Deeper Engagement Activities

The types of activities presented in the following pages involve deeper level of commitment and on behalf of a company or industry organization and require dedicated financial and material support provided by companies to advance STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education and career development. Such activities include for instance a long-term partnership with a school via an 'Adopt A School' program or the development of extended learning courses that can be hosted on company-owned or external platforms.

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Adopt a Class/School Program

As part of this initiative, you can **"adopt" one or more classrooms or even 2-3 neighbouring schools,** providing financial or in-kind support for STEM/digital skills/ICT-related activities. These partnerships aim to spark student interest in STEM, enhance learning experiences, and address the lack of resources in underfunded schools.

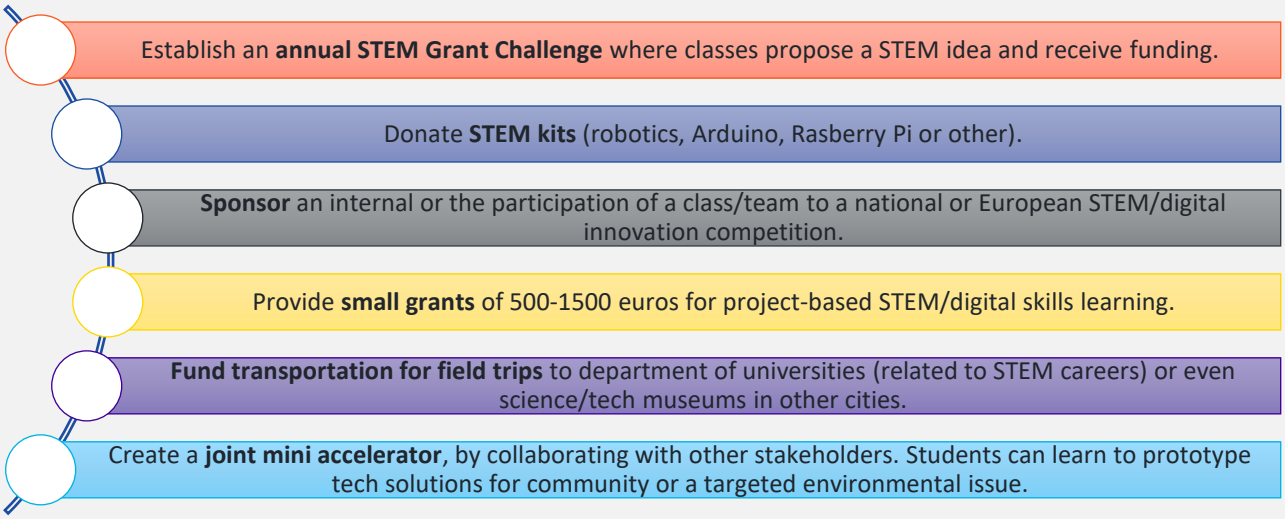
An organization like a tech company may partner with an academic institution and an innovation cluster/lab in order to be easier to access additional tools and network but also to co-design potential curriculum or applied challenge-based projects aligned with market trends. Additionally, students can access startup methodologies and more networking opportunities.

How Can You Identify Schools in Need

To strategically select schools that truly need support, organizations can adopt a multi-channel discovery approach:

- **Partner with local education authorities or ministries:** Contact national or regional education departments (e.g., Ministries of Education, municipal school boards) to request data on underfunded or low-resource schools.
- **Use NGO & public data portals**: EU Open Data Portal and UNESCO Institute for Statistics
- **Leverage CSR/ESG data platforms:** GlobalGiving, or TechSoup Europe list schools and nonprofits looking for tech and financial support. Here you can get inspired or find a potential partner.
- **Engage local community foundations or chambers of commerce:** They often have direct insight into schools' needs at a municipal level and can recommend candidates based on impact potential.
- **Run an open call application:** Publish a call of interest where schools can apply and share their needs — include a needs-assessment form covering: Student demographics, current access to tech resources and priority needs (equipment, training, infrastructure).

Inspiration Corner | Suggested ideas



Checklist

Step 1	❑ **Identify target school/s:** Focus on local or underserved schools. Consider schools who haven't partnered yet.
Step 2	❑ **Set objectives:** Clarify whether your goal is engagement, talent pipeline, or community visibility.
Step 3	❑ **Budget & Resources:** Define early the sponsorship size and human resources available.
Step 4	❑ **Partner with educators:** Co-create and involve – when applicable and relevant, school leadership in pre-planning and let them know every step of the process (timing, resources available, agenda of the activity, outcomes, schools' teachers or company's volunteering employees that could be involved)
Step 5	❑ **Track & measure impact:** Use feedback forms, participation rates, and learning outcomes to share later with the school, include them in your ESG/CSR reports or bring awareness and visibility in your action through media partners.

Bonus Tips

- **Align with your competencies and establish sustainable partnerships:** Leverage your company's technological expertise to provide meaningful contributions. For instance, provide hardware, software, or IT support to schools lacking resources.
- **Curriculum Development**: Collaborate with educators to integrate relevant tech topics into the classroom.

Communication Templates

Check out the General Guidelines & Templates for Communicating Your Activities in Appendix C in Resources & Supporting Assets file as well as an example of an internal brief to senior leadership or/and stakeholders concerning an **"Adopt a Class/Program**.

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Training courses and educational material on company-owned or external platforms

The decision between building a complete company-owned platform with training courses or creating courses for existing platforms, depends on strategic considerations around resource allocation, audience, and long-term educational objectives. For organizations interested to explore this path, it is important to consider their main differences:

Aspect	Apprenticeships	Internships
What it is	**Online educational platforms** are comprehensive digital learning environments that serve as complete ecosystems for education delivery.	**Individual online courses** are standalone learning experiences focused on specific topics or skills.
What does it typically include	These platforms typically include: • Content hosting and delivery infrastructure • User management systems and learner profiles • Course creation and management tools • Assessment and certification capabilities • Analytics and reporting functions • Community and collaboration features • Additional administrative tools for educators	These courses usually: • Cover defined subjects with clear learning objectives • Follow a structured curriculum • Include assessments and activities • May also offer completion certificates • Have a defined start and end point
Pros/Cons	When you are planning to launch such a platform, you may create self-contained educational environments, where you can **control the entire learning experience** from registration to certification. But there are **numerous challenges** that must be taken into consideration. See bonus tips below.	Creating individual STEM-related courses or a series (rather than full platforms), you can develop the educational content but **rely on third-party platforms** like Coursera, edX, or Udemy for hosting, delivery, and user management infrastructure.

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Inspiration Corner | Suggested ideas

STEM Career-Integrated Course	Offer a full elective course (e.g., "Careers in Data & AI") that includes industry-backed content, hands-on challenges, and career awareness modules.

- **How to do it**:
  - Partner with the school board or curriculum coordinator
  - Create project-based units tied to real business scenarios
  - Integrate recorded modules + live mentor Q&A sessions
  - Invite students to tour your offices or host a mini "Tech Career Day"
- **Ideal for**: Companies that want to promote STEM pathways and employer branding.

"Tech for Good" Student Project Lab	A co-curricular or in-school program where students use STEM skills to tackle real-world issues (e.g., climate, accessibility, inclusion), guided by company mentors.

- **How to do it**:
  - Provide a training course at the start (coding, data analysis, IoT, etc.)
  - Break students into teams to work on tech-for-good projects
  - Offer mentor check-ins, pitch training, and a final showcase
  - Reward winners with a tech equipment/software or internships
- **Ideal for**: Mid- to large-sized companies wanting innovation + impact.

Plug-and-Play Coding Curriculum with Certification	Provide a ready-to-implement, bite-sized curriculum (e.g., "Intro to Python") that teachers can deliver, with students earning a company-branded certificate upon completion.

- **How to do it:**
  - Build or customize a course from platforms like Microsoft Learn.
  - Provide branded slide decks, code labs, and assessments.
  - Automate the process regarding the certificate, via a simple online form
- **Ideal for:** Organizations that want scalability with minimal involvement.

Checklist

Step 1

- ❑ **Set objectives:** Clarify your goal, resources and target audience before deciding the type.

Step 2

- ❑ **Adapt Open Educational Resources:** You don't have to start from scratch. Customize freely available curricula (e.g., MIT OpenCourseWare, Code) into localized or simplified versions for a specific age group of youth.

Step 3

- ❑ **Consider co-creating with Educators:** Partner with a school and local teachers to co-develop classroom-ready materials that align with national education standards, and the needs of students/school.
- ❑ **Develop Modular Online Learning Units:** Use tools like Google Classroom or Moodle to build on-demand, self-paced coding or tech fundamentals courses.
- ❑ **Gamify Learning Content:** Integrate interactive platforms like Kahoot, or Twine to create engaging learning paths (e.g., coding challenges, puzzles).

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Step 4

- ❑ **Track & measure impact:** Use feedback forms, participation rates, and learning outcomes to share later with the school, include them in your ESG/CSR reports or bring awareness and visibility in your action through media partners.

Bonus Tips

- **Consider these challenges** when you are about to create an owned educational platform or individual courses in existing platforms:
  - **Infrastructure Development:** Building and maintaining secure, scalable servers, databases, and content delivery networks requires significant technical resources.
  - **Learning Management System (LMS) Architecture:** Creating a system to handle user registration, course enrolment, progress tracking, and certification requires specialized expertise.
  - **Interactive Tool Integration:** Developing tools for coding environments, virtual labs, simulations, and interactive assessments has complex technical challenges compared to using pre-built functionality on established platforms.
  - **Cross-Platform Compatibility:** Ensuring seamless functionality across different devices, browsers, and operating systems requires extensive testing and optimization.
  - **User Acquisition:** Attracting learners to a new platform requires substantial marketing investment compared to leveraging the existing user base of popular platforms.
  - **Content Maintenance:** Keeping educational content relevant requires dedicated resources and systematic updating processes.
  - **Community Building:** Fostering an engaged learning community with discussion forums, peer support, and collaborative activities requires community management strategies that established platforms have already developed.
  - **Regulatory Compliance:** Educational standards, accessibility requirements, and data privacy regulations has legal challenges when operating a platform, versus contributing content to a compliant one.
  - **Leverage Internal Experts:** You could create an internal team with engineers, designers, and employees from product/sales department to co-develop tutorials, modules, or mini-courses aligned with real-world tech applications and offer them in your own platform or in an online educational platform, e.g. Coursera.

- **Partner up with crucial stakeholders** that can offer support – indicative examples:
  - Reach out to your EU Code Week National/Regional Hub (see Appendix B in Resources & Supporting Assets file) and share your main purpose and needs. Check out also the official EU Code Week partners.
  - Engage **Local & National STEM Education NGOs**: Co-develop initiatives or fund course delivery (e.g., Code Club, Girls Who Code).
  - Join an **EU Education & Innovation Networks** like Digital Skills & Jobs Platform, EIT Digital, or Erasmus+ that offer different kind of partnership opportunities.
  - Co-create a course or an entire program with **local Universities or even EdTech Startups**, via joint pilots.
  - Partner with a **municipality** to get access to students through official education programs or funding schemes.

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Case Studies

Company/Program	Description
Cisco Networking Academy	A comprehensive platform with courses in networking, AI, digital literacy, sustainability, professional skills, cybersecurity, programming, IoT and more. Their content is designed for high school students through college-level learners with age-appropriate materials. They have trained more than **24 million students in 191 countries.**
IBM SkillsBuild	They have committed to provide to **30 million people** with new skills by 2030. They offer free online courses in AI, cybersecurity, IT project management, data science, web development, and cloud computing, design thinking and more, with specific tracks for **students 13+ and young adults** pursuing careers in tech.
Microsoft Learn	Microsoft provides free, interactive learning paths with the opportunity to gain a Microsoft **certification**. They offer training on various technologies including coding, cloud computing, data science and much more. They also provide often virtual training days, for any skill level. Their student-focused content includes beginner-friendly materials.
Accenture Skills to Succeed Academy	This is an interactive online learning platform developed by **Accenture** to help individuals build the skills and confidence needed to choose the right career, find a job, and succeed in the workplace. This comprehensive program targets young people (15–24), jobseekers, and those looking to reskill—especially from underserved communities. It is active in over **30 countries, with over 1 million learners** reached globally. It offers bite-sized, gamified learning modules using realistic role-plays and interactive videos across topics like CV writing, interview prep, and workplace success. It is developed in partnership with NGOs, schools, and public employment services to maximize social impact.
Huawei Europe & other partners European Leadership Academy	This is a programme funded by **Huawei Europe** as part of 'Seeds for the Future', a global talent development and education initiative. The European Leadership Academy is a collaboration between the **European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), ImagiLabs, Women Political Leaders (WPL), LifeTerra, Mobile World Capital Barcelona.** The Academy works to close the gender gap and support women in leading the digital age via its two dedicated programmes: ● Schools for Female Leadership in the Digital Age ● Women's Academy for Rural Innovation

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