, they make good choices.

AB comment Impact

"Curiosity Clubs reignite youth's love for learning by prioritising curiosity over grades. With hands-on, project-based exploration, they develop creativity, problem-solving, and teamwork, making a significant impact on fostering lifelong learners."

AB comment Scalability

"Curiosity Clubs' youth-led model, supported by flexible frameworks and global networking through its app, enables seamless adaptation to diverse contexts, making it a powerful tool for fostering curiosity and leadership across the globe."

Innovator Quote

"Curiosity Clubs are places for exploration and for sharing the love for learning. They are communities where young people can say "look what I made, look what I did!" and have that excitement returned."
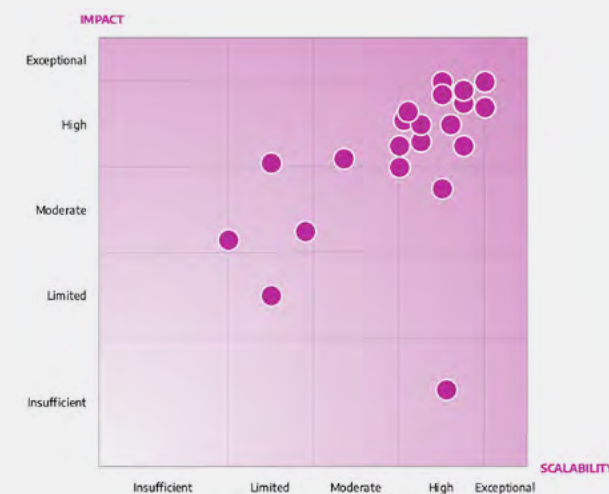
Challenge Accepted. Creativity Expected.

Destination Imagination Challenge Experience

United States

The Destination Imagination Challenge Experience equips students to thrive in a future fueled by creativity, adaptability, and innovation. Working in teams and guided by our Creative Process, students tackle open-ended challenges that fuse STEM and the arts. Along the way, they build essential, durable skills like collaboration, problem-solving, and resilience while unlocking their full potential.

1999	150K	27
YEAR ESTABLISHED	CHILDREN / USERS	COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

The Destination Imagination Team Challenge Experience addresses all of the pillars highlighted in this Spotlight. Each of the elements within our pedagogy centres completely and squarely on the learner and not on a system, teacher, or adult. The Team Challenge Experience is built completely on learner ownership. We believe that students can do it themselves, and there should be no outside interference.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

Our programme is unique in that we encourage learners to assess the liabilities with respect to their resources, which corresponds to freedom within limitations, and we encourage clarifying questions to help learners contextualise their own understanding.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

One of the biggest barriers to implementing Child-Centred practices is changing the mindset of educators. Destination Imagination provides teachers who are exploring and looking for something, but they may not know exactly what they are looking for. The programme gives them a flexible framework that can be used in different settings. The framework and the training in our learning management system can be adapted to any project the learners want to do.

AB comment Impact

"Destination Imagination Challenge Experience prioritises child-centred methods, encouraging critical thinking, social-emotional learning, and creativity. Its hands-on approach promotes autonomy and engagement, making it highly impactful for student development."

AB comment Scalability

"Destination Imagination is scalable due to its adaptable, context-driven design, which leverages local resources, empowers educators through online training and global support networks, making it accessible across diverse socio-economic and cultural settings."

Innovator Quote

"One of the great things about our organisation and the team challenge experience is that it's flexible, we're talking about the creative process that is innate to human beings. It is innate to want to learn."
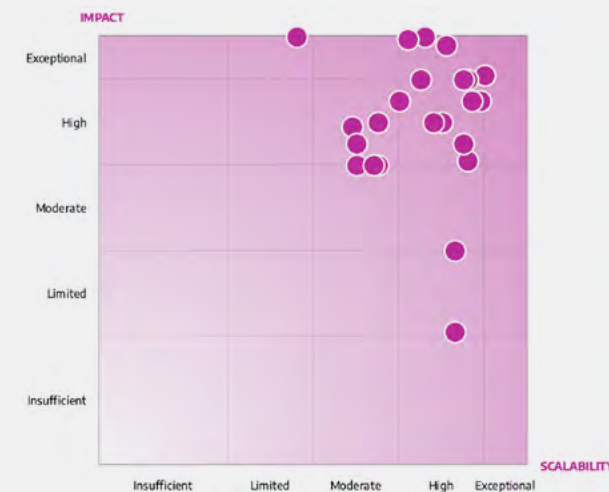
Tech-enabled, project-based learning to build foundational skills in emergencies and crisis contexts

Flying Colors

Uganda

One third of the world cannot access the Internet, and for learners in these areas, there are also fewer opportunities to benefit from project-based learning approaches. Technology can be a strong enabler. Flying Colors leverages technology to implement project-based learning to build skills and knowledge acquisition facilitated through real-life experiences, all in low-resource environments.

2022
YEAR ESTABLISHED

1.4K
CHILDREN / USERS

1
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

Flying Colors focusses on high engagement, ensuring learners actively participate in lessons rather than passively receiving information. Through the integration of social-emotional learning (SEL) to help refugee learners develop self-awareness and emotional well-being, Flying Colors respects the inner life of the child and the role that plays in their engagement and love of learning.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

Flying Colors provides differentiated instruction based on pre-assments to determine student needs, giving teachers flexibility to tailor lessons to individual learners. The programme incorporates project-based learning to make lessons interactive and enjoyable. Teacher training with the Flying Colors framework ensures instructors can effectively implement learner-centred methods.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

The programme is designed with low-resource settings in mind, using locally available materials and offline technology like Kolibri. The curriculum integrates subjects (e.g., literacy, numeracy, SEL) to streamline learning and reduce teacher workload. As a result, teachers have been receptive, because the programme aligns with their practical needs.

AB comment Impact

"By integrating project-based learning (PBL) with offline technology, Flying Colors transforms education in low-resource settings, empowering educators and enabling impactful, self-paced, hands-on, and community-focussed learning experiences."

AB comment Scalability

"Flying Colors' open-source model, global adoption in over 220 countries, and comprehensive educator toolkit enable seamless implementation in diverse, low-resource environments, ensuring high scalability."

Innovator Quote

"We very much believe that student-centred learning is the most meaningful way, and we openly make our entire curriculum available for anyone who wants to use it. Though the resources are designed for the Ugandan context, we have launched it publicly for anyone who has a Kolibri account."
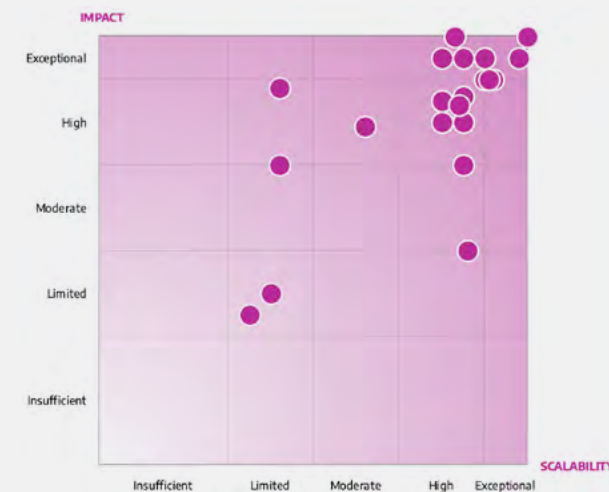
Quality Education for All

Giddy2School Education Initiative

Nigeria

Nigeria currently has 20.6 million children out of school, the world's highest and endemic situation that we are set out to solve - Using quality education to empower and reduce the illiteracy index. We have three thematic solutions approach and the overall aim is to reduce the out-of-school index in Africa, empower youth leadership, and overall sustainable development.

2021
YEAR ESTABLISHED

6.9K
CHILDREN / USERS

3
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

Giddy2School supports children and youth as active learners, trusting their inner motivation, and encouraging inner discipline. The initiative empowers children and youth to take ownership of their learning, recognising that intrinsic motivation is crucial for education to be effective.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

The four projects that comprise the initiative address fundamental learning gaps, help youth to solve community problems and connect school with real-world skills development, and make the importance of learning a community goal. Youth in Nigeria often see school as irrelevant to their experience, but Giddy2School's programming encourages them to find the connections between entrepreneurship, financial empowerment, and practical skills pursued through education.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

Giddy2School challenges the traditional Nigerian model of schooling by demonstrating that learners have unique needs and will be more successful through individualised learning opportunities. With proper integrated training, teachers learn proper planning, collaborative learning techniques, and the power of facilitating the learner-centred experience.

AB comment Impact

"Giddy2School reduces out-of-school rates through tuition-free schools, scholarships, and vocational training. It fosters leadership and practical skills, creating self-reliant youth and addressing illiteracy, poverty, and unemployment effectively."

AB comment Scalability

"Giddy2School's structure, combining virtual platforms and localised mentorship, allows for adaptability and potential scalability across Nigeria and beyond. The online leadership curriculum and Google Classroom integration enable access to many."

Innovator Quote

"We see the child as the future of education. We put them in the driver's seat of their experience. Teachers are not authoritarian or authoritative in the classroom, but facilitate the experience for young people to learn."
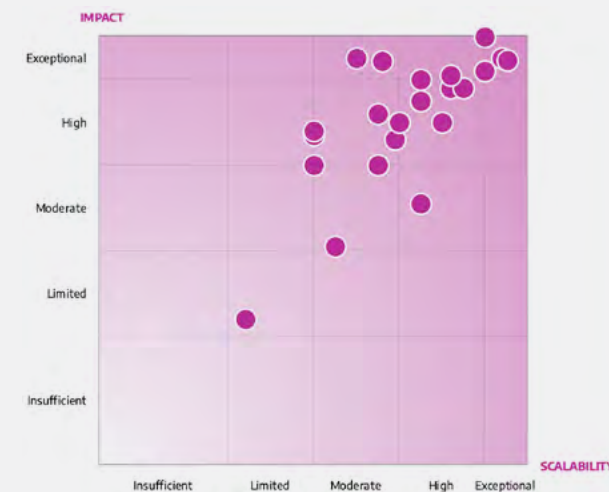
You can't support what you don't observe

HoloTracker

Singapore

HoloTracker reveals the invisible potential in every child. Daily, thousands of students and teachers use our app to effortlessly capture essential skills like creativity, resilience, and emotional intelligence - qualities no test measures. Using AI, these observations are then transformed into meaningful narratives that celebrate and nurture a child's sense of self, purpose and possibility.

2019

YEAR ESTABLISHED

30K

CHILDREN / USERS

9

COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

HoloTracker addresses all of the pillars, but the key focus is on creating a system to intentionally practice them. By helping educators to capture, affirm, and reflect on student growth moments, child-centred education is visible and trackable.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

HoloTracker shifts the focus from academic outcomes to the process of learning by capturing and celebrating daily moments of growth. It provides formative assessment tools to support learners where they are, rather than focusing on gaps. HoloTracker helps educators see and recognise students' progress, reinforcing positive learning behaviours.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

The HoloTracker platform tracks and affirms student behaviors in real time, making growth of difficult-to-measure soft skills visible. The platform eliminates the need for extensive training; observation and affirmation are simple but powerful tools that any teacher can adopt. Automations of observations and feedback reduce teacher workload and free up time for teachers to focus on the learners.

AB comment Impact

"HoloTracker's high impact score is due to its transformative approach to the capture of whole-child development, enabling educators to address social-emotional growth alongside academic achievement and foster well-rounded learners."

AB comment Scalability

"HoloTracker's scalability is strong due to its easy implementation, minimal training, and adaptability across diverse schools globally. Its ability to capture large-scale data on student development makes it feasible for widespread adoption in various contexts."

Innovator Quote

"HoloTracker is a system for schools to intentionally capture children's skills and character growth. It makes visible each child's evolving sense of self, purpose and possibility."
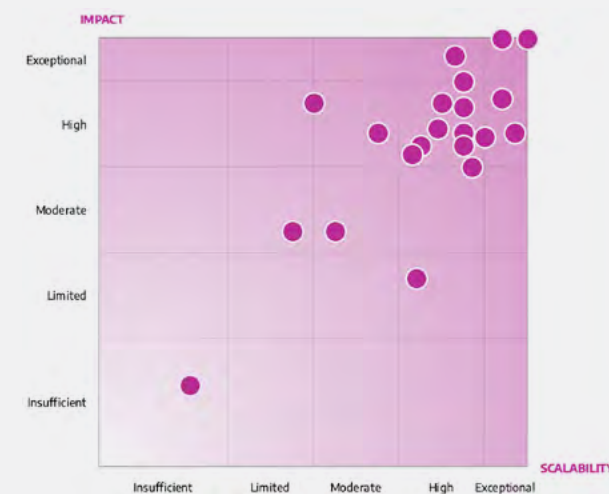
Pathways: Where Futures Begin. Redefine Achievement, Showcase Strengths; Engage, Enrich, Empower!

Learnlife: Pathways to Possibilities

Spain

Lead with learning, not testing! Formal assessments and examinations are outdated, failing to capture the breadth of human potential. Pathways revolutionises education, liberating learners from narrow constraints. It heralds a future where every individual can make visible for any audience their aspirations, potential and attainments unhindered by outdated norms. Unbox the potential of learners!

2020
YEAR ESTABLISHED

2K
CHILDREN / USERS

6
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

All the pillars are relevant, but especially empowering students with agency and freedom within boundaries. The programme removes exams as an endpoint and instead focuses on self-directed learning, allowing students to create artifacts and research to demonstrate their competencies.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

Pathways to Possibilities addresses the missing endpoint in learner-centred education, moving beyond exams to self-directed learning. The programme supports students in choosing their own paths, equipping them with lifelong learning skills rather than just preparing them for standardized tests.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

Collaborative teaching and shifting teacher mindsets are key to overcoming misconceptions. Teachers work in teams, which reduces apprehensiveness about Child-Centred Learning, and students learn self-direction in a structured way rather than just being given a few choices. AI also plays a supportive role in personalised learning.

AB comment Impact

"Student agency is the key to Pathways to Possibilities, which will lead the learner to take charge of their learning process. The project helps to deepen engagements, equity and ability to showcase authentic learning."

AB comment Scalability

"The Pathways to Possibilities model is adaptable globally, with the potential to scale across diverse education systems. The integration of digital tracking and personalised learning will be key to adapting it to different educational contexts."

Innovator Quote

"Learners can go to open-path learning, and that means they have to have given us evidence of self-directed learning skills, so they're ready as lifelong learners before they leave the programme - it is the complete opposite of having exams as the end point."
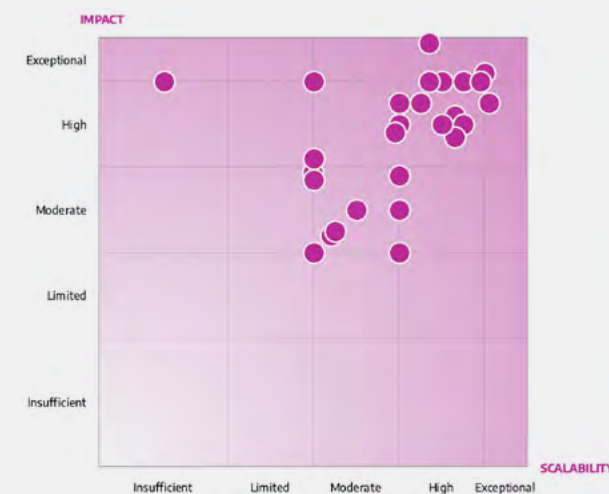
MyMachine is a unique collaboration of all educational levels to create dream machines invented by kids.

MyMachine

Belgium

Three educational levels co-creating: in one school year: 1] Primary school children invent (IDEA) a 'dream machine'; 2] together with university students they design a CONCEPT for it; 3] and together with students from technical/vocational secondary schools they build a WORKING PROTOTYPE.

2008
YEAR ESTABLISHED

24.9K
CHILDREN / USERS

33
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

MyMachine is centred on respecting the inner life of the child; the programme ensures children's ideas are taken seriously, without adults imposing their own themes or priorities. Additionally, while learners have full freedom in idea generation, the methodology of MyMachine guides them through structured prototyping and design processes.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

MyMachine encourages students to identify and pursue their own ideas, whether for personal, community, or global needs. Children develop creative confidence as they see their ideas come to life. Using a multi-level education collaboration involving primary, secondary, and university students, working prototypes of children's dream machines are created.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

Child-centred approaches are often seen as too unstructured, time-consuming, and impractical. MyMachine follows a methodology that balances creativity with structured execution, reducing teacher workload by taking over classes during sessions. "Impossible" or impractical ideas dreamed up by children (for example, a machine that chases ghosts) teach valuable problem-solving and design skills.

AB comment Impact

"The key to high impact for MyMachine is acceptance that your idea matters, your idea can come to life. Giving a sense of empowerment, collaboration, respect, resilience and persistence makes it not only fun but also brings the community together."

AB comment Scalability

"Designed to adapt to diverse educational contexts by uniting primary, secondary, and higher education students as peers, the framework encourages a collaborative culture that can be implemented across schools, districts, and even nations."

Innovator Quote

"We start our interaction with students using an open-ended question: What is your Dream Machine? Some of the children use that opportunity to come up with an idea for something very personal, another child might invent something for a grandparent or a friend, for their city, or even something needed to tackle one of the United Nations Development Goals."
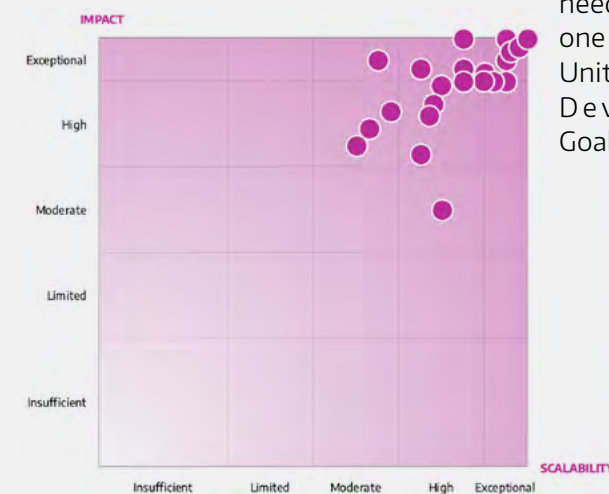
P-BLOT

Play-Based Learning Observation Tool

Bridging the gap between knowledge and practice in child-led learning environments

Play Based Learning Observation Tool (P–BLOT)

New Zealand

The Play Based Learning Observation Tool (P-BLOT) bridges the gap between what educators know and believe about the power of play, and implementing play pedagogy in the classroom for students of all ages. Teachers access professional development supported by evidence-informed play pedagogy, to confidently navigate policy and curricular requirements, while students learn through play.

2018
YEAR ESTABLISHED

8K
CHILDREN / USERS

4
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

The P-BLOT supports all the pillars by helping teachers bridge the gap between understanding Child-Centred Learning and actually implementing it effectively. This is achieved mainly through recognising the child as an active learner who brings funds of knowledge to the learning experience.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

The P-BLOT provides a structured approach that supports teachers in making Child-Centred Learning practical and measurable, addressing a gap in teacher training. Teachers are not traditionally taught to understand how to facilitate the exploration of children's own funds of knowledge, and that is where the P-BLOT serves a purpose. The principles embody best practices in teaching, and help educators to know when explicit instruction is needed and when to step back and let children lead.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

The P-BLOT clarifies what Child-Centred Learning looks like in practice, making it easier for teachers and school leaders to implement without seeing it as impractical or vague. The P-BLOT is a set of practices that are described in a "sounds like" approach, and clarifies what is developing practice, strong practice, or counterproductive practice.

AB comment Impact

"The P-BLOT fosters a measurable shift toward evidence-informed, child-centred pedagogy. Teachers gain tools to align practices with developmental needs, leading to increased engagement, creativity, and socio-emotional growth in students."

AB comment Scalability

"With adaptable frameworks and cultural responsiveness, P-BLOT scales globally, already implemented in four countries and poised for further expansion, showcasing its broad applicability and potential."

Innovator Quote

"P-BLOT clarifies any confusion or misinterpretation around what we mean by Child-Centred Learning and the practices that are needed to support it. Child-centred practices are a sophisticated way of teaching; you can't ask teachers to do this without support."
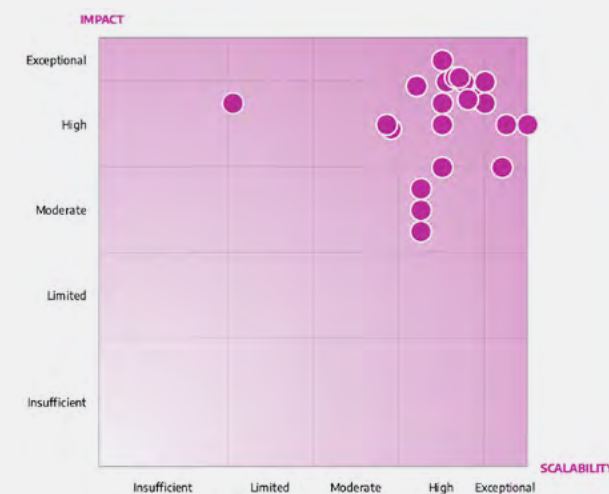
Con las TIC fortalezco mi proyecto de vida

PROYECTIVIDA

Colombia

PROYECTIVIDA es una experiencia significativa que busca fortalecer el proyecto de vida de los estudiantes a partir del Área de Tecnología e Informática y las TIC en general, aplicando la economía circular y la sostenibilidad ambiental, así como la Metodología STEAM y la innovación que para que los estudiantes puedan salir del colegio con un plan de vida acorde a sus gustos y aptitudes.

PROYECTIVIDA is a significant experience that seeks to strengthen the life project of students from the Area of Technology and Computing and ICT in general, as well as the STEAM Methodology and innovation so that students can leave school with a life plan according to their tastes and aptitudes.

2017
YEAR ESTABLISHED

1.7K
CHILDREN / USERS

1
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

PROYECTIVIDA tiene dentro de sus pilares apoyar al niño como un estudiante activo porque a lo largo de estos años he evidenciado que si no es a través del aprendizaje activo los estudiantes no interiorizan sus propios conocimientos, es decir que el estudiante debe ser partícipe del aprendizaje. Ellos puedan realmente aprender a partir de su experiencia y que mejor que esa experiencia sea basada en las problemáticas reales que ellos tienen. / PROYECTIVIDA supports the child as an active learner: if it is not through active learning, students do not internalise their own knowledge. They can learn from their own experiences and what better than that experience be based on the real problems that they have.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

Una de las principales necesidades que cubre el programa es la inclusión: PROYECTIVIDA inició en una institución educativa que tenía un 70% de estudiantes indígenas, y también ha atendido a la población LGBTQIA+, y a estudiantes que llegan a Colombia por problemas sociales o políticos en sus países de origen. / One main need that the programme fills is inclusion: PROYECTIVIDA began in an educational institution that had 70% indigenous students, and has also served the LGBTQIA+ population, and students who come to Colombia because of social or political problems in their native countries.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

El programa se centra en problemas reales y relevantes que enfrentan los estudiantes, sus familias y sus comunidades. El programa supera las preocupaciones sobre la disciplina y el rigor, demostrando un enfoque bien organizado, atractivo y académicamente sólido que empodera a estudiantes de todos los orígenes para que tomen las riendas de su aprendizaje y su futuro. / The programme focuses on relevant, real-world problems that the students, their families, and their communities face. The programme dismisses concerns about discipline and rigour by demonstrating a well-organised, engaging, and academically strong approach that empowers students of all backgrounds to take ownership of their learning and future.

AB comment Impact

"PROYECTIVIDA empowers students to design life projects by integrating ICT, STEAM, and sustainability into the curriculum. It reduces dropout rates, fosters creativity, and addresses real-world issues, making a tangible impact on students."

AB comment Scalability

"PROYECTIVIDA's low-cost, inclusive, and adaptable model, supported by its open-source framework and alignment with global goals, shows strong potential for scalability in underprivileged regions."

Innovator Quote

"Realmente si el estudiante va con una visión clara de lo que desea hacer, indudablemente va a aumentar su motivación porque está haciendo actividades que se asocian con lo que desea hacer en el futuro." / "In fact, if a student has a clear vision of what they want to do, their motivation will undoubtedly increase, because they are engaging in activities that are associated with what they want to do in the future."
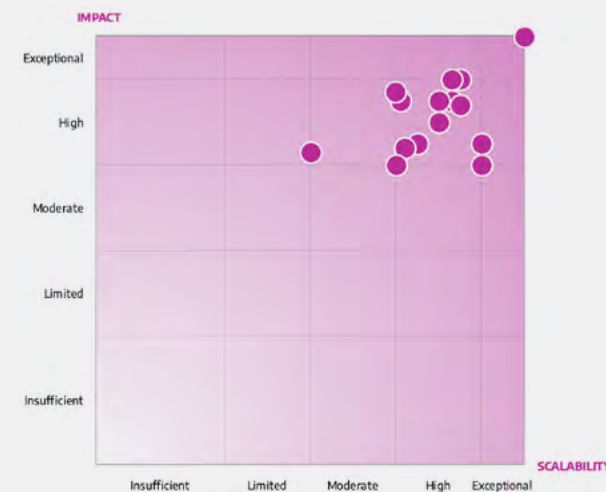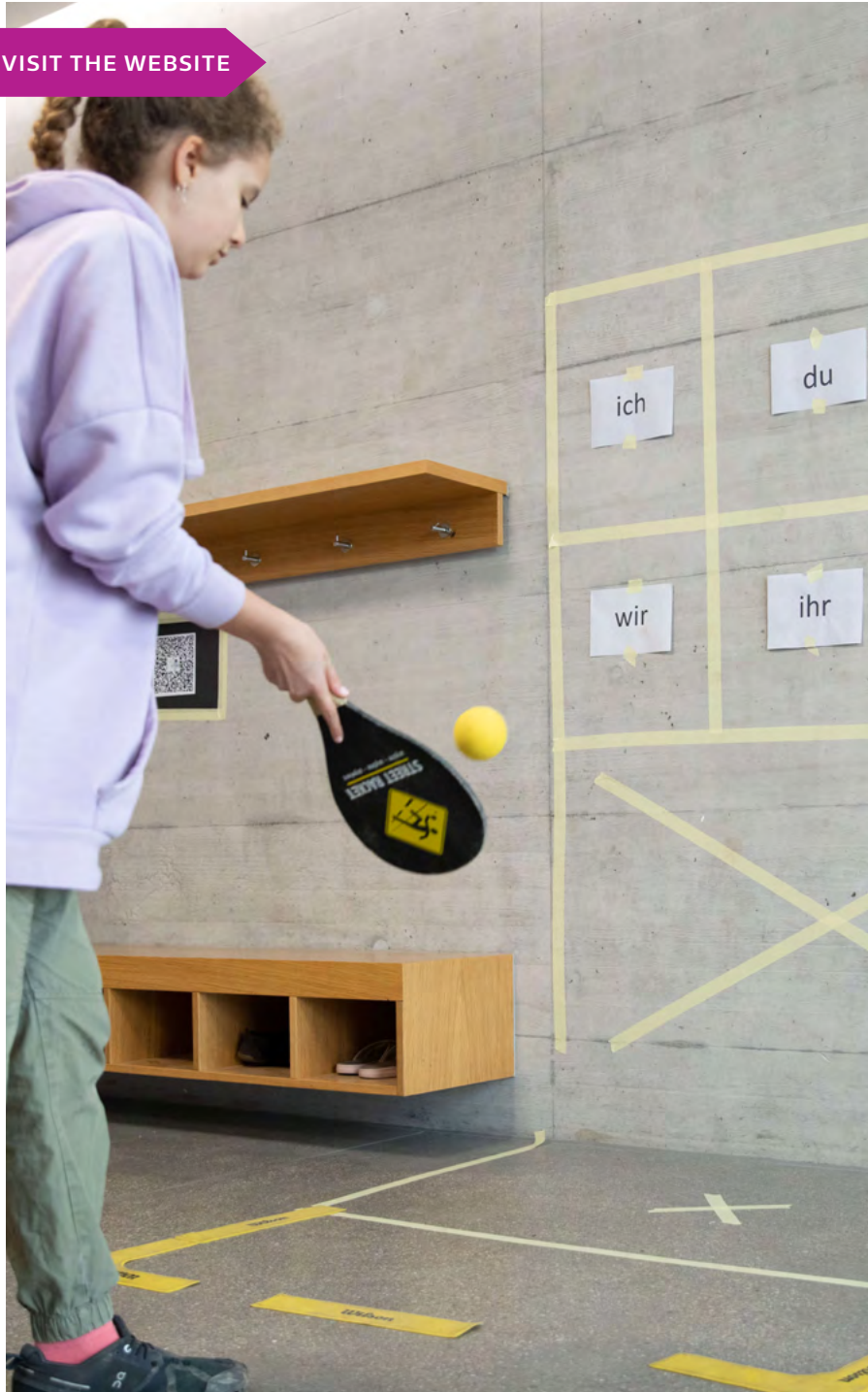
Learning through movement with racket and ball

Street Racket – anyone, anytime, anywhere

Switzerland

Street Racket is a unique and versatile Swiss concept providing sports, education and empowerment for all. We focus on active, crosscurricular learning and on a barrier free and sustainable access for anyone, anywhere. Kids benefit from social and fun learning in a low-threshold concept framework that intersects with the main school curricula and promotes all of the 21st century skills.

2017
YEAR ESTABLISHED

2M
CHILDREN / USERS

91
COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

Street Racket supports the child as an active learner. The programme allows children to create their own games, adjust difficulty levels, and actively participate in lessons. While guided by a structure, students have creative control over their activities; this promotes freedom within limits.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

Street Racket encourages participation in everyday school life by giving students a role in shaping their own learning. Through the combination of movement and cognitive development, the programme reinforces learning through physical activity. This can extend beyond the classroom into homes and communities, allowing for family-based learning.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

Street Racket provides a balance of structure and flexibility, making learning engaging yet purposeful. The method is barrier-free, adaptable, and requires no infrastructure, making it easy to integrate into various educational settings. Street Racket individualises learning, with students adjusting difficulty levels and game mechanics to suit their abilities.

AB comment Impact

"Street Racket strongly aligns with Montessori and positively impacts children's physical and mental health, enhancing social skills and reducing screen time by promoting active, engaging, and inclusive play and learning environments."

AB comment Scalability

"Street Racket's scalability is exceptional, supported by its low cost, infrastructure free model and universal applicability. It requires no specialised equipment, making it accessible even in resource constrained environments."

Innovator Quote

"The child becomes an active learner with a lot of ways to determine their own pace, to determine their own difficulty levels, so they can really be the master of their own education. That's something we see happening and the teachers love that approach."
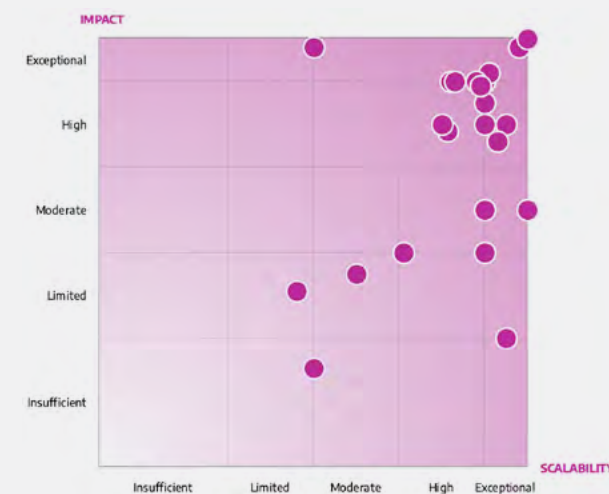
For every child to achieve their full potential.

Using Play to Better our World

India

Many children in India lack access to safe and stimulating play opportunities, hindering their development. Research shows that lack of playfulness and joyfulness in childhood ecosystems, disrupts developmental milestones for children and risks maladjusted adulthood. The Opentree Foundation is committed to building critical life skills in at-risk children through our Conscious Play™ approach.

2004	**100K**	**1**
YEAR ESTABLISHED	CHILDREN / USERS	COUNTRIES

WHICH CHILD-CENTRED PILLAR(S) ARE MOST CENTRAL TO YOUR INNOVATION?

The most central pillar of Using Play to Better our World is supporting the child as an active learner. The programme integrates play as a primary learning method to challenge traditional, rigid, and educator-centred classrooms.

WHAT NEEDS DO YOU SEE YOUR INNOVATION FILLING IN THE LEARNER-CENTRED EDUCATION SPACE?

Using Play to Better our world transforms schools from stressful environments into safe, engaging spaces where students develop relationships with teachers and actively participate in learning. Teachers also undergo a transformation, gaining a deeper understanding of students as they view them through the lens of 'play'.

HOW DOES YOUR INNOVATION ADDRESS COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE IMPRACTICALITY OF CHILD-CENTRED PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS?

Through play, children and educators alike are encouraged to participate in a more humanised model that fosters mutual learning. The programme helps educators shift from a strict teacher-led model to one where teachers and students develop a more balanced relationship, leading to improved student engagement and reduced behavioural issues.

AB comment Impact

"Using Play to Better our World's transformative results in elevating children's curiosity, critical thinking, and emotional awareness are unmatched. Its scalability, measurable outcomes, and proven ability to address life skills gaps through play make it a beacon of innovation."

AB comment Scalability

"This programme is highly adaptable and replicable across diverse cultural and educational contexts. Low-cost resources and effective teacher training methods make it accessible and sustainable. Focus on empowering teachers ensures the model's scalability in new regions."

Innovator Quote

"One of the most transformative shifts we introduced was positioning play as the central force driving everything within the classroom. By making play the hero, we witnessed a powerful shift—classrooms became more engaging, children more curious and participative, and learning more meaningful and joyful."
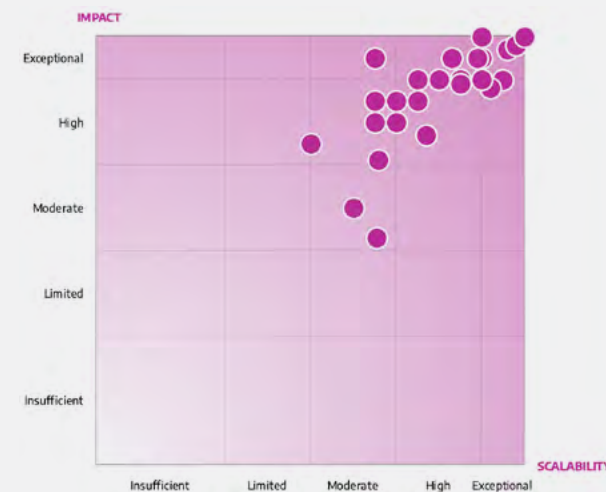
Chapter 4
Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

Curating any Spotlight collection comes with its own challenges - especially those of balancing the demographics of selected innovations. During the final selection meeting, both HundrED and Montessori Global Education found that this group of innovations organically came into balance. All fourteen innovations meet not only the criteria of carrying out highly impactful work and demonstrating actual or potential scalability to new contexts, but are also rooted in the pillars of Child-Centred Learning (CCL) specific to this Spotlight. What was most gratifying was the spread of selected innovations over continents, socioeconomics, target audiences, organisation structure, and focus.

The collection highlights the truly adoptable and adaptable nature of CCL, and the way in which all fourteen innovations authentically fulfilled the five principles espoused by Maria Montessori while still staying true to their own philosophies of child-centred practice. Through this Spotlight, our goal was to broaden the view of CCL, including programming that demonstrates the universality of such approaches, de-emphasising the pedagogical label of "Montessori" in favour of the actual practice, a trend that we saw in submissions - only seven innovations categorised themselves as Montessori. Additionally, the characterisation of CCL as embraced primarily by the early-childhood cohort was also redrawn by our selection. Applicants to the Spotlight from that cohort made up less than ten percent of the total submissions, and as the selected solutions span from Kindergarten to upper secondary school and even beyond, demonstrating that learner-centred practices can and should be part of life-long education.

From *Using Play* to *PROYECTIVIDA*, the fourteen innovations put learners at the forefront of their educational experiences. Still, we believe there is more work to be done to make learner-centred approaches accessible,

adaptable, and part of every child's journey toward becoming a whole and realised individual. As such, we invite stakeholders to advocate for the following:

Large-scale bridging of philosophies

Continuing to innovate in the area of making connections between educator- and child-centred practices more transparent, and therefore easier to navigate. It is resourceful to employ the tactic of Project-Based Learning (PBL), especially in STEAM/STEM, as a helpful entry into CCL, but we encourage innovators in this space to find other authentic ways to embed CCL fully into the daily classroom routines. We also encourage peers, the sector, and communities to celebrate and champion the recognition of such innovations—providing support and platforms for them within families, diverse cultural interpretations, and broader communities. Our hope is that peer recognition and value for these efforts becomes the norm, rather than just a growing appreciation.

Appropriate use of technology in learner-centred approaches

Even the newest cutting edge technologies can and should be incorporated into CCL, but mindfully. This can be done, for example, by employing Artificial Intelligence and other educational technologies as aids to make child-centred programming more effective, while maintaining the educator/learner relationship.[20]

Systems change that supports child-centred practices

Innovations can be involved in direct systems change via methods that work simultaneously from the bottom-up and top-down.

HundrED and Montessori Global Education hope that heeding these calls to action will lead to increased awareness about the needs for support of practitioners in adopting and adapting child-centred approaches, therefore contributing to a growing appreciation, deeper understanding, and regular use, so that they become the norm. As societies continue to grow and change, so must education systems meet their needs. It is clear that Child-Centred Learning is key to cultivating a future in which people are actively engaged in their learning, empowered to contribute to their communities, and prepared to shape a more inclusive and innovative future.
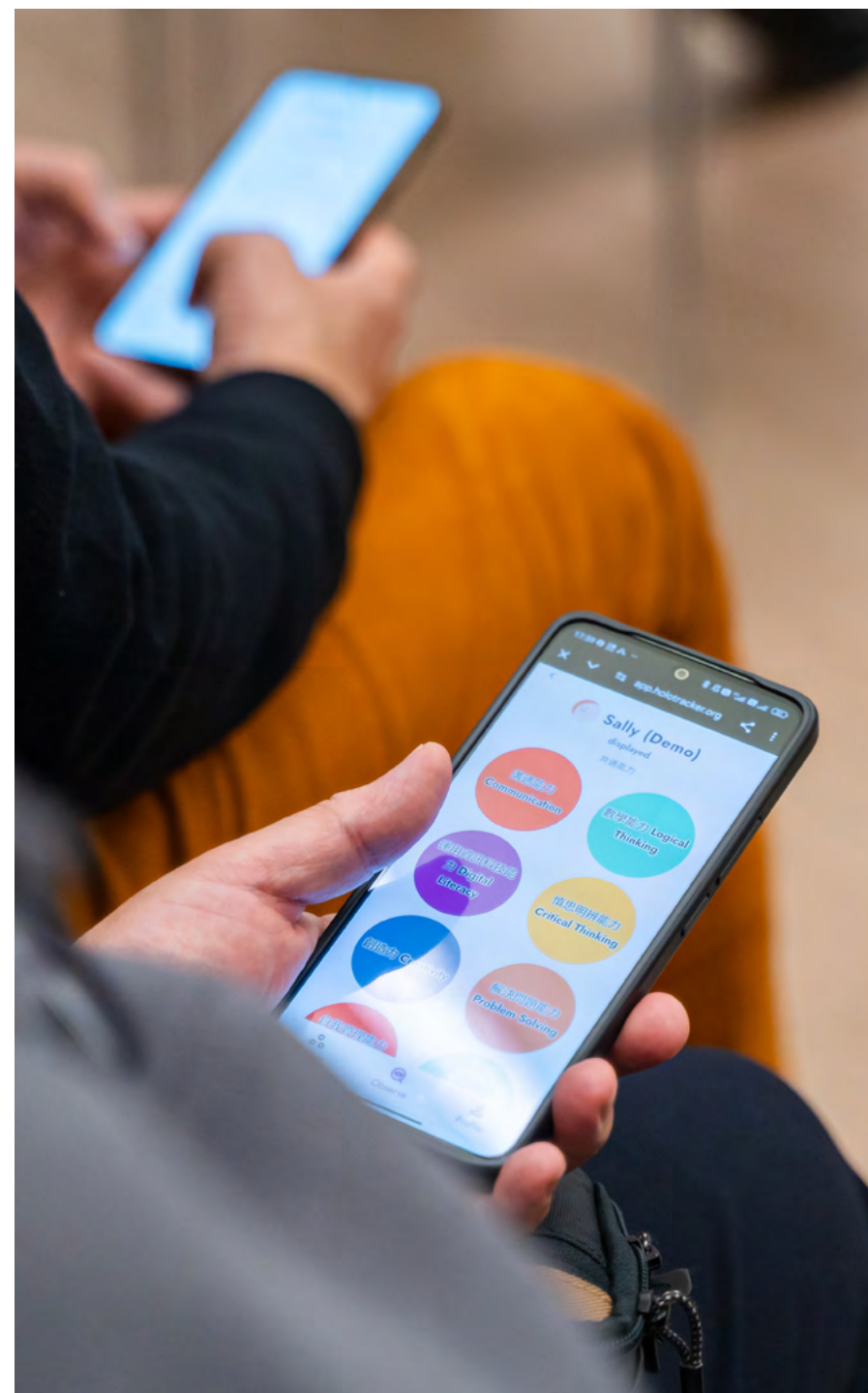
Photo credit: HoloTracker

Do You Want to Organise a HundrED Spotlight?

HundrED Spotlights are an opportunity to gain a thorough insight into the education innovations taking place in either a specific area of education, like literacy or sustainability, or within a certain geographic location, for example, India or London.

HundrED Spotlights are organised by HundrED and a Spotlight Partner. Together we select the location or theme of focus and will encourage applications from innovators for this Spotlight. In-depth research will be conducted together into these innovations and 10-20 will be selected by HundrED, partners, and an advisory board. Spotlighted innovations will be packaged and shared on the HundrED platform.

HundrED Spotlights are non-profit but rely on funding from Spotlight Partners. If you are interested in becoming a HundrED Spotlight Partner please contact us.

We believe that these selected innovations deserve to be spread across the world. And there are a lot more good innovations, just like them, waiting to be discovered.
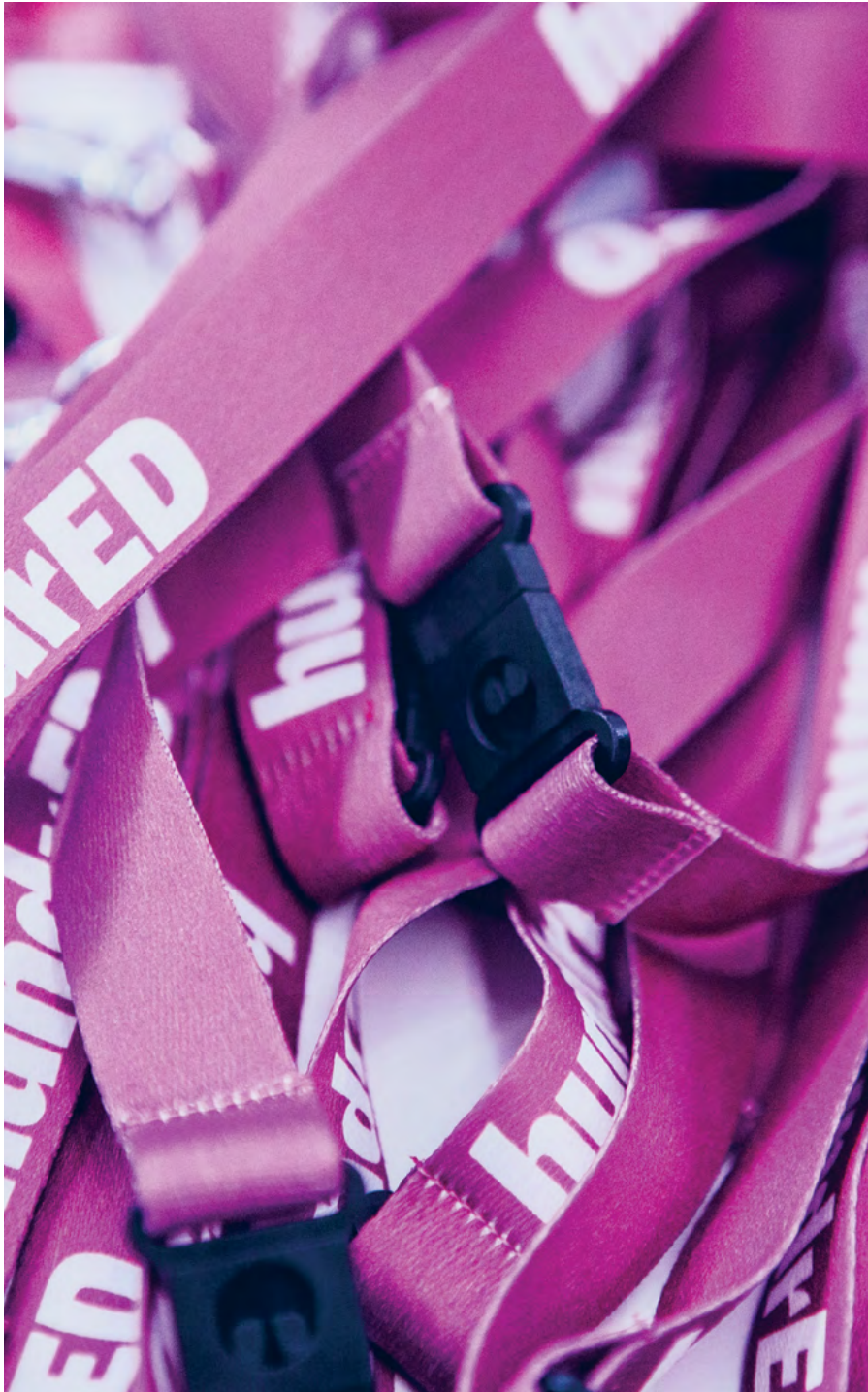
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Appendix A: Methodology

THE SELECTION PROCESS

Inspired by Everett M. Rogers' classic book Diffusion of Innovations, we use the following definition for innovation in education:

"Innovation in education can be defined as meaningful improvements considered within the place of implementation to a new or modified practice and/or technology that supports any part of the educational ecosystem (for example, skills, teachers, assessment, environment and/or systems, and leadership)."

To progress through each evaluative phase, all innovations must have demonstrated evidence of impact and scalability to the reviewers using the following definitions:

→ **IMPACT** Evaluated as a valuable improvement within the innovation's context. All innovations must have at least one year of being implemented with their intended users.

→ **SCALABILITY** Either the innovation is actively expanding to other contexts or has a high degree of transferability for others to adopt its practice/technology.

→ **EVIDENCE BASED** Supportive evidence could include submitted internal or external impact and research reports, external media, awards, internal videos, reviews, and anecdotal evidence. All forms of evidence will be triangulated and a holistic view of the evidence is considered in relation to the resource capability and size of the innovation. Additionally, HundrED's Ambassador community of 1000+ stakeholders in education in 100+ countries (and growing) may provide first hand perspectives to confirm or disconfirm the claims being made.

To identify thematic relevance, the following criteria were considered:

Innovations' alignment with the five main principles of Montessori and their goals to

· Support the child as an active learner

· Create both structure and freedom for child-driven learning

· Encourage the child's inner discipline and self-regulation

Innovations' fit within the listed target audiences and global call

· Early childhood education through high school

· Formal and non-formal education (e.g. after school programmes, community-based programmes, and practical trainings)

· Non-traditional education sectors (e.g. healthcare and social welfare, public health)

· Public and private sectors

PHASE 1:
SEARCH AND SUBMISSIONS

PHASE 2:
SHORTLIST

PHASE 3:
ADVISORY BOARD REVIEW

PHASE 4:
FINAL
SELECTION
WORKSHOPS

HundrED has a growing database of over 3000 published innovations. During the call for submissions, new innovations are added through recommendations by our community and targeted searches by the HundrED Research Team based on the regional and/or thematic focus of the Spotlight.

Based on HundrED's Standards of Evidence and using a Holistic Evaluative Score, the HundrED Research Team and the Spotlight Partners thoroughly reviews each submitted innovation for its impact, scalability, and innovativeness. The curated shortlist of innovations will be reviewed in the next phase.

For each collection, education stakeholders, including educators, innovators, experts, leaders, and students are recruited globally or regionally to form a HundrED Advisory Board which evaluates the shortlisted innovations and makes recommendations towards the final selection.

The reviews by the Advisory Board are thoroughly assessed by the HundrED Research Team and the Spotlight Partners during structured workshops in which they aim to make a geographically and/or thematically balanced representation of innovations for the final selection.
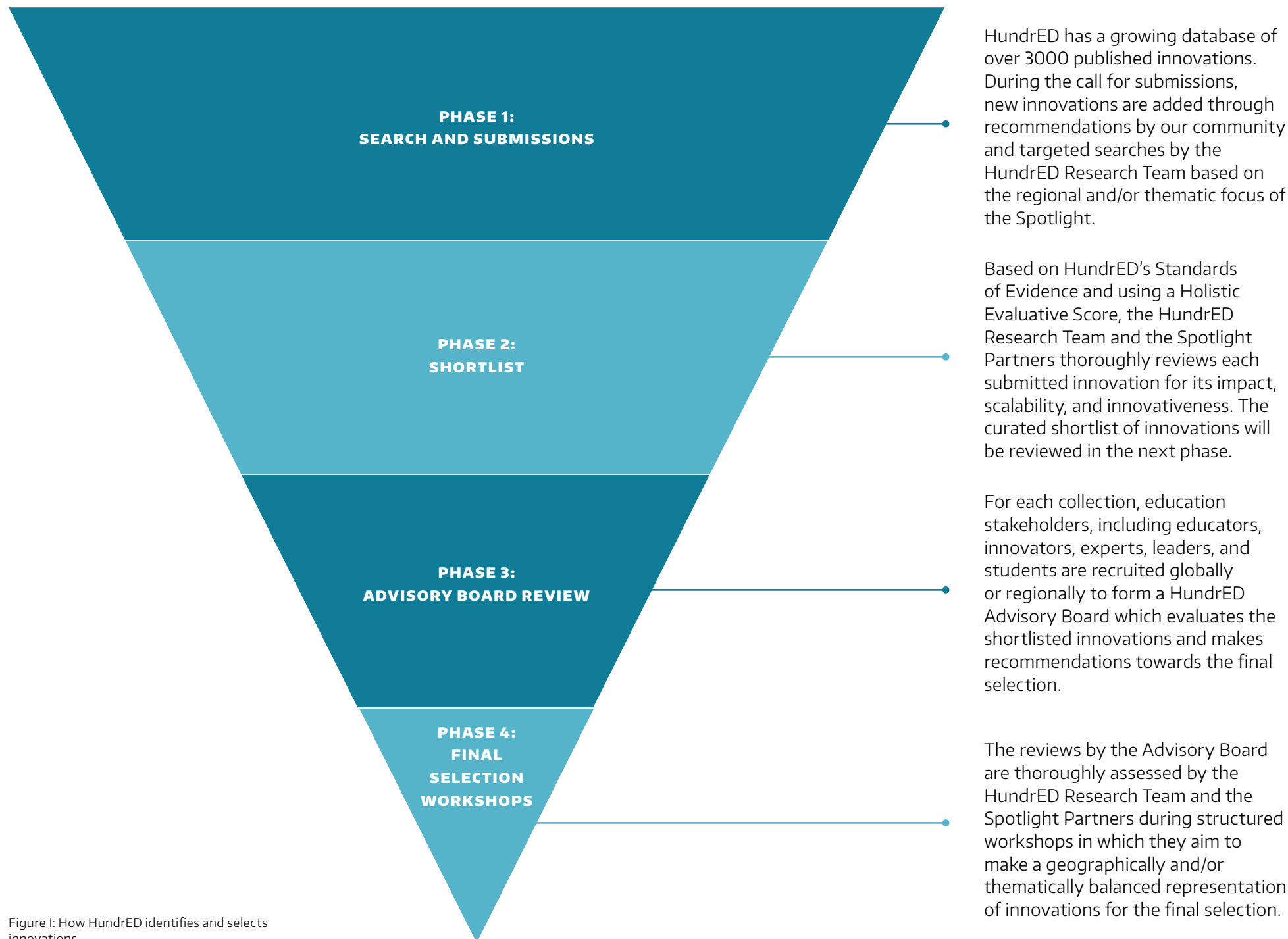
Figure I: How HundrED identifies and selects innovations

PHASE 1 – DISCOVERY

The first phase involved the discovery of leading innovations by HundrED's Research Team, Spotlight partner, and HundrED's Global Community.

Discovery activities may include:

1. Conducting targeted outreach and personalised applicant support to potential submissions;

2. Mobilising the HundrED Community (it is essential to have our local eyes and ears on the ground, recommending and reporting about the best practices and solutions, especially in locations that are difficult to get access to, such as rural schools and regions with limited internet);

3. Engaging in other research activities such as speaking with experts in and out of education, studying academic and non-academic texts such as peer-reviewed journals and blogs; and

4. Highlighting innovations from previous years' Global Collections and relevant Spotlights.

Those innovations from the previous collections/Spotlights were added to the pool to be reviewed along with the recently discovered innovations.

PHASE 2 – SHORTLIST

In this phase, HundrED's Research Team and Spotlight partner review each innovation for regional and/or thematic relevance for the Spotlight, and for impact and scalability. During the review process, the aforementioned definitions are used for innovation, impact, and scalability. To be selected for the shortlist, each innovation is required to comply with Spotlight specific requirements and demonstrate impact and scalability using the following Standards of Evidence.

Figure II: Identification activities by the HundrED Research Team

i.
Conducting
targeted outreach

ii.
Consulting our
rapidly growing
global education community
of Ambassadors, Community
Leads, and Academy
Members from over 100
countries

PHASE 1
Identification
Activities
by the HundrED
Research Team

iv.
Non-formal
identification
channels

iii.
Formal identification channels
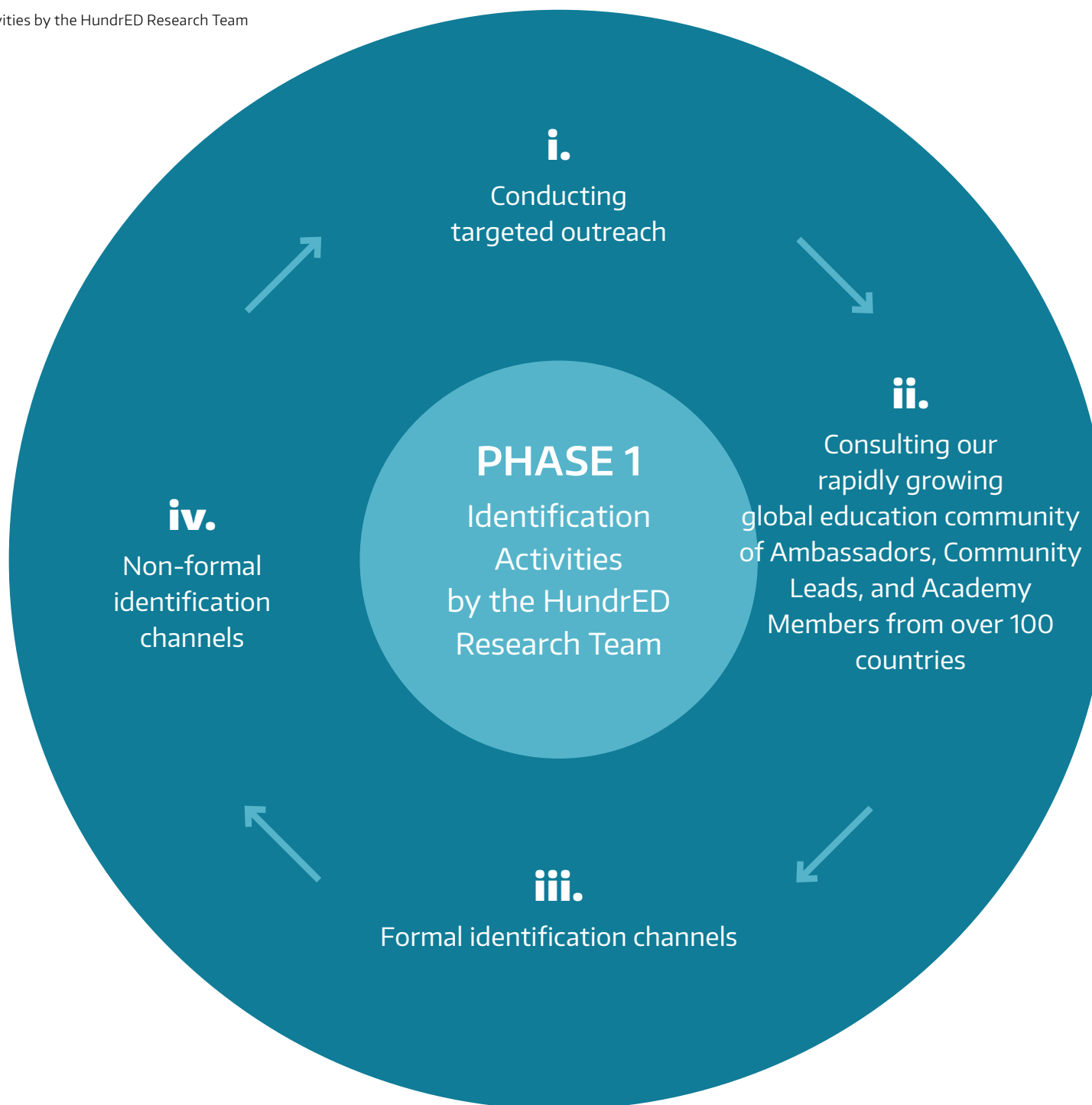
PHASE 3 – SELECTION

We believe that a diversity of perspectives from a wide range of contexts is fundamentally important to our selection process. Thus, for each Spotlight, HundrED, in collaboration with the Spotlight partner, recruits and forms an Advisory Board to review the shortlisted innovations. The selection process of the Advisory Board for the Spotlight is conducted carefully by both HundrED and the partner to ensure that they support our mission to help every child flourish in life. The Advisory Board reviews the shortlist of innovations over a two week period.

HE ADVISORY BOARD REVIEW TOOL

· **Step 1**
During an innovation review, the factors of impact and scalability, scored 1-100, are plotted on a graph by each Academy member using HundrED's review tool. Innovations that have a majority of scores in the top right of the plot tool are considered as highly impactful and highly scalable. This step provides quantitative data to measure the average score of impact and scalability for every innovation.

· **Step 2**
Each reviewer also provides specific comments about each innovation that explain their quantitative score. This qualitative data helps us to understand the reasoning behind reviewers' plot and make sense of their evaluation.

PHASE 4 – SELECTION WORKSHOPS

In this last phase of the selection, the HundrED Research Team and the partner participate in a structured workshop where innovations are selected to be highlighted in the Spotlight. The discussion centres around the contextual relevance, innovativeness, and potential for scaling for enhanced impact.
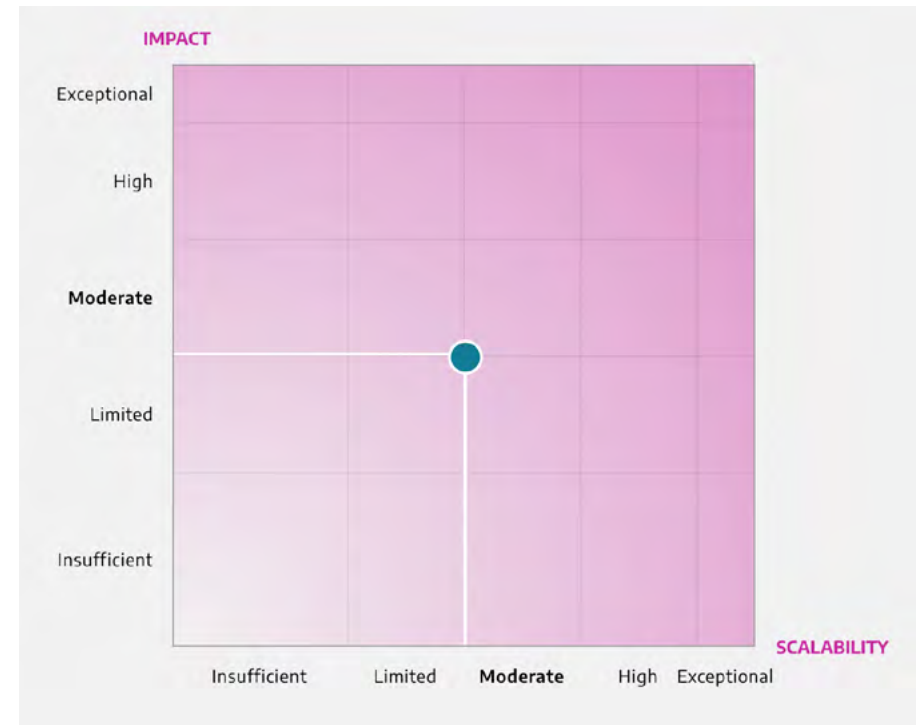

Figure III: Review plot tool for the Advisory Board

Impact
Measurable change/improvement within the context for at least 1-year.

Scalability
Actively expanding to other contexts or high potential of transferability.

STRENGTH OF EVIDENCE

LEVEL 5

VERY HIGH – An independent source verifies the demonstrated measurable improvement.

Example: They provide data from independent research evaluations in collaboration with Universities, Research Institutes or Organisations that conduct external impact evaluations.

LARGER SCALE IMPLEMENTATION – An independent source or sources verify the initiative has been implemented by others on a larger scale.

Example: They provide data from independent research evaluations in collaboration with Universities, Research Institutes or Organisations that conduct external impact evaluations in several contexts.

LEVEL 4

HIGH – An internal study provides evidence of the large measurable improvement.

Example: They can demonstrate research analysis of the data and evidence they have collected in the form of Innovations' impact reports, annual reports, presentations, and powerpoints.

IMPLEMENTED ELSEWHERE – The initiative can be implemented in more than one setting and/or with different groups with at least the same impact. Documentation supports implementation.

Example: The innovation has been implemented in more than one school, district, region or country and it provides documentation that supports implementation (user manuals, curriculum materials, replication models, teacher training materials).

LEVEL 3

MODERATE – A reasonable explanation describes the initiative and supports attribution of a measurable change, but they cannot prove they have caused it.

Example: Innovation page includes data that shows improvement (social media posts, video content, testimonials), but they cannot prove they have caused it.

WELL DOCUMENTED – Documentation exists about how the initiative is implemented and is comprehensive enough to enable implementation with different groups or in other settings.

Example: The innovation provides documentation on how this innovation has been implemented in one context. It includes user manuals, curriculum materials and replication models, as well as it integrates teacher training as a process for consistent replication.

LEVEL 2

LOW – A logical plan describes the initiative and its objectives, target and outcomes.

Example: Innovation page and website convincingly describes what the initiative does and why it matters.

COULD WORK – Documentation describing the implementation of the initiative in one setting exists.

Example: A reasonable explanation describes how the innovation is implemented in practice.

LEVEL 1

UNKNOWN – The design of the initiative or the quality of the data is not sufficient to measure impact.

Example: Innovation page or website does not include enough information to measure impact.

UNKNOWN – Insufficient documentation exists on the initiative.

Example: Innovation page or website does not include enough information of how the initiative is implemented in practice.

Figure IV: HundrED's Standards of Evidence Rubric

Appendix B: Shortlisted Innovations

Innovation Name	Country
Learning Huddles	Australia
L3 – Learning for Life and Livelihood	Ethiopia
Freethinking Foundation	India
QatarMontessoriHub	Qatar
The 'Around the World Club'	United Kingdom
Lil Bo Peep - Finnish Early Years Programme	India
Play Based Learning Observation Tool (P-BLOT)	New Zealand
Global Citizenship Ambassador Programme	Australia
CLASS ONE Personalized Language Learning	Malaysia
Improve Liberia cooperation movement	Liberia
EarlyWorks Experience	Malaysia
Using Play to Better our World	India
PROYECTIVIDA	Colombia
Flying Colors	Uganda
TEC Educação	Brazil
My Learning Story	Netherlands
Giddy2School Education Initiative	Nigeria
Papagoya Education	India

Learnlife: Pathways to Possibilities	Spain
smART Community Connections	Canada
Breshna.io	USA
MOZA AMBASSADORS	Qatar
Content Creation Lab	USA
Raster Master, Three Generations Learning Model' (Teacher of the Streets)	India
Canopy Nepal	Nepal
#Decarbonize Global Child Climate Programme	Canada
GO SO HIGH FOUNDATION	Uganda
HoloTracker	Singapore
Museum in Residence	Qatar
Curiosity Clubs	Netherlands
Manzil Mystics	India
Destination Imagination Challenge Experience	USA
MyMachine	Belgium
Kide Science	Finland
Qridi - A Digital Platform for Formative Assessment	Finland
THINK Global School	Global
Project DEFY: Design Education for Yourself	India
Street Racket - anyone, anytime, anywhere	Switzerland

Appendix C: Advisory Board Members

Full Name	Country	Role	Organisation
Aanchal Kapur	India	MPhil Graduate in Education (Globalisation and International Development)	University of Cambridge
Abraham Leek Tor	Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya	Student	Scorpion Control Center
Akanksha Singh	India	Middle School Coordinator	Pathways School, Noida
Alison Baulos	United States	Executive Director	Center for the Economics of Human Development, The University of Chicago
Andrea Dalling	Croatia	Montessori education consultant	STAR Assessor - Freelance
Andreas Paul			
Angel Jesús Tello Vargas	Perú	HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum, Content creator	Luzly
Anne Rodgers	United Kingdom	Early Years Consultant	ATR Consultancy
Babita Bisht	India	PYP Counsellor	Prometheus School, Noida
Banyaa Dunstan	Ghana	Student and HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum	
Bhavi Jitenkumar Naik	India	Highschool Senior (IBDP) - Grade 12 and HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum	SVKM JV Parekh International School
Carla Dabau Padrosa			
Catherine McTamaney	United States	Professor	Vanderbilt University
Chieh Yu Shen			
Chong Zhan Xuan	Malaysia	HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum	
Cláudia Maria Guedes da Costa	Portugal	Psychologist	Ministério da Educação
Damilola Okonkwo	Nigeria	Founder	KEY academy

Dawa Seldon	Bhutan	Student and HundrED Youth Ambassador	Druk Gyalpo's Institute, The Royal Academy
Dincer Demir	Türkiye	Senior Trainer	Teachers Academy Foundation
Dr. Mansi Talwar	India	Founder and Chief Coach	Happy Mee
Dr. Swati Sharma	India	PYP Counsellor	Prometheus School, Noida, India
Emanuela Gasca			
Eshu Madaan			
Farah Nikijuluw			
Freddie Schneider	Germany	Student and HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum	
Gabriel Martínez Valerio			
Geeta Sidhu-Robb	United Kingdom	CEO & Founder	WCorp
Gülşah Şendilek			
Hannah Simmons	Tanzania	Country Co-Lead	EdTech Hub
Heena Goenka	United Kingdom	Impact Manager	Big Change
Hessa Amin	Kuwait	CEO	FAWSEC Educational Company
Jayde Davies	United Kingdom	Star Accreditation Assessor	Montessori Global Education
Jennifer Bahrami	United States	CEO and Founder	Good Impact Labs
Justin Lessek			
Karabo Sharon Mawele	South Africa	Senior Play and Learning Facilitator	Play Africa
Kelly Michelle Wu	Panama	Student and HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum	
Koen Verrecht	Belgium	Education Innovation Expert	Enabel
Louise Nicolson	United Kingdom	PhD student	University of Oxford
Margaret Laurie			

Maria Volynchuk	United Kingdom	Student	Leeds Beckett University
Reviewer	Germany		Vincerola International
Maryam Bham	United Kingdom	PhD Candidate	University of Cambridge
Maya Paliath Divakar			
Md Ashraf Uddin Khan	Bangladesh	Student, HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum, and Founder,	Enolej
Meenakshi Dogra	India	Independent ECE expert	
Meggie Fisher	England	Head of Quality	Dingley's Promise
Miss Neelam Jayendra Shah	United Kingdom	Researcher and Research Analyst	Civil Consultancy CIC
Muzhda Wafa	Afghanistan	Student and HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum	K12 Online Schools
Nadia Hussain			
Namya Joshi			
Nathan Strenge	United States	Senior Learning Designer	Fielding International
Nirvana Yarger	United Kingdom	Founder and Lead Educator	Community Classroom CIC
Nirvana Yarger	United Kingdom	Educator	
Noora Abdulla H Jahrami			
Nurul Hasnat Ove	Bangladesh	President	QS ImpACT Bangladesh, World Merit Bangladesh & Leadership Development Association Bangladesh
Nyajuok Williams Deng	Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya	Innovator and founder	the MILES project
Onuh Oyigoga John	Nigeria	Chief Education Officer	Benue State Teaching Service Board, Makurdi, Nigeria
Osoro Duncan Onkundi	Kenya	Lead Consultant	Solanki Education Consultants
Ozgen Bagci	Italy	Academic Program Director	Goal Testing	ETS Local Partner
Priscilla Adjei-Mensah	Ghana	Lead School Counsellor	Al-Rayan International School

Professor Verity Campbell-Barr	United Kingdom	Professor of Early Childhood Education	University of Plymouth
Raquel Gomez Junco Lobo	Mexico	Student and HundrED Youth Ambassador	
Rima Singh	India	Head of School	DPS International
Rishita Rokariya			
Saanvi Singh			
Sabeena Abbasi	Pakistan	Chief Digital Learning Officer	Taleemabad
Sanad Abu Alya	Jordan	Student	English Talents School
Sarah Tucker	United Kingdom	novelist, author, broadcaster, lecturer	
Sathiyan AK	India	Founder & President	The D.I.M.E.S
Shalini Rawat	Qatar	Vice Principal	Olive International School
Sheeba Ajmal	Pakistan	CEO / Founder	Technology for a Cause - Enhancing Skills Empowering Kids
Sneha Dutta Biswas	India	Head of Department - English (International Program)	The Shriram Millenium School, Noida, India
Soizic Le Courtois			
Sophia Amin	Australia	Student and HundrED Youth Ambassador Alum	
Sudakshina Kashyap			
Tanya Rajani			
Tejasvini Kumar			
Tenzin Rabgay Zangmo			
Udantika Dhar			
Vikas Pahwa	India	Educator and HOD	Shiv Nadar School Gurgaon
Yonten Chophel	Bhutan	Teacher	Daga Central School, Ministry of Education and Skills Development, Bhutan. .
Zubeda Shaaban Maloba	Kenya	HundreD Youth Ambassador Alum	

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