



EdTech Assistive Technology Testbed Programme

February 2019

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Session Overview

The webinar session aims to provide:

Section 1

- Brief background to the DfE EdTech Strategy
- Further details of the Assistive Technology Testbed Programme

Section 2

- Q&A
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To ensure the session runs smoothly:

- All participants will be on mute
- Questions can be posed at any time using the text/chat function of your Skype
- Periodic short pauses to allow relevant questions to be typed
- We will be recording the session

EdTech Strategy

- Department for Education's Education Technology strategy 'Realising the potential of technology in education' was published in April 2019
- The strategy highlighted the barriers to the effective use of technology reported by schools and colleges
- It recognised the importance of accessible and assistive technologies
- Identified accessibility and inclusion as one of 5 key areas of opportunity where technology can help drive a step change:
 - *'Teaching Practice – supporting access, inclusion and improved educational outcomes for all'.*

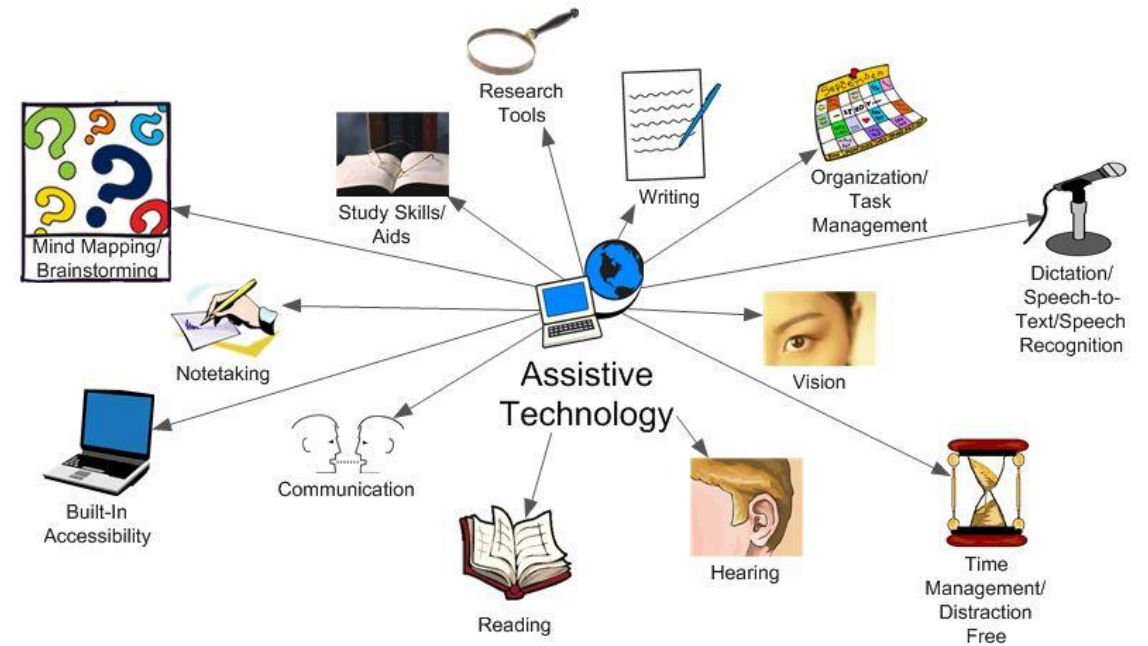


<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/realising-the-potential-of-technology-in-education>

Current Situation

There are many examples of good practice across England, however, many pupils, parents, teachers, headteachers and SENCOs struggle to:

- Realise the full potential of AT
- Identify, procure and effectively implement the right AT products
- Current evidence base is often inaccessible, undigestible or too generic



The EdTech strategy set out the government's aim to support the education system in England to overcome barriers to adoption and embed technology in a way that:

- Cuts workload
- Fosters efficiencies
- Removes barriers
- Drives improvement

EdTech Challenges

Challenge 1: “Improve parental engagement and communication, whilst cutting related teacher workload by up to five hours per term.”

Challenge 2: “Show how technology can facilitate part-time and flexible working patterns in schools and colleges, including through the use of time-tabling tools.”

Challenge 3: “Cut teacher time spent preparing, marking and analysing in-class assessments and homework by two hours per week or more.”

Challenge 4: “Show that technology can reduce teacher time spent on essay marking for mock GCSE exams by at least 20%.”

Challenge 5: “Identify how anti-cheating software can be developed and improved to help tackle the problem of essay mills.”

Challenge 6: “Challenge the research community to identify the best technology that is proven to help level the playing field for learners.”

Challenge 7: “Demonstrate how technology can support schools and teachers to diagnose their development needs and to support more flexible CPD.”

Challenge 8: “Prove that the use of home learning early years apps (both those aimed at parents and those aimed at children) contributes to improved literacy and communication skills for disadvantaged children.”

Challenge 9: “Widen accessibility and improve delivery of online basic skills training for adults.”

Challenge 10: “Demonstrate how artificial intelligence can support the effective delivery of online learning and training for adults.”

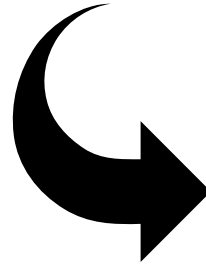
Assistive Technology Testbed programme is to meet this challenge, and help to build and effectively disseminate evidence.

We expect the Testbed programme will:

- support short-cycle mixed-method experimental evaluations
- evaluate the use of the most promising AT with pupils and students with SEND in a variety of contexts
- Help to build the accessible, digestible and context-specific evidence base

Assistive Technology Testbed Programme

Build on the outputs of a rapid literature review that is being undertaken alongside an external partner



- Provide a broad understanding of the current landscape of AT use in education around the world
- Identify types of AT that have shown the most promising impact
- Outputs expected by end of March 2020

Programme objectives:

- Increase the context specific evidence base of the impact of AT
- Increase the number of teachers and SENCOs that access and understand the AT evidence base
- Increase awareness of the potential of AT
- Improve outcomes for SEND pupils

Delivery Partner's Role

We expect the delivery partner will be responsible for working with the DfE to:

- Recruit, shortlist and select schools and colleges to take part in the Testbed
- Agree the evaluation design, framework, measurement tools and baseline assessments
- Manage the evaluation process
- Collect the post-intervention data to assess impact
- Analyse impact data and produce a final research report
- Effectively communicate evaluation findings with appropriate audiences
- Evaluate the Testbed programme



Parameters:

- Schools and Colleges must hold an Ofsted 'Good' or 'Outstanding' rating
- Schools and colleges must have already chosen to adopt AT
- The design will not use 'control groups' where Assistive Technologies are actively withheld from SEND pupils

Please note:

1. We are open to receiving proposals that challenge these ideas on evaluation design, provided this is well explained, well evidenced and costed appropriately.
2. DfE will retain all Intellectual Property Rights associated with this work in line with the Open Government Licence.

What We Expect

We anticipate that the successful delivery partner will have:



- Experience of experimental evaluation and robust quasi-experimental design.
- Experience and expertise in conducting robust evaluations within short-time frames.
- Experience of process evaluation and a knowledge of the issues surrounding technology and assistive technology implementation in schools and colleges.
- Experience of high-quality mixed methods work and qualitative research.
- Experience working directly with schools and colleges (including special schools and colleges) to conduct responsive evaluations, sensitive to the requirements of education institutions, practitioners and pupils / students.
- An understanding of the issues surrounding the use of educational and assistive technology in schools and colleges and with pupils and students with SEND.
- Experience working directly with diverse kinds of partners and stakeholders, including in technology, policy or innovation contexts.
- Track record of producing high-quality written outputs for a variety of audiences.
- Track record of effectively communicating complex messages to different audiences.

Contract Award

- We will award a contract to a single supplier for the delivery of the services
- Applicants lacking extensive experience in an area to consider responding as part of a consortium
- Bids from consortia must outline in their bid how the consortium will aid delivery and must supply the relevant agreements between the lead supplier and partnered suppliers
- Only the lead supplier must be registered on the Redimo2 system
- You must have applied for the DPS by 6th February 2020 at the latest



Expected Timelines

Activity	Date
RFQ launched	26 th February 2020
Deadline for response	18 th March 2020, 12:00
Notification of results	9 th April 2020
Contract awarded/signed	Early April 2020
School/College recruitment	April 2020
Testbeds operational	Late April 2020 – June 2021
Evaluation activity, outputs produced and communicated to sector	June 2020 – July 2021

Please note: The timescales are flexible depending on the bidder's proposal

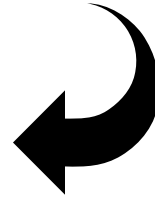
Some of the expected outputs are:

- Impact evidence reports from each AT tested
- Evaluation report of the testbed method (including evaluating success of recruitment of participants, their engagement with the AT companies, the delivery partner and the evaluation process and impact on participants' ongoing AT use)
- Guidance documents for education providers on effective implementation of AT based on the 'Lessons learned' from participating schools and colleges
- Guidance documents for AT industry on how to adapt their products to meet the needs of pupils and teacher based on 'Lessons learned' from participating companies.

Final Points

- DfE will meet with the successful delivery partner on a monthly basis
- Quarterly review meetings to discuss issues and measure progress against agreed KPI's and milestones
- Please consider how to ensure feedback from Testbed schools and colleges are fed back into the DfE
- Funding will be allocated for FY 2020-21 quarterly, in arrears

Except for the final quarterly payment in FY2020/21 which will include funding in advance to meet the potential activity and evaluation run by the delivery partner towards the end of the academic rather than financial year.



Q&A

- We will attempt to answer all the questions
- Will try to answer similar questions with a single response

