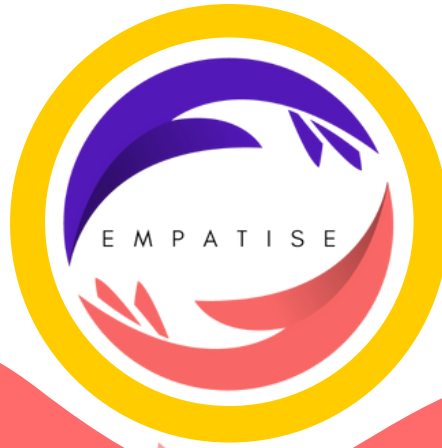
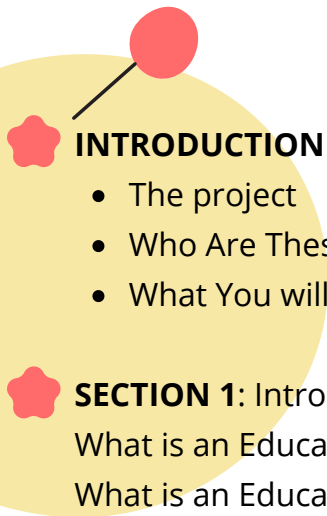


# Toolkit for Developing Educational Communities







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# Introduction



## Welcome

to the **Empatise Educational Community Toolkit**, a comprehensive resource developed within the framework of the EMPATISE project (EMPowering schools'

Action fostering Teachers' Innovation, empathy & Support within the Educational community, project N. 2022-1-IT02-KA220-SCH-000089811).

This toolkit is designed to support **educators, school leaders, and community stakeholders** in establishing and nurturing educational communities that are collaborative, inclusive, and innovative.

## The Project

According to the 2019 Eurostat analysis, **22.5% of children in the EU were at risk of poverty or social exclusion**, due to factors such as family type, work intensity, parental education level, migration background and living conditions. As the report shows, these children are less likely to do well in school, enjoy good health and realise their full potential later in life, when they are at greater risk of becoming unemployed, poor and socially excluded.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all regions similarly, but the effects on schools are very heterogeneous: according to the **Save The Children 2021 Report**, the effects of school closures have been most pronounced in the most fragile areas, where dropout rates were already high even in the pre-Covid era. **Pre-existing fragilities**, therefore, **had a multiplier effect** on the effects of Covid-related closures.



From 2019 to 2021, **implicit dropout rates**, i.e. the percentage of students leaving school without the minimum basic skills, **increased in all EU countries**, with huge regional differences. It is inevitable that the pandemic will have long-term effects on the working lives of students in the most affected regions and those from more socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. In addition, it is clear that **the current education system is in need of profound reform**: as recommended by the EU Commission, this means rebuilding the social fabric around schools, taking into account not only infrastructural needs (canteens, gyms, etc.) but above all relational needs, rebuilding the value of the ecosystem that makes each child grow and transforms him or her into a citizen, an active civic actor who is attentive to the development of his or her community.



It is evident that without interventions to support equal access to educational services and the reduction of starting disparities the increase in socio-economic disadvantage will be inevitable, which is why the project aims to increase and improve development opportunities for adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds, in order to **break the chain of progressive impoverishment** consisting of family socio-economic disadvantage, lack of public services, school drop-out, unemployment and social exclusion.

The **EMPATISE** project, through a tailor-made innovative programme based on learning by doing and a bottom-up community approach, aims to **strengthen the community of teachers by transforming them into promoters of change in the current education system**, thus increasing school's retention rates in rural and disadvantaged areas. The methodology, based on the concept of non-formal education, through the peer learning and learning by doing approach, was developed taking into account the weaknesses of the local public systems (lack of individualised training paths, few opportunities for the development of transversal skills, lack of opportunities for non-formal learning, absence of cultural and/or social stimuli that promote the development of young people's personalities) and aims to develop practical solutions in a cost-effective and innovative way.



Through an innovative tailored program based on learning by doing and bottom up, community-based approaches, the project aims to empower teacher community turning them into changemakers of the current educational system through 3 main actions:

### Training:

1

after an initial exchange of educational best practices and identification of learning and practical needs currently faced by teachers, open educational resources have been co-developed and tested. Participating teachers and educators had the opportunity to improve their competences and learn new ways of delivering teaching and increase student's motivation through a highly formative and interactive course that aims to develop skills and soft skills useful for the engagement of disadvantaged learners. à Discover our e-learning platform and course: <https://empatise.eu/>

### Development & Test pilot of educating communities:

2

the participants, supported by the resources developed by the project, co-developed new models of educational communities connecting schools, public bodies and private organisations working with adolescents in order to share material and non-material resources. The workshop and co-design activities feed into this Toolkit for the development of educational communities which includes resources and practical tools for the development of models of cooperation between the key actors of educational community interactions.

### Co-design and development of an "Individual paths open dashboard":

2

through the exchange of know-how between the actors of each local educational community and the co-design of a tool dedicated to student empowerment, an "Individual paths open dashboard", an interactive digital tool dedicated to the development of individualised paths for students, has been developed and tested. The dashboard interactively provides tools and methodologies for the development of engagement paths customised to the student's needs, preferences and attitudes.

Discover our Dashboard → <https://empatise.eu/dashboard/>

The initiative is part of the project 'EMPowering schools' Action fostering Teachers' Innovation, Empathy & Support within the Educational community' (Progetto N°. 2022-1-IT02-KA220-SCH-000089811).

The project is co-funded by the **Erasmus Plus programme** and is implemented simultaneously in **Italy, Greece, Portugal, Cyprus and Spain**.



(Italy)



(Greece)



(Portugal)



(Cyprus)



(Spain)

PROJECT LEADER

PARTNERS

## Who Are These Guidelines For?

The primary aim of this toolkit is to **empower schools and educators** to create educational environments that foster the development of essential skills such as empathy, leadership, and innovation. By leveraging non-formal learning methodologies, this toolkit provides practical guidance, tools, and resources to build robust educational communities that support the holistic growth of both teachers and students. This Toolkit is mainly addressed to:

### Educators and School Leaders

Gain insights into creating a supportive and innovative learning environment

### Community Stakeholders

Learn how to collaborate effectively with schools to enhance educational outcomes

### Policy Makers

Understand the value of educational communities and how to support them through policy and funding



# What You will Find in This Document?

This document aims to provide practical guidance on the set up of educational communities, thus promoting local development through bottom-up, participatory and inclusive approaches. The Toolkit is designed to be your go-to resource for building and nurturing educational communities that can drive positive change and foster an environment of continuous learning and collaboration. For this reason, the document is made of several sections, which aims to guide any relevant stakeholder in the process of co-development of a Educational Community Action Plan in its own community through participatory approaches, including:

## Comprehensive guides:

**Section 1 to 3** provide step-by-step instructions on setting up and maintaining an educational community, from initial planning to ongoing development. The document provides you with a clear and actionable roadmap to understand, establish, and sustain an educational community that fosters collaboration, innovation, and growth. In this section, you'll learn how to identify and map out the key stakeholders involved in or affected by your educational community, and you'll discover effective strategies for engaging stakeholders to ensure active participation and commitment from all parties, fostering a collaborative environment.

## Sustainability and scalability:

**Section 4** provides strategies and best practices for ensuring the long-term sustainability and scalability of educational communities and scaling successful initiatives. It covers funding models, fundraising techniques, and ways to engage local authorities and institutions.

## Collaborative tools and resources:

Finally, **section 5** provides resources and templates to facilitate collaboration among teachers, students, parents, and other community stakeholders. Access practical templates and tools that will assist you in various aspects of setting up and managing your educational community. These resources are designed to make your work easier and more effective.





## SECTION

# 1

# Introduction to the Educational Community



# What is an Educational Community?

An **educational community** refers to a **group of individuals**, such as teachers, students, parents, administrators, and other stakeholders, **who come together with the common goal of supporting and enhancing learning and education.**

Educational communities can take different forms, such as schools, universities, online learning communities, or informal learning groups.



In an educational community, members share a sense of identity and purpose, and they work collaboratively to create an environment that fosters learning, growth, and development. The community provides a space for sharing knowledge, experiences, and resources, as well as for offering support and feedback.

The concept of an educational community **recognizes that learning is a collective and social activity**, and that the quality of education is influenced by the relationships and interactions among its members. Therefore, an educational community **places a strong emphasis on collaboration, communication, and mutual respect, and seeks to create a positive and inclusive learning culture.**

The EMPATISE project aims to reduce educational poverty in the target regions through a **community-based approach** that develops solutions adapted to each context and capable of promoting long-term cooperation. To do this, it is indispensable to initiate a **process of analysis, co-design and co-development** of possible methodologies and tools shared with all stakeholders involved.





For this reason, the project, beyond the development of an Educational Program with resources that can support teachers in the daily management of students, will support the selected participants in the development of an educational community pilot, where to involve the actors they deem most useful and to develop together with them participatory processes and tools that can improve the management of children's development and, through this, the welfare of the communities in which they live.

## What is an Educational Community Pilot?

An educational community **pilot is a type of project that aims to test and evaluate innovative educational practices and approaches within a specific community.** The community can be a school, a group of schools, or a broader educational context, such as a district or a region.

**The goal** of an educational community pilot **is to develop, implement, and assess new teaching and learning methods that respond to the needs and challenges of the community.** This can involve the introduction of new technologies, pedagogical approaches, curricula, or assessments, among other elements.

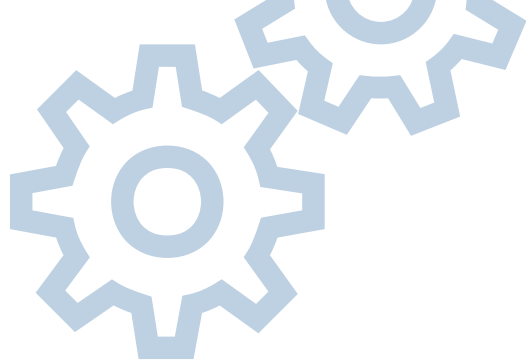
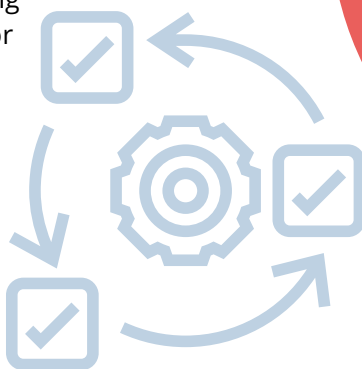


The pilot project typically involves collaboration among different stakeholders within the educational community, including teachers, students, parents, administrators, and community partners.

The stakeholders work together to co-design and co-implement the pilot, with the goal of achieving shared goals and objectives.

The pilot project also involves a **rigorous evaluation process**, which aims to measure the effectiveness of the innovative practices and identify areas for improvement. The evaluation can involve various methods, such as surveys, focus groups, and performance assessments, among others.

Overall, an educational community pilot provides a valuable opportunity to test and refine innovative educational practices and approaches within a real-world context, with the goal of improving educational outcomes for students and enhancing the overall quality of education.



# How to set up an Educational Community Pilot?

Setting up an educational community pilot involves several steps, including:

1

## Identify and engage the educational community:

The first step is to identify the specific educational community that will participate in the pilot. This can be a school, a group of schools, or a broader educational context, such as a district or a region.

2

## Define the goals and objectives:

The next step is to define the goals and objectives of the pilot project. This involves identifying the educational challenges and needs of the community and determining how the pilot can address these challenges.

3

## Design the pilot project:

Once the goals and objectives are defined, the next step is to design the pilot project. This involves determining the specific practices and approaches that will be tested and how they will be implemented in the community. This can involve collaboration among various stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and community partners.

4

## Develop the implementation plan:

The implementation plan outlines the specific activities and timelines for implementing the pilot project. It includes the identification of the resources needed, such as funding, materials, and personnel, as well as the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder.

5

### Implement the pilot project:

The implementation phase involves putting the plan into action. This includes training teachers and other stakeholders, introducing new technologies or pedagogical approaches, and collecting data on the implementation process.

6

### Evaluate the pilot project:

The evaluation phase involves collecting and analyzing data to assess the effectiveness of the pilot project. This can include surveys, performance assessments, focus groups, and other evaluation methods. The results of the evaluation will help to identify areas for improvement and refine the practices and approaches tested in the pilot.

7

### Scale up the pilot project:

Once the pilot project is evaluated and refined, it can be scaled up to other educational communities, with the goal of replicating the successful practices and approaches and improving educational outcomes more broadly.

Overall, setting up an educational community pilot requires careful planning, collaboration among various stakeholders, and a commitment to ongoing evaluation and refinement.

## SECTION

# 2

# Setting up an educational community - Community engagement

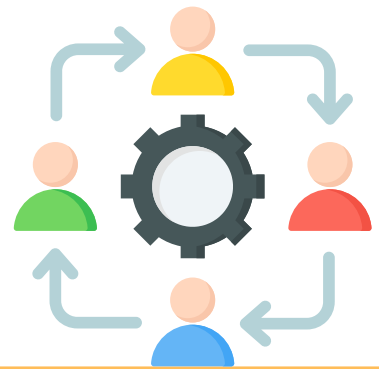


# Stakeholder Mapping

As provided in the previous section, the first step to develop an educational community is to identify the specific community that will participate in the pilot. This could be a school, a group of schools or, as in the case of EMPATISE project, a **broader educational context**, such as a district or a region.

Stakeholder engagement is a critical aspect of the community-building process, as it helps to ensure that the community is designed to meet the needs and interests of its members.

What does it mean stakeholder engagement and why it is important?



Stakeholder engagement refers to **the process of involving individuals or groups who have a stake or interest in a particular topic, project, program, or organization** in the decision-making process. Stakeholders can include a wide range of individuals or groups, such as customers, employees, investors, community members, or partners.



# Stakeholder Engagement

**involves actively seeking out and listening** to the perspectives, concerns, and feedback of stakeholders, and taking that input into consideration when making decisions.

**can take many forms**, depending on the context and the stakeholders involved. Examples of stakeholder engagement methods include town hall **meetings, focus groups, surveys, online forums**, one-on-one interviews, and public comment periods.



effective stakeholder engagement **requires ongoing communication and collaboration** between the organization or project team and the stakeholders. It also requires a willingness to listen and **respond to stakeholder feedback**, and a commitment to making decisions that are in the best interest of all stakeholders involved.

**the goal is to ensure that all relevant perspectives and interests are taken into account**, and that decisions are made in a way that is transparent, accountable, and inclusive.

Stakeholder engagement is a critical step in the process of setting up an educational community for several reasons:

### Ensures inclusivity:

By engaging stakeholders, you can ensure that a diverse range of perspectives, needs, and interests are taken into account in the design of the educational community. This can help to create a more inclusive and equitable community that meets the needs of all its members.

### Builds buy-in and support:

Engaging stakeholders in the design process can help to build buy-in and support for the educational community. When stakeholders feel that their input has been heard and considered, they are more likely to be invested in the success of the community.

### Identifies potential challenges:

Stakeholder engagement can help to identify potential challenges or barriers to the success of the educational community. This can help to mitigate risks and ensure that the community is designed in a way that addresses these challenges.

### Improves decision-making:

Engaging stakeholders can help to improve decision-making by providing a broader range of perspectives and ideas. This can lead to more informed and effective decisions that are better aligned with the needs and interests of the community.

### Enhances transparency and accountability:

Stakeholder engagement can help to enhance transparency and accountability by involving stakeholders in the decision-making process and keeping them informed about the progress of the community. This can help to build trust and foster a sense of ownership among stakeholders.

Overall, stakeholder engagement is a critical step in setting up an educational community because it helps to ensure that the community is designed to meet the needs and interests of its members, and that stakeholders are invested in the success of the community.



# Engagement Strategies

So how is it possible to effectively identify and involve local stakeholders?  
A stakeholder engagement plan typically involves the following steps:

1

## **Identify the stakeholders:**

Identify the individuals or groups who have a stake in the educational community. This could include students, teachers, parents, administrators, community organizations, and other interested parties. Please keep in mind EMPATISE main target groups:

- High school teachers
- Educators
- Staff of local public authorities (e.g. from local education institutions & social service desks of the local administrations)
- Actors in the educational community (sports associations, NGOs, civil society organisations, etc.)

2

## **Determine the engagement objectives:**

Clarify the goals and objectives of the stakeholder engagement process. This could include gathering input on the design of the community, identifying potential challenges or barriers, or building support for the community.

3

## **Choose the engagement methods:**

Determine the methods and channels for engaging stakeholders. This could include focus groups, surveys, community meetings, online forums, or one-on-one interviews.

4

## **Develop engagement materials:**

Create materials to support the stakeholder engagement process, such as discussion guides, surveys, or presentations.

5

## **Implement the engagement plan:**

Execute the stakeholder engagement plan, using the chosen methods and materials to gather input and feedback from stakeholders.

6

## **Analyze and respond to feedback:**

Analyze the feedback gathered from stakeholders and use it to inform the design and development of the educational community.



More in detail, digital tools like Miro can support stakeholder analysis by providing a platform for collaborative brainstorming, mapping and visualization of stakeholder information.

Within the EMPATISE project, we focused on the use of **Miro** for the preliminary tasks of stakeholder identification and engagement in each target community, in order to facilitate remote collaboration as well as data collection and analysis between partners. Overall, it can support stakeholder analysis by providing a platform for collaborative ideation, organization, and visualization of stakeholder information. It can help to create a more inclusive and transparent stakeholder engagement process that leads to more informed decision-making.

Please read the guidelines below carefully and use the tools developed:

1

**Identify stakeholders:** Miro allows for collaborative brainstorming and ideation, which can be used to gather input on stakeholders and contacts of the participants' networks. Use Miro stakeholders' board to allow participants to share their ideas and feedback in real-time.

**See examples**

2

**Clustering:** Miro is a great tool for collaborative brainstorming as it provides a digital canvas that allows you to create visual maps of stakeholder categories and relationships, interests, and influence. Use Miro tables N. 2 to create stakeholder maps that show the different stakeholder groups and their connections. **See examples**

3

**Priritising stakeholders and move on the map:** Miro can be used to organize stakeholder information in a way that is easy to access and analyze. You can use Miro to create stakeholder map based on their relevance and influence. Use Miro tables N. 3 and N.4 to create stakeholder maps that show the different stakeholder groups and their level of interest or influence in the project. **See examples**

4

**Stakeholder engagement Table:** once you have finalised your stakeholders map and identified those you want to engage, use the excel Stakeholder table to detail each stakeholder identified and the engagement strategy you consider most appropriate. This file will be updated in the next months according to your community action plan and will provide an overview of efforts and results. **See examples**

By including a stakeholder engagement plan in the first step of setting up an educational community, you can ensure that the community is designed to meet the needs and interests of its members, and that stakeholders are engaged and invested in the success of the community.



# Effective Communication

In the vibrant world of educational communities, effective communication is the backbone that holds everything together. It ensures that every voice is heard, every idea is shared, and every goal is achieved collaboratively.

This section will guide you through crafting internal and external communication plans, leveraging digital tools, and exploring best communication practices to make your educational community thrive.

**Take a look to the table and discover the essential elements of an internal and external communication plan, digital tools and examples of best practices. The accompanying table will help clarify the differences and provide guidance on how to effectively manage communication in both contexts.**

What?	Internal Communication	External Communication
Why?	<p>Internal communication is the heartbeat of your educational community.</p> <p>It's about ensuring that all members, from teachers and students to administrators and parents, are on the same page. An effective internal communication plan should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular Updates: Share weekly or bi-weekly newsletters to keep everyone informed about upcoming events, achievements, and important announcements.</li> <li>• Meetings and Briefings: Schedule regular meetings, both formal and informal, to discuss progress, address concerns, and brainstorm new ideas.</li> </ul>	<p>External communication is your community's window to the world.</p> <p>It involves engaging with parents, local businesses, policymakers, and the wider community. An effective external communication plan should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Relations: Build a positive image of your community through press releases, articles, and newsletters. Highlight your achievements, innovative projects, and community impact.</li> <li>• Events and Workshops: Organize events that invite external stakeholders to participate and witness the vibrant activities within your community.</li> </ul>



Use a mix of face-to-face and virtual meetings to accommodate everyone's schedule.

- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement channels for feedback where members can share their thoughts and suggestions. This could be through surveys, suggestion boxes, or dedicated feedback sessions.

This fosters a sense of belonging and support.

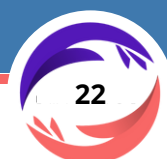
- **Outreach Programs:** Develop outreach programs to engage with local businesses, NGOs, and other educational institutions. Collaborate on projects that benefit the wider community and showcase the strength of your educational community.

## How?

### Digital Tools for Communication

In today's digital age, leveraging the right tools can significantly enhance your communication efforts. Here are some digital tools to consider:

- **Social Media:** Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn are powerful for reaching a broad audience. Use them to share updates, celebrate achievements, and engage with your community. Create engaging content like photos, videos, and infographics to capture attention.
- **Collaborative Platforms:** Tools like Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Google Workspace facilitate seamless communication and collaboration among members. They allow for real-time messaging, file sharing, and project management, making it easier to stay organized and connected.
- **Email Marketing:** Platforms like Mailchimp or Constant Contact help you manage and distribute newsletters and important updates to a large audience efficiently.
- **Webinars and Live Streams:** Use Zoom, Google Meet, or YouTube Live to host virtual events, workshops, and Q&A sessions. This not only engages your community but also reaches a wider audience.



## Examples of Best Practices

To inspire you, here are some examples of best communication practices from successful educational communities:

- **Interactive Newsletters:** Instead of traditional text-heavy newsletters, use interactive formats that include videos, infographics, and links to relevant resources. This makes the information more engaging and easier to digest.
- **Social Media Challenges:** Create fun and educational social media challenges that encourage students, teachers, and parents to participate. This increases engagement and spreads awareness about your community's activities.
- **Collaborative Projects:** Use digital platforms to run collaborative projects where students and teachers from different schools or even countries work together. This not only enhances learning but also fosters cross-cultural communication.
- **Transparent Communication:** Maintain transparency in all communications. Regularly update your community about decisions, changes, and the rationale behind them. This builds trust and encourages a positive, inclusive atmosphere.
- **Feedback Loops:** Implement a structured feedback loop where members can regularly provide input on various aspects of the community. Act on this feedback to show that every voice matters.

By implementing these strategies and leveraging digital tools, you can ensure that your educational community is not just connected but also vibrant and dynamic. Effective communication will empower every member, making your community a place where ideas flourish, collaboration is seamless, and learning is a shared, joyous journey.



## SECTION

# 3

# Educational community design and implementation





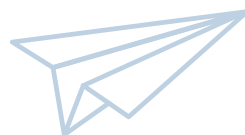
# Co-Designing the Action Plan

In this section, you'll delve into the collaborative process of co-designing an action plan for your educational community. Co-designing involves working closely with stakeholders — students, educators, parents, and community members — to create a plan that reflects the diverse needs and aspirations of everyone involved. This approach ensures that the resulting action plan is both inclusive and tailored to the unique context of your community, setting the stage for meaningful and sustainable impact. Whether you're starting from scratch or refining an existing initiative, this section will guide you through the essential steps to develop a robust and actionable plan together.

## Overview of the process



## Co-designing local AP



Local needs identification and prioritisation

Vision and mission development

Key areas for local development definition  
*(it includes: key objectives per area + activities to be implemented + local resources (organisations & funds to be used))*

Monitoring and evaluation for implementation continuous improvement  
*(it includes KPIs definition per each area + monitoring processes and moments of collective reflections on results achieved and adaptation measures to improve on long term)*



# Implementing Activities

Effective implementation of educational activities is crucial to achieving the desired outcomes in any educational program. This involves meticulous planning, robust monitoring, and continuous evaluation to ensure that the activities are impactful and aligned with the overall goals. Here's how you can effectively plan, manage, and improve your educational activities.

## Planning and Managing Educational Activities

1

### Setting Clear Objectives:

- Begin with defining the clear, measurable objectives of the educational activities. Objectives should align with the overall goals of the program and should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART).
- Example: "Improve students' problem-solving skills by engaging them in weekly coding challenges over the next semester."

2

### Developing an Action Plan:

- Create a detailed action plan that outlines the steps required to achieve the objectives. Include timelines, resources needed, and responsibilities assigned to team members.
- Use tools like Gantt charts or project management software (e.g., Trello, Asana) to organize tasks and timelines.

3

### Resource Allocation:

- Ensure that all necessary resources, such as materials, equipment, and human resources, are available and allocated appropriately.
- Budgeting for resources is crucial; allocate funds judiciously to avoid any disruptions during the implementation phase.

4

### Scheduling and Coordination:

- Schedule activities in a manner that maximizes participation and minimizes conflicts. Coordination among team members is key to ensuring activities run smoothly.
- Use shared calendars and scheduling tools (e.g., Google Calendar, Doodle) to keep everyone on the same page.

5

### Continuous monitoring & evaluation for improvement and adaptation

- Encourage continuous feedback from participants, educators, and other stakeholders. Create a culture where feedback is seen as a constructive tool for improvement.
- Implement regular feedback sessions, suggestion boxes, or digital feedback platforms to gather insights.
- Regularly review and analyze feedback to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Look for patterns and recurring issues that need addressing.
- Develop an action plan to address the feedback and make necessary improvements. Set realistic timelines for implementing changes.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement where the team is always looking for ways to enhance the educational experience.

# Tools for Monitoring and Evaluating Activities

## Monitoring Tools

- **Progress Tracking:** Use progress tracking tools to monitor the advancement of activities. Project management software like Monday.com or Smartsheet can be effective.
- **Checklists and Milestones:** Create checklists and set milestones to keep track of completed tasks and upcoming deadlines.

## Case Study:

A school implements a coding program for middle school students. They start by setting clear objectives and developing an action plan. Using tools like Trello for project management, they schedule weekly coding sessions.

Throughout the program, they collect feedback via Google Forms and monitor progress using milestone checklists.

After analyzing feedback, they find that students enjoy hands-on projects the most, so they adjust the curriculum to include more project-based learning activities.



## Evaluation Tools:

- **Surveys and Feedback Forms:** Collect feedback from participants using online survey tools like Google Forms, SurveyMonkey, or Typeform. These can help assess the effectiveness and impact of the activities.
- **Observation and Assessment:** Regular observations and assessments can provide insights into the participants' engagement and learning progress. Use rubrics or evaluation forms to standardize assessments.
- **Data Analysis:** Utilize data analysis tools to interpret feedback and performance data. Software like Excel or more advanced tools like SPSS can help in analyzing quantitative and qualitative data.

By following these structured approaches to planning, managing, monitoring, and improving educational activities, educational communities can ensure that their programs are effective, engaging, and continuously evolving to meet the needs of their participants.



# SECTION

# 4

# Sustainability and Scalability







# Project Sustainability

To ensure the longevity and sustained impact of educational initiatives, it's essential to develop robust strategies that embed the project within the community and secure ongoing support.



Key strategies include:

-  **Integration into Existing Structures:** Embed project activities into the regular operations of schools and educational institutions. This can involve aligning project goals with institutional priorities and ensuring that the project becomes a part of the institution's strategic plans.
-  **Capacity Building:** Equip educators and administrators with the skills and knowledge to sustain the project. Provide training sessions, workshops, and resources that help stakeholders understand and continue the project's methodologies and objectives.
-  **Stakeholder Engagement:** Maintain active and ongoing engagement with all stakeholders, including students, parents, educators, local authorities, and community organizations. Establishing a strong network of supporters helps ensure continued commitment and advocacy for the project.
-  **Regular Evaluation and Adaptation:** Continuously monitor and evaluate the project's impact, using feedback to make necessary adjustments. This adaptive approach helps keep the project relevant and effective over time.

# Funding Models and Fundraising

Securing financial resources is crucial for the sustainability of any educational initiative. Consider the following funding models and strategies:

## 1 Grants and Public Funding:

Apply for grants from government bodies, educational foundations, and international organizations. Programs like Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and national education funds can provide substantial support.

## 2 Partnerships with Businesses:

Engage local businesses and corporations through corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. Businesses may offer sponsorship, in-kind support, or direct funding.

## 3 Community Fundraising:

Organize fundraising events, campaigns, and drives within the community. Crowdfunding platforms can also be used to gather small contributions from a large number of people.

## 4 Membership Fees and Service Charges:

For projects that provide direct services, consider implementing a membership fee or service charge model. This can generate a steady stream of income while ensuring participants' commitment.



# Involvement of Local Authorities and Institutions

Collaboration with local authorities and institutions is critical to project sustainability. Strategies include:



## Policy Advocacy

Work with local authorities to integrate the project's goals into local education policies. Advocacy efforts can help secure long-term support and funding.



## Institutional Partnerships

Form partnerships with schools, colleges, and universities to ensure that the project's activities and outcomes are recognized and valued. This can include formal agreements, MOUs, and joint initiatives.



## Community Integration

Actively involve community organizations and local institutions in project activities. This fosters a sense of ownership and ensures that the project meets the needs and priorities of the community.

# Scalability of the Model

## Adapting the Model to Different Educational Contexts

To scale the educational model effectively, it's essential to adapt it to various contexts while maintaining core principles. Consider the following approaches:

### **Contextual Analysis:**

Conduct thorough analyses of new contexts to understand specific needs, challenges, and opportunities. Tailor the project's activities and methodologies to address these unique factors.

### **Flexible Framework:**

Develop a flexible project framework that allows for adaptation without compromising core objectives. This can involve creating customizable modules, resources, and training materials.

### **Pilot Programs:**

Start with pilot programs in new contexts to test and refine adaptations. Use feedback from these pilots to make necessary adjustments before full-scale implementation.





# Tools for Project Replicability

Ensuring that the project can be easily replicated involves creating clear, comprehensive resources and support structures. Key tools include:



## Detailed Guides and Manuals:

Develop step-by-step guides, manuals, and toolkits that outline how to implement the project. Include best practices, case studies, and troubleshooting tips.



## Training Programs:

Create training programs for educators and administrators that provide the necessary skills and knowledge to implement the project. Offer both in-person and online training options.



## Support Networks:

Establish support networks and communities of practice where new implementers can seek advice, share experiences, and collaborate. Online forums, social media groups, and regular webinars can facilitate this.

# SECTION

# 5

# Resources and Tools



The present section aims to provide practical tools and resources to deepen into the field of educational communities, useful for anyone interested in deepening the topic to set up its own community. These references provide a comprehensive overview of the value of educational communities, relevant funding opportunities, and successful case studies, offering practical insights and resources for those looking to implement or scale educational community projects.

## Relevant Studies and Reports on Educational Communities' Value for Students and Local Development



### ***"School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action"***

Authors: Joyce Epstein & al.

This study highlights how community involvement in education positively influences students' academic achievements, social skills, and overall well-being.

<https://parentsinternational.org/the-impact-of-school-family-and-community-connections-on-student-achievement/>

<https://organizingengagement.org/models/framework-of-six-types-of-involvement/>

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### ***"Community education in community development"***

Authors: Asep Saepudin; Dinno Mulyono

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332617511\\_COMMUNITY\\_EDUCATION\\_IN\\_COMMUNITY\\_DEVELOPMENT](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332617511_COMMUNITY_EDUCATION_IN_COMMUNITY_DEVELOPMENT)

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### ***"Education for Inclusive Societies"***

Authors: OECD

The Education for Inclusive Societies Project is designed to respond to the increasing diversity that characterises education systems, and seeks to help governments and relevant stakeholders achieve more equitable and inclusive education systems as a pillar for creating more inclusive societies.

<https://www.oecd.org/en/about/projects/education-for-inclusive-societies.html>

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Overall, there are many tools and methods that can be used to facilitate collaboration and engagement. These tools can be used in conjunction with digital tools to create a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy that combines the benefits of both digital and in-person approaches.

# Templates and other useful tools

Using digital tools for stakeholder analysis and engagement has several advantages over traditional methods as it can help to create a more inclusive, collaborative, and effective stakeholder engagement process.

Here are some reasons why using digital tools is useful for this task:

## Increased accessibility:

Increased accessibility: Digital tools can be accessed from anywhere in the world, making it easier to engage with stakeholders who are geographically dispersed. This can help to ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to participate in the engagement process.

## Improved collaboration:

Digital tools allow for real-time collaboration and communication between stakeholders, making it easier to share information, ideas, and feedback. This can help to create a more collaborative and inclusive stakeholder engagement process.

## Data collection and analysis:

Digital tools allow for easier collection and analysis of stakeholder feedback, making it easier to identify patterns and trends in stakeholder input. This can help to inform decision-making and improve the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement efforts.

## Time and cost savings:

Using digital tools can save time and cost associated with traditional methods of stakeholder engagement, such as in-person meetings or mailed surveys. Digital tools can be used to reach a large number of stakeholders simultaneously and can provide a more efficient and cost-effective means of engaging stakeholders.

## Transparency and accountability:

Using digital tools can help to promote transparency and accountability in stakeholder engagement efforts. Digital tools can provide a record of stakeholder feedback and input, making it easier to track and report on the stakeholder engagement process.



There are several digital tools that can be used for stakeholder engagement and analysis. The selection on the ones to be used depends on your specific needs and preferences. It is important to choose a tool or set of tools that align with your stakeholder engagement objectives and that are accessible and user-friendly for your stakeholders. Here are a few examples:

## MIRO

Miro is a collaborative online whiteboard that can be used for stakeholder analysis and engagement. It provides a platform for visual brainstorming, mapping, and organizing stakeholder information.

[Show more](#) >

## SURVEY MONKEY

SurveyMonkey is an online survey tool that can be used to gather feedback from stakeholders. It allows you to create custom surveys, distribute them to stakeholders & analyze results.

[Show more](#) >

## GOOGLE FORMS

Google Forms is another online survey tool that can be used to gather stakeholder feedback. It allows you to create custom surveys and share them with stakeholders via email or a link.

[Show more](#) >

## SLACK

Slack is a messaging platform that can be used to facilitate stakeholder communication and collaboration. It allows you to create channels for different stakeholder groups, share files and information, and communicate in real-time.

[Show more](#) >

## ZOOM

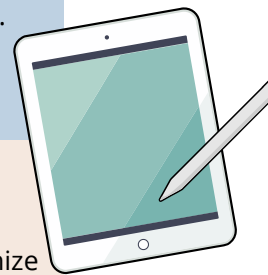
Zoom is a video conferencing tool that can be used to facilitate stakeholder meetings and discussions. It allows you to host virtual meetings with stakeholders from anywhere in the world.

[Show more](#) >

## TRELLO

A management tool to organize stakeholder information and tasks. It lets you create boards, lists, and cards to track engagement and facilitate real-time communication and collaboration.

[Show more](#) >



While digital tools are useful for stakeholder engagement and analysis, in-person collaboration and engagement can also be valuable. These tools should be used in conjunction with digital tools to create a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy that combines the benefits of both **digital and in-person approaches**. Here are some examples of tools that can be used to facilitate in-person collaboration and engagement:



### **Whiteboards and sticky notes:**

Whiteboards and sticky notes can be used to facilitate brainstorming and organization of stakeholder input during in-person meetings or workshops.



### **Flipcharts and markers:**

Flipcharts and markers can be used to capture stakeholder input and feedback during in-person meetings or workshops.



### **Posters and visual aids:**

Posters and visual aids can be used to convey information and engage stakeholders during in-person events or presentations.



### **Interactive workshops:**

Interactive workshops can be used to facilitate stakeholder engagement and collaboration, through activities such as group discussions, role-playing, or problem-solving exercises.



### **Town hall meetings:**

Town hall meetings can be used to provide a forum for stakeholders to ask questions, share feedback, and engage in dialogue with project leaders or representatives.



### **Focus groups:**

Focus groups can be used to gather feedback and insights from stakeholders in a structured and facilitated environment.

See Empatise templates for stakeholders' mapping and Action plan codesign

[Go to templates](#) >



# Funding Opportunities

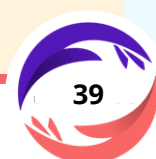
## Case Studies

The present section aims to provide resources to deepen the landscape of EU funds, useful to create, improve and develop your educational community or to implement its activities.

- **Erasmus+ Programme:** it offers opportunities for teachers, students, and educational institutions to participate in training, teaching assignments, and job shadowing in other EU countries.
- **European Social Fund (ESF):** it supports initiatives aimed at improving education and training quality.
- **Horizon Europe:** it funds research and innovation projects, including those related to education and training.
- **Creative Europe Programme:** it provides funding for cultural and creative projects, including educational initiatives.
- **Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme (CERV):** it funds projects promoting civic engagement and active citizenship.
- **Digital Education Action Plan:** it supports projects that develop digital skills and competences for teachers and students.

The present section aims to provide resources to deepen into the field of educational communities and case studies.

- **Teach For All:** a global network adapting the Teach For America model to different countries, focusing on expanding educational opportunities.  
[Link](#)
- **Khan Academy:** an online learning platform that has successfully scaled to reach millions of students worldwide through diverse educational contexts.  
[Link](#)
- **Big Picture Learning:** a model focusing on personalized learning through real-world projects and internships, adapted in various countries to local educational systems.  
[Link](#)
- **Reggio Emilia Approach:** an educational philosophy originating from Reggio Emilia, Italy, emphasizing child-centered, experiential learning that has been adopted worldwide.  
[Link](#)
- **Community Schools Initiative:** a strategy used in the US and other countries to integrate youth development and community engagement, showing significant positive outcomes for student achievement and community health.  
[Link](#)



## Conclusion

The **Empatise Educational Community Toolkit** is a living document, designed to evolve with the needs of the educational communities it serves. As you reach the end of this toolkit, it's important to remember that the journey of building and sustaining an educational community is just beginning. The tools, strategies, and insights shared here are more than just resources—they are the foundation for a transformative movement that can redefine the future of education in your community.

Empowering students, fostering collaboration, and driving innovation are not just goals; they are the stepping stones to creating a vibrant, inclusive, and dynamic educational ecosystem. By engaging with this toolkit, you've taken a crucial step towards making this vision a reality.

But the work doesn't stop here. The true impact of your efforts will be felt as you implement these strategies, adapt them to your unique context, and continue to innovate. The success of your educational community depends on your commitment to continuous learning, collaboration, and improvement.

Thank you for joining us on this journey toward innovative, empathetic, and collaborative education. Now is the time to take action. Gather your stakeholders, ignite the passion within your community, and start building the future of education together. The challenges may be great, but the potential for positive change is even greater. Let this toolkit be your guide as you embark on this exciting journey. Together, we can create educational communities that not only educate but inspire, empower, and transform lives.

The future of education is in your hands—let's build it together. We invite you to contribute your experiences and insights to continuously improve and enrich this resource. Together, we can create vibrant, supportive educational environments that empower every member of the community to thrive.



