

# Finnish Edutech Sector



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, interest towards Finnish education has increased significantly. Education experts from various countries are visiting Finland and are keen to find out the secret behind the Finnish education sector. At the same time, education export is a growing business. This report will focus on edutech services offered by Finnish companies in the following fields:

- Educational technologies
- E-learning materials
- E-learning environments and platforms

Finnish companies are offering the above-mentioned services for all educational levels from early childhood education and care to vocational training and professional development. Through the report, we will give illustrative examples of companies' offerings, what kind of clients and partners they are searching for, and their existing partnership arrangements. In the appendix, a list of Finnish companies is provided based on their offerings to various school-levels. However, based on our discussions with the companies, they emphasized that often their offerings are suitable for various school levels.

Innovative educational technologies are responding to the global needs of new methods of teaching and studying. According to several studies (e.g UNESCO, 2017<sup>1</sup>) it is no longer possible to lean on conventional education alone. Teachers must utilize smart education technology to manage education with a growing number of children in classes. Edutech solutions can be understood as leapfrogging technologies. Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland recommends that Finland would take a stronger role in solving the learning crisis in developing countries, hence suggesting that Finnish development cooperation should be more closely integrated with other Finnish educational exporters (Reinikka et al., 2018<sup>2</sup>).

This report is structured as follows: firstly, we offer an overview of the Finnish education system; secondly we discuss on the Finnish edutech companies and what kind of customers and partners they are searching for and how they are pricing their offerings; thirdly, we present what kind of instruments there are to accelerate co-operation between Finnish companies and actors in developing countries; finally, we give possible options for future scenarios. In addition, in the appendixes, we have first listed Finnish edutech companies and then listed some useful websites.

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<sup>1</sup> Latchem, C. (eds). 2017. *Using ICTs and blended learning in transforming TVET*. UNESCO and Common Wealth of Learning report. Available: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002474/247495e.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Reinikka, R.; Niemi H. & Tulivuori, J. 2018. *Stepping Up Finland's Global Role in Education*. Niras Finland.

## 2. FINLAND HAS ONE OF THE BEST EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE WORLD

Finland today has one of the most respected and potentially powerful national education “brands” in the world. In its 2016-2017 Global Competitiveness Report, The World Economic Forum ranked Finland’s primary school system as #1 in the world out of 138 nations, and its higher education system as #1 in Europe. Currently, Finland is becoming one of the leaders in education export. Finnish education system is highly valued worldwide and there is demand for Finland’s education expertise. According to some previous studies, Finnish education sector has some unique elements globally. Sahlberg<sup>3</sup> (2014) emphasize four reasons. First, participation and completion rates are extreme high: in Finland, over 99 per cent of children complete compulsory nine-year basic school; close to 90 per cent earn some kind secondary education diploma; half of young Finns have at least Master’s level university degree and most adults complete some form of lifelong learning activities. Secondly, Finnish education system serves everyone equally regardless learners’ background and differences between schools are the smallest among all developed countries. Thirdly, Finnish children are showing excellent learning results. This is proved in international student assessment studies, such as the OECD’s PISA, in which Finland has been ranked among the top learning nations in the world for several years. Fourthly, Finnish education system is economically efficient (Sahlberg, 2014).

### 2.1 The Finnish education system

In this chapter we are briefly presenting the Finnish education system. Every child permanently residing in Finland must attend compulsory education. Compulsory education usually begins in the year during which a child turns seven and ends when the basic education has been completed or when ten years have lapsed since the beginning of the compulsory education. Schools have mixed-gender teaching groups, and all pupils get a school meal for free every day. Basically the Finnish education system consists of:

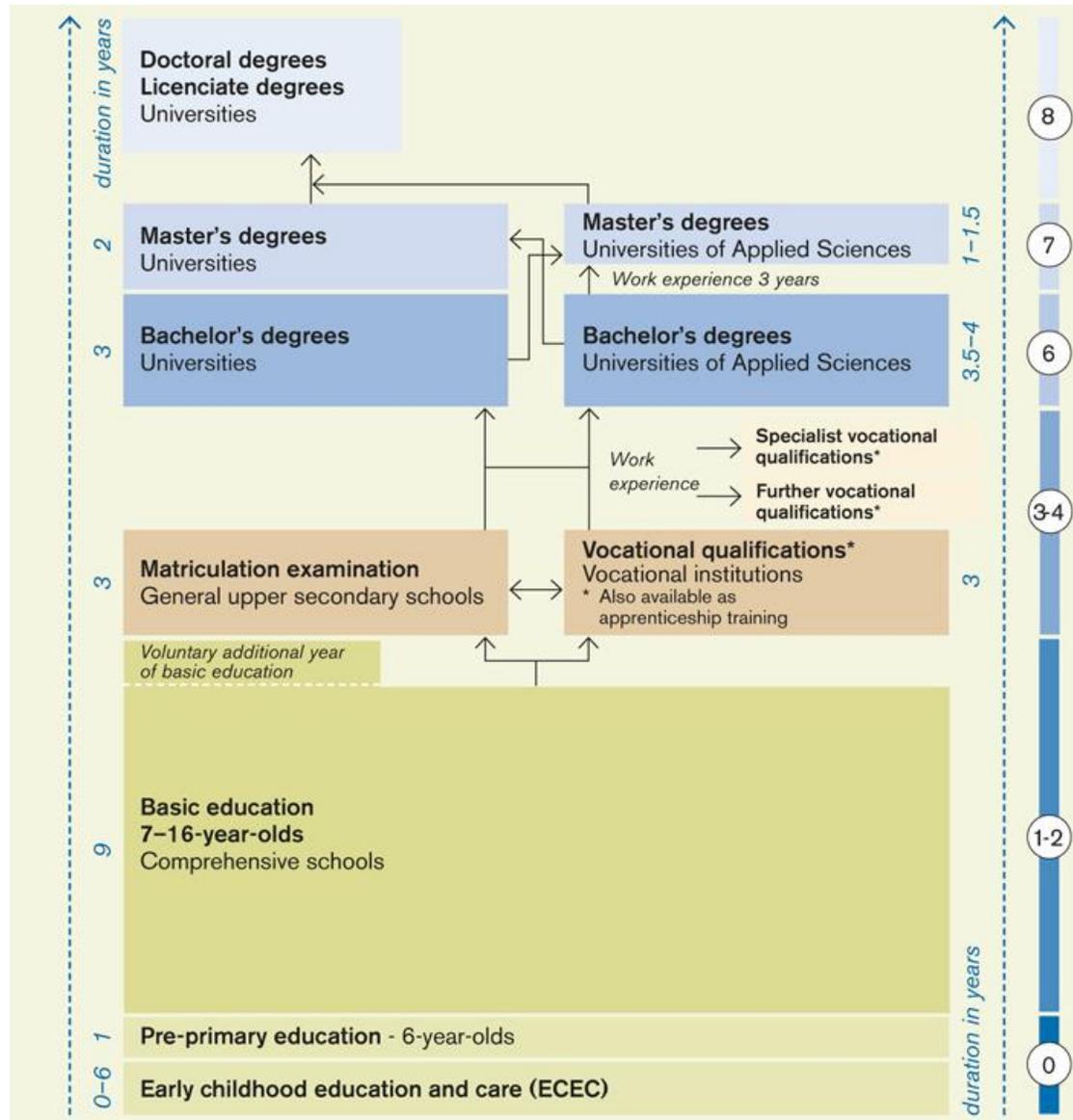
- early childhood education and care: provided for every child before the compulsory education begins
- a pre-school year for 6-year-olds: provided for children before the compulsory education
- 9 years of compulsory comprehensive school (ages 7–16)
- upper secondary education education: either general upper secondary education or vocational education and training
- higher education consisting of two complementary sectors: universities and universities of applied sciences
- lifelong adult education

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<sup>3</sup> Sahlberg, P. 2014. *Finnish Lessons 2.0. What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?* Teachers College Press.

Figure below presents the overall structure of the education system in Finland.

**Figure 1.** The Finnish education system (*source studyinfo.fi*)



## 2.2 Recent developments of the education sector

Finnish education system is regularly updated in order to keep up with expectations to encourage people to learn continuously. Finnish Government has supported the modernisation of basic education to meet the current and upcoming challenges. The national curriculum for basic education emphasising digital skills was introduced in August 2016. Hence, Finnish schools are

increasingly utilizing more digital tools in education partly because they allow to focus on the individual learner. Former, “one-size-fits-all” learning solutions that have been built for education institutions, are no longer reality. Hence, currently there is a strong interest in integrating technology in innovative ways that enable crossing boundaries in formal and informal learning settings (Niemi et al., 2014<sup>4</sup>). The outcomes are various, for instance introducing digital storytelling and games, at schools, student-driven knowledge creation, improving digital media competences. It has been noticed that digital tools can make learning more fun, perhaps better motivate some students. In addition, for teachers – as well as for parents – it is easier to follow individual child’s learning process, hence again allowing to provide more specific support to the individual learners (Niemi et al., 2014).

## 2.3 Strengths of the Finnish edutech sector

Education and teaching constantly demand new practices and information. The strengths of the so-called “Finnish solution” has been large multidisciplinary research and development networks in which researchers, practitioners and private and public sector actors work together (Niemi et al., 2014). Therefore, this chapter will discuss why so many high-quality e-learning solutions have been created in Finland and what make them so unique. We can identify the following reasons:

- Teachers as innovators and developers
- Private actors’ co-operation with universities and utilizing recent scientific knowledge
- World-known gaming industry
- Long history in the ICT and mobile industry

In end of this chapter, we are also highlighting the specific “gender aspect” which can be seen also as a unique feature of Finnish society in a broader level.

### 2.3.1 Teachers as innovators and developers

Finnish schooling system has been praised as it gives a lot of autonomy and flexibility for teachers. They can quite independently decide how they are teaching specific issues under the National curriculum. This autonomy has encouraged teachers to develop their own teaching materials and tools. In Finland, all teachers have a higher university degree, hence they have deep academic knowledge on the issues they are teaching. Interestingly, we can see that behind several edutech companies there are teachers who have created the solutions. They might have a long working experience in teaching and have constantly improved their own teaching methods and are willing to share their knowledge and best-practices.

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<sup>4</sup> Niemi, H.; Multisilta, J.; Lipponen, L. & Vivitsou, M. (eds.) *Finnish innovations and technologies in schools. A guide towards new ecosystems of learning*. Sense Publishers.

Below we are presenting few examples of services, which are developed by Finnish teachers.



Paths to Math is an innovative, challenging and student-centered method to teach and learn mathematics for lower-secondary and middle school students. The founder of Paths to Math, Maarit Rossi, worked for decades as a teacher of mathematics. She was among the top 10 finalists of the Global Teacher Prize 2016. She created the Math Learning Environment because she was worried about students' decreasing interest in mathematics. She wanted to implement modern pedagogies, such as learning by doing and learning by thinking, learning to solve problems and learning to apply theories to real-life problems.

More information: <http://pathstomath.com/>



*SkillzzUp is a software, which allows to assess and follow individual skill development in real time at any educational level.* It provides constant information about the student's learning progress for the teachers, the student him/herself and parents. The founder and CEO of SkillzzUp, Kimmo Kumpulainen, worked as a teacher for more than 13 years. While working, he noticed that many young students and pupils are unmotivated by the traditional theoretical lessons, exercises and exams provided by teachers today. Kimmo wanted to teach his students in a more personalized way and pace. As he couldn't find any existing tools or solutions on the edutech market to solve this common problem, he decided to create one of his own.

More information: <http://skillzzup.com/>



*Seppo is an innovative tool for creating educational games.* It can be used on all educational levels from pre-school to university. It was developed by a history teacher, Riku Alkio, for 20 years. Alkio wanted to take learning from inside the classroom to the outside world, such as to city centers and parks during field trips. The basic idea is that teachers create game tasks, which students then solve in teams by using mobile devices. The map of the selected area works as a

game board. During the game teacher monitors the game, assesses the answers submitted by the teams and gives feedback.

More information: <http://seppo.io/en/>



*Kindiedays is an application in which educators and families collaborate in real-time on all the matters related to the education and wellbeing of the child in the childcare center. The application was designed by a kindergarten teacher who was thinking could it be possible to communicate with parents during the day and let the parents know that their children are safe and sound. Parents are also hoping to know more about how their kids are spending their time in the kindergarten. This application provides a tool to capture the children's activities and learning with pictures, videos and notes.*

More information: <https://kindiedays.com/>

### 3.2.2 Co-operation with universities and utilizing recent scientific knowledge

It is a long tradition in Finland that universities and private sector actors have close co-operation. The most common form of co-operation is joint research and development projects. This kind of co-operation is also common within the edutech sector. Collaboration offers companies access to resources, might enable to create new networks and build partnerships and cost-efficiently test and collect feedback of their products from various markets. Afterwards, the actual market entry can occur faster as companies have been able to localize their products to fit the local markets.

In the following, we are offering an example on how Finnish edutech companies co-operated with Finnish and Brazilian universities to gain knowledge how they can localize their products to better meet the needs in the Brazilian markets.

### SCALA – Scalable mobile services for global markets

Finnish edutech companies Vioppe, Finpeda and Promentor participated in a project in which their products were piloted in educational institutions in Brazil. The objective of the project was to analyse what are the criteria for localizing mobile learning (hereafter m-learning) solutions within global education under different circumstances and in different cultures. With the help of Finnish and Brazilian universities and students, m-learning application of the companies' solutions were developed and piloted among Brazilian students. As an outcome, these companies received not only valuable feedback on how they can develop their offerings but also gained important networks and made their steps to gain visibility in the Brazilian market.

The project was implemented by Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences (coordinator) and Lappeenranta University of Technology, LUT Lahti. It was funded by the "Business with Impact" (BEAM) program of Business Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

You can read more: <http://www.e-julkaisu.fi/haaga-helia/mobile-learning-and-frugal-innovation/mobile.html#pid=6>

Besides joint research and development companies, several Finnish edutech companies are utilizing scientific information in their products and services.

### CLANED™

*Claned is a collaborative online learning platform that supports an individual to learn better real-time.* Claned personalises learning to each individual improving their study motivation and learning results. This is possible by combining artificial intelligence, machine learning and Finnish pedagogy revealing what factors impact individual learning. In Claned, students can build their own individualised learning paths, track their progress, collaborate with peers, act and adjust learning habits.

More information: <https://claned.com/>

There are also some services that have originally been developed at universities and are based on scientific research. Nevertheless, when reaching the commercialization stage and aiming to scale up the solutions, it is usually necessary to set up an enterprise. Below is an example of GraphoGame, which has been developed after a long and deep scientific research.



*A mobile game, which aims to teach the very basic language skills that are crucial for learning to read.* GraphoGame is an early literacy game designed in co-operation with academics from universities around the world, leading university being the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, and professor Heikki Lyytinen. The game is based on the scientific follow-up study of Finnish children, which began already in the early 1990s. The game is widely used in kindergartens in Finland. Different language versions have been developed and tested during the years. Currently, the GraphoGame is being commercialized as the University of Jyväskylä and Niilo Mäki institute made a deal with Learning Intelligence Group Ltd to launch a new enterprise around the solution.

More information: <https://graphogame.com/>

### 2.3.3 Long-history in the ICT and mobile industry

Finland is one of world's leading countries in information and communications technology. An important characteristic in the Finnish telecommunications market has always been the tendency of early adoption of new technology – both in the provider and customer sector. Hence, Finland has also been called world's telecommunications test laboratory and the worldwide success of Nokia is good example of that. After the golden days of Nokia, a new story of Finnish ICT started.

During the last years, there has been a significant growth in the amount of new ICT and mobile industry companies. Hundreds of new technology startup have created a vibrant startup scene. For instance, the edutech sector is one proof of that and the number of companies in this field is growing constantly. According to some estimations there are more than 80 edutech companies in Finland and more are popping up every year. The development has been backed up by the commitment of public and private sectors to research and development. This kind of cross-border partnership means that different actors can build meaning products together. In addition, one of the drivers has been the government's willingness to develop the education system on the digital front. Some of the main Finnish cities are also taking their own initiatives by implementing new digitalization programmes. In addition, individual schools are not hesitating to test new edutech offerings in their daily-teaching.

On the next page there is an example from the city of Jyväskylä where schools are testing artificial intelligence (AI) in their teaching.



Almer's Yiptree learning analytics, "the virtual tutor" guides the students considering their individual needs. Regardless the time or place students always get support for their learning. For teachers and parents, the platforms offer automatic evaluation, daily and monthly reports of learning challenges, and real-time monitoring of child development and concentration in the digital environment. The city of Jyväskylä decided to test what kind of results artificial intelligence can bring to students learning and would it be an efficient tool to offer each student more personalized learning materials and home-works.

More information: <https://www.almerin.com/>

#### 2.3.4 World-known gaming industry

Finland is also known for its game industry and home to world leading mobile gaming companies, such as Supercell (Clash of Clans), Rovio (Angry Birds) and Fingersoft. In terms of sales, Finland is among the three largest game developer countries in Europe. Having high-skilled programmers available has also influenced that there are several pedagogical games available. Thus, it is no surprise that several Finnish edutech companies are innovatively combining games and pedagogy.

In the following, we are presenting few examples of learning games, which are besides Finland widely used abroad.



10Monkeys' Math World is a fun online math site, which offers high quality and fun maths learning games especially for primary school pupils and early learners. The game effects are essential part of application: when kids solve the math problems, the game gives them rewards. These rewards help to motivate kids to do more and work harder. It tracks kids' progress and gives parents a report to see where they need extra practice.

More information: <https://www.10monkeys.com/us/>



Lightbot is a puzzle game based on coding which secretly teaches the user programming logic while playing. It is suitable to different ages group.

More information: <http://lightbot.com/>

If you are interested to learn more about gaming, have a look at the Serious Gaming Cluster Finland ([www.seriousgamingcluster.fi/welcome/#cluster](http://www.seriousgamingcluster.fi/welcome/#cluster)). It is a network of Finnish serious game companies developing products with a primary purpose other than pure entertainment. It has five sub-clusters: Learning, Wellbeing, Environment, Gamification and Simulation.

### 2.3.5 Acknowledging gender aspect

Finland has always been one of the world's leading countries in fostering gender equality. Finland was the first country in the world to extend the right to vote and stand for elections to all women and men in 1906. Finland is also known as a country where women usually work full-time and enjoy equal access to education and healthcare. Finland has been propelling a worldwide commitment to gender equality, which also reflects to different parts of the society. If we think Finnish development aid, gender equality is a long-standing priority for Finnish development policy. Education, starting from early childhood education plays crucial roles in the promotion of gender equality and gender awareness. High-quality, affordable early childhood education and care, for example, enable mothers of small children to work. There are gender differences in learning outcomes, and on average Finnish girls do better than boys at comprehensive school<sup>5</sup>. After comprehensive school the majority of girls choose general upper secondary school, while a small majority of boys choose vocational education and training. There are slightly more women than men in higher education. On average, women have a higher level of education than men.

Relating to improving ladies' programming skills, please familiarize yourself with the global movement "Rail Girls" which was cofounded by a Finnish lady, Linda Liukas.

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Gender equality in Finnish education. Available: [https://stm.fi/documents/1271139/5825735/STM\\_kasvatusjakoulutus\\_UK\\_verkko.pdf/ebe86072-6314-4dea-be5a-6feeb8088303/STM\\_kasvatusjakoulutus\\_UK\\_verkko.pdf.pdf](https://stm.fi/documents/1271139/5825735/STM_kasvatusjakoulutus_UK_verkko.pdf/ebe86072-6314-4dea-be5a-6feeb8088303/STM_kasvatusjakoulutus_UK_verkko.pdf.pdf)



Rails Girls aims to give tools and a community for women to understand technology and to build their ideas. They are doing this by providing a great experience on building things and by making technology more approachable. Rails Girls was born in Finland in 2010 but rapidly expanded and now has local chapters all around the world. Local chapters are hosting coding workshops for women. These workshops are free-of-charge, participants don't need any previous knowledge about programming and there are no age-limitations.

More information: <http://railsgirls.com/> and <http://lindaliukas.com/>

### 3. FINNISH EDUTECH COMPANIES INTEREST IN EMERGING MARKETS

Finland is a small country with only around 5 million inhabitants. For growth-companies this means that they need to internationalize fast and search for possible other markets. Therefore, majority of Finnish edutech companies are highly interested in opportunities in different emerging markets and many of them already have found customers in the far-off markets. While they derive from the Finnish experience in the education system, their solutions are suitable in globally as well. Most of the companies listed in the appendix, are offering their solutions at least in English, some even in other languages as well.

#### 3.1 Potential clients

Potential clients of Finnish edutech enterprises can include various segments, such as schools (e.g. schools are buying services for their classes), private students, partner associations, big publishers and software providers in educational sector. Here we are giving a brief outlook on what kind of clients or partners Finnish edutech companies are looking for, what are the common pricing methods etc.

##### 3.1.1 School classes

Several edutech companies are selling their products and services directly to schools. In the appendix we are presenting a list of Finnish companies and their preferred client segments, although often the programmes might be suitable for students in different school levels. Usually these services are sold in a way that a class purchases a license for each student. This allows that the teacher can monitor the progress of each student independently but also the students themselves have easy access to the platform. In case you are interested to learn more about these services, you can contact the companies directly. Please notice also that several companies are offering free trials for testing.

For instance, previously mentioned 10Monkeys can be bought for the whole class. The price depends how many pupils there are in the class. The purchase allows for the teacher and his/her students unlimited access to 10Monkeys Math World for 12 months. Home's access is also included.

##### 3.1.2 Private school owners

The reputation of Finnish school systems has gained attention worldwide. According to the Finnish government, they are receiving an increasing number of inquiries asking "How can we set up a school that is based on Finnish pedagogy". To fulfil this need, there are few Finnish

companies which “export” Finnish knowledge and even offer setting up “Finnish schools”. In the following, we are offering few examples of these.



### **Polar Partners**

Polar Partners operates with various Finnish actors to deliver and design World’s best K-12 School. It is particularly targeting private school owners in emerging markets, who want to create a new school brand based on Finnish education.

More information: <http://polarpartners.fi/>



Oksidia is offering cloud-based school management systems for schools which not only make the schools more transparent but also diminish the amount of paper. Currently the company has a pilot in Vietnam and it is searching for new schools interested in purchasing the services as it is available in Vietnamese.

More information: <https://oksidia.fi/>

### **3.1.3 Individual teachers**

Preparing materials for classes can be very time-consuming work. Sometimes teachers even might be out of ideas or just want to try something different. For these purpose, online platforms are a good way to share materials and find new content. There are few companies, which are operating in this field. On the next page, we are presenting LessonApps, which was purposely created to help the work of teachers in developing countries.



LessonApp is based on modern, research-based pedagogy. LessonApp follows the very same principles how teachers in Finland are taught during the teacher training and what they apply every day in their classrooms. Teachers have told that LessonApp would help their work by providing them with new ideas and inspiration, as well as saving valuable time.

More information: <https://lessonapp.fi/>

### 3.1.4 Vocational training institutions

One reason for high youth unemployment across the world – and particularly in developing countries – is a growing mismatch between the supply and demand for skills. In most African countries there is an oversupply of social science and business graduates but an undersupply of engineers, scientists and technicians. Adopting digital solutions could be one way of making education available for broader number of youth. Some Finnish companies have targeted to this and come up with innovative solutions how even vocational training can be offered in digital platforms. Have a look at an example below.



Skhole makes high-quality healthcare education accessible and affordable with their e-learning digital platform. For vocational learning institutions it offers, for instance EaaS (Education-as-a-Service) –based model which provides learning environment, tools and services for content curation and ready content. Skhole environment provides capabilities for video, audio and textbook based learning methods, and can be accessed through any device whether it is computer, tablet or a mobile phone. Skhole provides also extensive user-specific learning path development, supported by monitoring and analytics to follow the progress on the individual path. The company’s mission is to democratize access to healthcare education. Skhole operates for instance in South-Africa where it has partnered with Change Dimensions. Besides vocational training institution, these digital health services can be used by health care providers, NGOs or by individual nursing students.

More information: <https://www.skhole.fi/best-healthcare-education-in-the-world.html>



Prodiags is offering online courses on automotive technology. Individual students can conduct self-study courses and use interactive self-assessments. For organizational teaching and training, it has developed specific course modules.

More information: <https://prodiags.com>

### 3.1.5 Teacher training

Trained teachers are critical factors if wanting to utilize technology and support applying digital learning tools. Teachers should understand that technology is not replacing them, but rather it is an enabler that will enhance their work. A huge challenge is to develop and implement training and professional development for teachers so they may embrace teaching with technology and understand the benefits of teaching with technology as a way to advance the academic outcomes of students. Finland has long tradition of teacher training and it has perhaps been the most common form of Finland's education export. Finnish excellence in teacher training has been sold already to countries such as Saudi Arabia, Colombia, Indonesia, Namibia, Pakistan and South Africa. Besides public education institutions, companies are also offering teacher training services, and of course, presenting digital tools is part of the training. Have a look at few examples on the next page.

#### **Seppo partners with Ayrton Senna Institute in Brazil**

Finland established a partnership with Ayrton Senna Institute. The purpose is to offer to the institute innovative practices in education, especially related to the training of educators. As part of the partnership, the Institute also signed a partnership agreement with Seppo, which will now be able to spread its educational solution, gamification platform, throughout the regions of Brazil.

More information: <http://seppo.io/en/>



#### **KOULU Group teaching teachers in – entering to Pakistan**

KOULU group is delivering world-class training and development services to private K-12 Schools and kindergartens. Part of this, they are educating teachers. The company has been

offering teacher training in Pakistan since 2017. One part of the training modules focuses on how to integrate digital solutions and services into teaching and how to assess existing services from a pedagogical perspective. This includes studying the design and pedagogy of E-Learning, and enabling teachers to design and implement their own E-Learning activities.

More information: [koulugroup.com /](http://koulugroup.com/)

### 3.1.6 Companies and executive education

Education is a constant activity within companies as well. Employees need to be trained. Similarly, as in schools, digital tools are cost-efficient way to deliver learning materials. In addition, updating material is very easy. In the appendix we are proving a full list of companies which are focused on digital online platform. Below we are giving two examples of companies that are particularly targeting the corporate sector.



MPS Prewise offers comprehensive digital solutions for the development and maintenance of know-how and integrate them as a natural part of other systems. In addition to technology and tools, it includes content production, so they deliver tailor-made e-learning to their customers from beginning to end quickly.

More information: <https://www.mps.fi/en/elearning.html>



Mediamaisteri is offering a full service for digital learning, such as content production for online courses, digital learning environments and software for organizations to manage their courses, skills and competences.

More information: <https://www.mediamaisteri.com/en/>

### 3.1.7 Clubs and associations

EduTech solutions are not only targeted for tight pedagogical purposes. Even in sports, digital tools are useful ways to evaluate progress.



Qridi is a formative evaluation and learning analytics software. Besides its programme targeted for schools, it has developed a Qridi Sports for athletics which can be used by seven-year-old juniors as well as professional athletes engaged in individual or team sports. Qridi is suitable for many types of sports. For example, it is already used in ice-hockey, football, tennis, golf, swimming, gymnastics and floorball, and also by referees. Qridi has been developed together with several Finnish education professionals and experts based on the current views about learning. Coaches manage their athletes through special interfaces. Qridi is a comprehensive digital tool for formative evaluation. Potential clients for Qridi are sport clubs, companies, private school associations.

More information: <https://qridi.fi/>

### 3.1.8 Individual consumers

So far, we have presented mainly cases, which can be bought by schools, companies or other type of organizations. Nevertheless, there are plenty of products, which individual consumers can also buy. Usually parents are highly interested in how their children are performing in their studies. Due to digital solution, it is easy to follow-up the progress. For instance, SchoolOS is an interactive user interface for the parents. Have a look at below.



Schools OS brings all school information to parents' smartphones, tablets, or PCs. Parents get one-click access to homework assignments, time-table, teachers' notes, rankings, referral system and recommendations.

More information: <https://schoolos.eu/>



Minifiddlers provides violin pedagogues a unique possibility to study the Colourstrings Method. The Colourstrings Method gives a solid base for the basic technique, which will guarantee fast improvement and quality playing in the future. With Minifiddlers video lessons also the parents of little violinists can support the child's learning at home – or purchase video lessons for themselves as the service is suitable both for kids and adults. Hence, videos are available for everyone, anytime and anywhere. Currently the company operates in more than twenty countries.

More information: <http://videos.minifiddlers.org/>

### 3.2 Examples of existing co-operation models

There is a range of alternatives of how to partner with Finnish edutech companies. Most common is that Finnish companies are interested entering the market and finding payable clients. As mentioned in the last section, most of the companies are selling the services directly to schools. Based on our survey and interviews, several companies mentioned that they are interested in finding local sales agents to boost the marketing and selling effort. In the following we are presenting other possibilities on how to partner and collaborate.

#### 3.2.1 Study visits to and from Finland

Hundreds of delegations of policymakers and education specialists visit Finland every year to learn from its experience first-hand. Many countries are keen to find out what Finland has done to achieve good-quality learning for all. Several companies are currently offering conceptualized tours for foreign visitors. Participating in these kind of visits is a good start to build partnership between different actors. In the following, we give an example of this kind of study tour visitin Finland. Please note also, in case you are interested, you can also ask for an offer for a visit to your own country.



Learning Scoop provides an inclusive Study Tour where participants have the opportunity to become familiar with the Finnish education system and the factors influencing its success. The company also provides a themed Study Tour focusing educational technology to give the overview on how information and communication technology is implemented in basic education and what kind of EdTech pedagogical approach we have in Finland. Participants have the opportunity to become familiar with the Finnish education system and the factors influencing its success. The program includes several visits to EdTech oriented Finnish institutions from kindergarten to upper secondary school, field trips to IT companies, so participants get to know platforms, digital tools and applications that are in use in every day school life and are the newest of new on the field.

More information: [learningscoop.fi/](http://learningscoop.fi/)

In addition, we would like to remind that our Ministry of Foreign Affairs regularly arrange official trade mission trips to different countries. These trips are joint by company delegations. Recently, particularly education has been one of the major emphasis in these trips. So please stay tuned and follow different social media channels of Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland to keep on track when and where these are trips are taking place.

### 3.2.2 Business accelerator services for edutech startups

Finnish edutech actors have been active in boosting innovations and accelerating new businesses. Some of these services are available for start-ups originating from the emerging markets.



xEdu is Europe's leading business accelerator for edutech startups creating transformative learning solutions with pedagogical impact. From product development to market entry and internationalization, they are offering broad assistance including coaching and mentoring and real-life testing environments for research and development. They provide a global partner network of recognized leaders in the education business for the startups. If you are interested in knowing more and applying to their acceleration program, please visit their website for further information.

More information: <https://www.xedu.co/>



UNTIL labs create a platform for problem-solving between the UN, private sector, academia and civil society, with the help of startups. Labs are located in different parts of the world, for instance in Malaysia and Cairo. The Finnish government with other local stakeholders is hosting one of the United Nations Technology Innovation Labs. The lab opened only recently in Espoo as part of the Aalto University campus and its AGrid. One of the lab's focus areas is education.

More information: <https://agrid.fi/>

### 3.2.3 Hiring local sales agents

International sales effort demand lot of resources. Particularly for new, small, enterprises sales effort can be the most challenging part. Among the Finnish edutech sector, several entrepreneurs would like to hire a local sales agent. They are especially interested in the kind of sales agents who have some kind of knowledge on pedagogy.



Eduten is offering a digital learning platform with scientifically proven impact on learning results and grades. The company has hired several sales agents globally. The company has made the process also easy and they are proving training for the Authorized Resellers to serve so that they can serve as trusted advisors for school management. In case you think you have the skills to be the sales agent, have a look at the company's website.

More information: <https://www.eduten.com/partners>

### 3.2.4 Hiring local content developers

Content development is a critical area that is too often overlooked. Given the unique characteristics of different countries, such as the diversity of languages and culture and specialized needs, there is a need to develop targeted content for edutech services. Therefore, tailoring solutions to meet the local context is one of the key factors to fulfil the market needs. It can be assumed that in the future, we will also see more Finnish companies, which are hiring

local content developers. Relating specially edutech sector, Finnish Fuzu, which has a branch in Kenya, is heavily utilizing local talents. See example below.



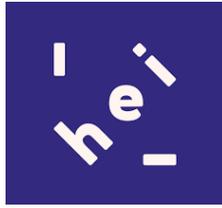
#### **Fuzu mobile learning and career advisory services**

Fuzu's starting point was to develop solutions to problems of high level of unemployment, students difficulties to 'commercialize' own knowledge and the lack of career planning. Fuzu built an interactive online platform where to find jobs, receive advice for job hunting and conduct some short courses to improve own competences. The service is currently used in few East-African countries and the company has hired local Kenyans to be responsible of producing relevant content.

More information: <https://www.fuzu.com/>

### **3.2.5 Licensing model**

Licensing is a transfer-related market entry strategy, which is also used in the education export industry. It involves a company (known as the licensor) granting permission to a company in another country to use its intellectual property for a defined time period. The intellectual property can include patented manufacturing processes, trademarked products, copyrights and technical assistance. In return for this permission, the licensor demands a fee from the company it has granted permission to (the licensee) and periodic royalty payments. In the below we are presenting two examples of Finnish companies forming a licensing model.



### **HEI Schools offers license-based Finnish kindergarten solutions**

HEI Schools is an international preschool concept, which created a licensing model to expand its businesses abroad. Instead of sending Finns to run the schools, the company is helping local operators to run kindergartens according to the Finnish model. The concept that HEI Schools has developed education (curriculum, learning materials, teacher training concept), design (facilities, architecture, furniture design, graphic design, toys and games) and the business plan (licensing). The first licensing school opened in Baotou, China, in the autumn of 2018. Currently HEI Schools is seeking new partners and pilot clients among institutions that are interested in developing high-standard early education in their own market according to the HEI Schools model.

More information: <http://www.heischools.com/>



### **Arkki International entering to ASEAN countries with a licensing concept**

In 2018 the company began to pilot education concept in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. This pilot is the first step in Arkki's market entry to South East Asia. According to a licensing agreement signed in May between Arkki International and Viet Motion, during the coming years the cooperation will be expanded to the whole of Vietnam and the 9 other ASEAN countries: Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Myanmar, Lao PRD, Cambodia and Brunei. In addition, in terms of education content the collaboration will expand to cover the whole Arkki concept and courses for all age groups of 4-19 years.

More information: <http://www.arkkiinternational.com/>

### **3.2.6 NGO-company partnerships**

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have wide networks in different developing countries. NGOs are becoming more and more interested in establishing new kind of partnerships with companies. Examples of these can also be found in the edutech sector.

### **GraphoGame: Company-NGO co-operation**

Previously-mentioned GraphoGame has been co-operating with companies to expand the leverage of its coverage. While still owned by the university, GraphoGame was selected in Wäertsilä's charity programme, hence which made it possible to offer the game to Kenyan first graders in two schools. Currently, being a commercial enterprise, GraphoGame continues to partner up with other actors. For instance, together with Claned Group, an online learning platform and their digital learning solution of ClanedKids and World Vision Finland, a development organization, GraphoGame continues its expansion in Kenya. The partnership was sealed in the form of a donation from Claned to World Vision. ClanedKids, along with GraphoGame, is used in the Ngoswet region in Western Kenya.

More information: <https://claned.com/claned-and-world-vision-join-forces-to-improve-teaching-quality-in-kenya/>

### **3.2.7 Co-operation between universities and companies**

In the context of emerging low-income markets, innovative business models are needed. There might be a huge demand for the services, but clients, especially public schools, might not be always able to pay for the services. Hence, it might be required to design new types of partnerships. Cesim has identified that there is a need for their solution and is hoping to find big companies to become sponsors.



Cesim is interested in the challenges facing labor markets in emerging countries. It specializes in simulation games, which are used in universities to teach business courses. The enterprise was founded in 1996 and it has broad markets throughout Europe and North America. Currently the company is focusing to expand into emerging markets, especially targeting Southeast Asia. For public universities, pricing is a dilemma. For that, Cesim is trying to build a cooperation model between the universities and companies, where companies would sponsor the simulation games.

More information: <https://www.cesim.com/>

### 3.3 Pricing of products and services

One-size-fits-all is not possible when it comes to purchasing and pricing. Different teachers, schools, and/or individual users may have varying priorities and needs that can be addressed by the same edutech products. Thus, companies are offering flexible ways when selling the content and tools. In following, we are presenting some of the most common pricing models. We have categorized them based on the end-users perspective, i.e. how to get access to the services and products. However, we would like to emphasize that most of the companies are offering some free pilots and demos to help purchasers understand a product's core value and assure that the product will meet the needs and is fitting for the environment.

#### 3.3.1. Subscription and licenses

Very common way of how edutech products are sold is based on a subscription-based pricing. It means that the user/users purchase a monthly or annual license to use the services. Depending on the product and targeted client, the product is brought for the whole class/group. These licenses allows unlimited access, possible home access and an evaluation tool for the teachers. Good example of this type of pricing is [Teachergaming company](#). It offers subscription-based “an all-in-one solution” (including dozens of games) for educational organizations for monthly or yearly licenses (price depends on the amount of pupils). Besides, individual games can be purchased by individual users and educators with a specific price per game license. Examples of these companies offering subscription-based pricing are for instance, [10Monkeys](#) and [Paths to Math](#).

#### 3.3.2 Direct purchasing from online stores

Services which are more directed to individual users, can be bought from the online study. Usually, there is a fix price for one course, online book etc. Companies using this type of pricing are for instance, [NEBA online training courses](#), [Tabletkoulu](#), [Vioppe](#), [Breino](#). In addition, in case you are interested generally knowing more on Finnish education, some companies are offering hourly-priced consulting, which are offered via skype, for instance Finhow.

#### 3.3.3. Freemium pricing

Some companies might offer certain products for free. Usually these products are limited to a few completely functioning parts of the actual program or then they are offering all the features, but each feature is limited in function. If you are preparing to purchase a program to enhance your classroom, freemium edutech products can be a great tool in the process of researching and evaluating the usefulness of the products before purchasing the chargeable features. For instance, Discendum's product “[Openbadgefactory](#)”. It uses different pricing categories, such as free, basic, premium and pro categories.

#### **3.3.4. Offered free: Partnering with NGOs**

Some of the companies are partnering with NGOs which are then delivering the services for the schools and end-users for free. In these cases, the NGO and the company has made some kind of agreement on how to cover the expenses. One example of this is for instance, previously mentioned Claned-Graphogame partnership with WorldVision in Kenya.

#### **3.3.5. Offered free: via sponsors**

Some of the Finnish companies aim to expand their client base by creating ways how to offer it free for the end-users. Previously mentioned Cesim aims to create a partnership arrangement where corporations would sponsor the simulation games offered at universities. As part of the arrangement, corporations might utilize this as a channel to recruit students. NEBA which is offering online courses on entrepreneurship and business management for private people interested in self-employment, is offering sponsorships for individuals so that the tuition fees are covered by a sponsor.

## 4. CO-OPERATION INSTRUMENTS

As already stated in this report, Finnish edutech companies are highly interested in possibilities in emerging and developing countries. The easiest way to proceed, is to contact the companies directly. Yet, there are also other means how to connect Finnish companies or express your own interest in findings Finnish partners. In the following we are briefly mentioning few co-operation instruments.

### 4.1 Finnpartnership's Matchmaking Service

Finding local business partners is critical when you are planning to import your products to Finland. With the help of [Finnpartnership's Matchmaking Service](#), companies in developing countries can seek out business partners from Finland. The service is free-of-charge.

Finnpartnership will provide visibility for registered companies and their business proposals in Finland. Once your company has been registered to the service, a public introduction profile is created and added on Finnpartnership's public [Matchmaking database](#). All the registered companies are also included in Finnpartnership's monthly newsletter and your business proposal can be presented at events that are attended by Finnish companies that are interested in finding new business partners. Finnpartnership may also present your company to other import/export organisations, business promotion organisations and to chambers of commerce. Also, a direct one-to-one introduction can be made if a potential partner candidate is found.

More information on Finnpartnership in general: [www.finnpartnership.fi](http://www.finnpartnership.fi)

### 4.2 Funding instruments for Finnish companies

For Finnish companies there are several funding opportunities. Hence, we would like to emphasize that they are only available for Finnish actors, but in case you have potential idea in your mind, it might be possible to be a partner in these projects.

#### **Finnfund**

Finnish companies' opportunities of participation in development cooperation can be promoted for example through the following development finance instruments provided by the private sector.

Finnfund is a state majority-owned development finance company, which offers longterm risk capital for projects that are economically viable and create development impacts in the emerging markets. In its investments, Finnish technology and expertise are used, respecting the principles of sustainable development. Finnfund invests in companies located in the developing countries,

grants investment loans and mezzanine capital, and invests in business activities in the countries of operation via international funding agencies. A considerable part of Finland's climate funding is channelled via Finnfund to, for example, projects that promote renewable energy supply. More information: [www.finnfund.fi](http://www.finnfund.fi)

### **Business Finland**

Business Finland is the Finnish innovation funding, trade, investment, and travel promotion organization, headquartered in Helsinki. Business Finland is fully owned by the Finnish Government. It offers funding for research, product development and for other purposes. It has, for instance, specific BEAM – Business with Impact programme which supports joint innovations launched by Finnish and developing country companies, research institutes and civil society organisations and other actors, which promote wellbeing and sustainable development in developing countries. BEAM supports the development, piloting and commercialisation of new products, services, business and cooperation models, and social innovations. The programme does not support export or conventional business partnerships. Funding can be applied for projects that will be carried out in any of the developing countries except in China. The programme is managed by Business Finland. In the period from 2015 to 2019.

More information: <https://www.businessfinland.fi/en/for-finnish-customers/services/build-your-network/developing-markets/beam/>

## 5. FUTURE SCENARIOS

In this report, we have given an overview of Finnish education sector and particularly focused on edutech. To conclude, Finnish companies are offering wide range of edutech services from early childhood to executive education. We can expect that these edutech services are still to be increased in the near future.

We would also like to emphasize that a majority of Finnish edutech companies are highly interested in emerging market opportunities and searching for new partners and new co-operation possibilities. Some of them already have activities in these markets (for instance HEI Schools) while others are saying that their internationalization process is just about to begin and at this stage, they are evaluating different options (for instance Tabletkoulu). We can expect that more and more Finnish edutech companies are interested in opportunities in various emerging markets. So far, several enterprises are finding it challenging to enter the market and get contacts. Therefore, many of the companies are interested in finding local sales agents. For instance, SkillzzUp has been testing its services in several countries and is now searching for local experienced distributors in educational sector to sell their product with a license. Once companies have gained some networks and partners, the co-operation can have more various forms, such as hiring local content developers to tailor the products to local markets and create new ones.

What is positive is that in Finland, public agencies are involved in promoting business expansions and offering matchmaking services. For instance, as a result of the Viet Nam-Finland Innovation Partnership Programme Finnish companies have found local partners (for instance Arkki International). Finland is actively also supporting entrepreneurship development in various means. For instance, Finland has been supporting Tanzit innovation fund in Tanzania. As an outcome of that, innovative tech-oriented start-ups have been created. In the recent years, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland has also sponsored bringing outstanding startups and innovation hub personnel from Asia and Africa to Slush<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, we are strongly recommending having a look at how local companies in emerging markets and developing countries can take part in these activities (contacts are provided in the appendix). They are also good forums to find Finnish collaborators.

Relating to bringing more women to the (edu)tech sector, Finland has good examples of for instance founding the global movement of Rail girls which supports training women and girls on ICT. In addition, in all our public private sector instruments and development policy investments are examined from the gender perspective.

We strongly believe that Finnish edutech knowledge and existing solutions are valuable in to increase developing countries' skills development. Several of the solutions, for instance Neba and

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<sup>6</sup> Slush is world's leading start-up event organized annually in the beginning of December in Helsinki.

Prodiags are providing learning pathways from informal and non-formal learning to formal study or enabling learning to access up-to-date information about job opportunities, career paths and opportunities for study. Therefore, we encourage you to have a look at the Finnish edutech companies and in general, Finnish education system.

## 6. APPENDIX

### 6.1 List of Finnish edutech companies

*In the following we have listed Finnish edutech companies. We have divided the companies based on which educational level their offerings are targeted to. However, please notice that in most cases, their offerings are suitable for different educational levels, so please go through each companies' products and services with care.*

#### **Early education**

**Breino:** <https://www.breino.com/>  
**Finhow:** <https://www.finhow.fi/Home>  
**GraphoGame:** <https://graphogame.com/>  
**HEI Schools:** <http://www.heischools.com/>  
**Kindiedays:** <https://kindiedays.com/>  
**Playvation/ Moominls:** <https://moominls.com/en/>

#### **Primary school**

**Arkki International:** <http://www.arkkiinternational.com/>  
**Almerin:** <https://www.almerin.com/>  
**Caprice Oy Products/ Minifiddlers:** <http://videos.minifiddlers.org/>  
**Eduten:** <https://www.eduten.com/partners>  
**Eliasrobot:** <http://www.eliasrobot.com/>  
**FinnwayofLearning:** <http://www.finnwaylearning.fi/>  
**Keeduu:** [www.keeduu.com/](http://www.keeduu.com/)  
**Kidescience:** <https://kidescience.com/en>  
**KOULU group:** [koulugroup.com/](http://koulugroup.com/)  
**LessonApp:** <https://lessonapp.fi/>  
**Lightbot:** <http://lightbot.com/>  
**Lumoeducation:** <https://www.lumoeducation.com/>  
**10Monkeys:** <https://www.10monkeys.com/us/>  
**Paths to Math:** <http://pathstomath.com/>  
**Polar Partners:** <http://polarpartners.fi/>  
**Qridi Oy:** <http://www.qridi.com/> and <http://www.qridisport.com/>  
**Skillpixels:** [www.skillpixels.com/](http://www.skillpixels.com/)  
**Tabletkoulu:** <https://www.tabletkoulu.fi/in-english/>  
**Viope:** <https://www.viope.com/>

## **Secondary school**

**Edutat:** <https://www.edutat.fi/>

**Eduten:** <https://www.eduten.com/>

**Finpeda:** <http://finpeda.fi/>

**Innofactor skili:** [www.skilli.com/en](http://www.skilli.com/en)

**Learningschoop:** [learningscoop.fi/](http://learningscoop.fi/)

**Mightifier:** <https://mightifier.com/>

**Muikku:** <https://otavanopisto.muikkuverkko.fi/>

**Oksidia:** <https://oksidia.fi/>

**Sanako:** <http://www.sanako.com/>

**SchoolOs:** <https://schoolos.eu/>

**Seppo:** <http://seppo.io/en/>

**Teachergaming:** <https://store.teachergaming.com/>

## **Upper-secondary school (high schools and vocational training)**

**Cloubi/Ubiikki:** [cloubi.com/](http://cloubi.com/)

**Cupplatech:** [cuppla.co/](http://cuppla.co/)

**Eduexcellence:** <https://www.eduexcellence.fi/>

**Futural Skills:** <https://tawasta.fi/en/solutions/futural-skills>

**Fuzu:** <https://www.fuzu.com/>

**Kokoa:** <https://kokoa.io/>

**Neba:** <https://neba.fi/>

**Peda.net:** <https://peda.net/info/en>

**Prodiags:** <https://prodiags.com/>

**Prommentor:** <https://prommentor.fi/>

**Schoolday:** <https://schoolday.fi/en/frontpage/>

**Seppo:** <http://seppo.io/en/>

**Skhole:** <https://www.skhole.fi/best-healthcare-education-in-the-world.html>

**Skillzzup:** <http://skillzzup.com/>

**Taz:** <http://www.taz.fi/>

**Workseed:** <https://www.workseed.fi/web/en/>

## **Universities**

**Cesim:** <https://www.cesim.com/>

**Discendum:** <https://www.discendum.com/>

**Optima:** <https://www.discendum.com/optima-lms/>

**Shouldersofgiants:** <https://shouldersofgiants.fi/>

## **Companies and executive education**

**AACGlobal:** <https://www.aacglobal.com/>

**Claned:** <https://claned.com/>

**Discendum/Prima:** <https://www.discendum.com/priimalms/>  
**Mediamaisteri:** <https://www.mediamaisteri.com/en/>  
**3tratkaisut:** <http://3tratkaisut.fi/?lang=en>  
**Mobie Academy:** <https://www.mobieacademy.fi/en/>  
**MPS Prewrite:** <https://www.mps.fi/en/elearning.html>  
**MIFAcademy:** <https://mifacademy.com/>  
**Thinglink:** <https://www.thinglink.com/>

## 6.2 List of useful websites

### **Finnish education actors**

**Council for creative education Finland (CCE):** <https://www.ccefinland.org/>  
**Dare to learn:** <http://www.daretolearn.fi/>  
**Education Finland:** <https://www.educationfinland.fi/>  
**Educa fair:** <https://educa.messukeskus.com/?lang=en>  
**Edtech:** <http://www.uef.fi/fi/web/edtech>  
**Eduexcellence:** <https://www.eduexcellence.fi/>  
**Global Education park Finland:** <http://www.globaleducationparkfinland.fi/>  
**Neogames – Hub of the Finnish game industry:** <https://www.neogames.fi/>  
**Ministry of Education and Culture:** <https://minedu.fi/en/areas-of-expertise>  
**OAJ, the trade Union of Education:** <https://www.oaj.fi/en/>  
**Rail girls:** [railsgirls.com](http://railsgirls.com)  
**Serious Gaming Cluster:** <http://www.seriousgamingcluster.fi/welcome/#cluster>  
**The Association of Finnish eLearning Centre:** <https://www.eoppimiskeskus.fi/en/>  
**XEduAcceleration:** <https://www.xedu.co/>  
**Study in Finland:** <https://www.studyinfinland.fi/>

### **Trade related services**

**Business Finland:** <https://www.businessfinland.fi/en/do-business-with-finland/home/>  
**Finnpartnership:** <https://finnpartnership.fi/en/frontpage/>  
**Slush:** <https://www.slush.org/>  
**Southern Africa Innovation Support:** <https://www.saisprogramme.org/>  
**Tanzit innovation fund:** <https://tanzict.or.tz/innovation-fund/>  
**Vietnam-Finland Innovation Partnership Program:** <http://ipp.vn/en/>

### **International edutech fairs and exhibitions**

**BETT:** <https://www.bettshow.com/>  
**Edutech Africa:** <https://www.terrapinn.com/exhibition/edutech-africa/index.stm>  
**Edtechxurope:** <http://edtechxurope.com/>  
**elearning Africa:** <https://www.elearning-africa.com/index.php>

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