



Fostering Talent for Innovation: An Education and Innovation Practice Community (EIPC)

Project Information

Project aim

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Commission (EC) have joined efforts to develop an **Education and Innovation Practice Community (EIPC)**.

EIPC will bring together peers from policy and practice from across OECD member countries and EU member states to build a strong platform to advance understanding of **competencies that trigger and shape innovation in our economies and societies** and the mechanisms through which higher education institutions (HEIs) can contribute to developing these competencies.

In three strands of work, the project will explore the role of HEIs in helping individuals to acquire **innovation competencies** in secondary education, mainstream higher education and in advance upskilling and reskilling for adults. Project activities combine **research and analysis, international peer-learning and work with individual countries**.

EIPC covers three areas of innovation from an economic and societal perspective, which are emphasised in the New European Innovation Agenda, specifically under the “Fostering, attracting and retaining talents” flagship:

- (1) **Digital transition.** Increasing automation, use of artificial intelligence and the deployment of smart machines calls for advanced knowledge and skills, while fundamentally altering the nature of many established professions. These changes have significant implications for the competencies individuals require and that education and training should seek to develop.
- (2) **Green transition.** Decoupling economic development from resource use by creating a zero-carbon, zero-waste economy will require a change in mindsets among the population at large, as well development of specific knowledge and technical skills.
- (3) **Deep-tech innovation.** Crossing disciplinary boundaries deep-tech brings together insights from the natural sciences and digital technologies to provide new solutions to global challenges. Among the key skills needed are the ability to manage projects with long time horizons and high risk.

Thematic strands: Schools, higher education, upskilling and reskilling in higher education

The project has **three thematic strands**, each with a specific focus on how to develop innovation competencies through education and training.

Strand 1 examines how higher education supports development of innovation competencies at foundational level in school education, focusing on secondary education; **Strand 2** will review how advanced levels of innovation competencies can be developed in mainstream higher education, for example through curricula updating; and **Strand 3** will focus on upskilling and reskilling in higher education developing innovation competencies at a professional level.

Work on each strand includes an analytical report reviewing international evidence, an online international knowledge exchange event bringing together practitioners and policymakers, a national advisory workshop with a peer-learning anchor country, and a final innovation bulletin.

To address the question of **what innovation competencies are**, an **analytical paper** will present a working definition of innovation competencies, including knowledge, skills, values and attitudes relevant to the three areas of innovation covered in EIPC.

Work on Strand 1 started in October 2022; work on Strands 2 and 3 will start in Q2-3 2023.

Strand 1: The role of higher education in supporting development of innovation competencies at foundational level in school education (started in October 2022)

Strand One will look into how higher education can support school leadership and teachers in the development of innovation competencies through **key mechanisms**, including curricula development and implementation, educational resources (e.g. digital platforms), initial teacher training, and professional development for teachers and school leaders.

Work involves close collaboration with various projects in the OECD Secretariat working on school reform.

Options for participation

Participation in EIPC activities is open to all OECD members and accession countries, EU member states and accession states.

Participation options are:

- Commenting on a working draft of the conceptual paper on innovation competencies
- Commenting on working drafts of analytical reports
- Providing information on practices and policies of how higher education supports the development of innovation competencies in secondary schools, mainstream higher education and upskilling and reskilling in higher education
- Participation in the online international knowledge exchange events
- Hosting a national advisory workshop as a peer-learning anchor country/jurisdiction
- Participating as a peer country/jurisdiction in a national advisory workshop

Activities of EIPC in 2022/23 are part of a pilot phase to build the analytical foundation for future country-specific work related to the themes in the three strands.

Contacts:

For questions about the project and to express interest in participation, please contact:

Andrea-Rosalinde.HOFER@oecd.org (EIPC Project Manager)

François.Staring@oecd.org (EIPC Project Coordinator)

Loredana.Lombardi@ec.europa.eu (Policy Officer)