



DIGI-FRAME

**[AI POWERED DIGITAL SKILLS
ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK]**

Invitation to tender for external evaluator

Terms of reference



Co-funded by
the European Union

Document Control

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Information about the funding programme

The project has been granted under the Erasmus+ programme: Forward-Looking Projects Topic 6: Digital education: Assessment of digital skills and competences (ERASMUS-EDU-2025-PI-FORWARD-DIGITAL-SC).

With digital change accelerating, it is essential that education and training systems adjust accordingly. As mentioned in the Digital education Action plan 2021-2027, technology can be used to support teaching and learning processes. Moreover, digital education is needed to equip all learners with proper digital competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) to live, work, learn and thrive in a world increasingly mediated by digital technologies. Addressing these two aspects of digital education requires policies and actions on several fronts, including infrastructure, strategy and leadership, teacher skills, learner skills, content, curricula, assessment and national legal frameworks. Action at EU level can contribute to the development of quality and inclusive education and training by supporting cooperation, the exchange of good practices, frameworks, research, recommendations and other key tools¹ (European union, 2020).

The OECD emphasizes the transformative potential of digital assessments in education: digital assessments offer adaptability, immediate feedback, and personalized learning experiences. However, challenges such as ensuring robust digital infrastructure, data privacy, and designing valid assessment items remain² (OECD, (2023).

The European Commission has launched this call for proposal to support forward-looking ideas focusing on key topics and priorities at EU level, with a clear potential to be mainstreamed in one or more sectors. Topic 6-ERASMUS-EDU-2025-PI-FORWARD-DIGITAL-SC: Digital education: Assessment of digital skills and competences aims to support projects and initiatives focusing on comprehensive assessment methodologies of digital skills and competences at all educational levels aligned with EU frameworks like DigComp2.2, fostering innovation and ensuring sustainable exploitation of project results across various educational contexts.

DIGI-FRAME: AI-POWERED DIGITAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The DIGI-FRAME project aims to develop a comprehensive and robust assessment methodology framework for digital skills using innovative AI systems, embedding digital skills in the curriculum at lower secondary school level to prepare students for the jobs of the future, but also for real life problems and challenges.

The project supports the general objectives of the Forward-Looking Projects call in the following ways:

- Fostering innovation in education by integrating AI-based systems for assessing digital skills;
- Enhancing digital transformation by embedding digital skills and digital thinking into the core curriculum.

It addresses several key priorities under the Erasmus+ Forward-Looking Projects call, including:

¹ *European Commission*, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027. *Resetting Education and Training for the Digital Age*, COM/2020/624 final.

² *OECD Digital Education Outlook 2023: Towards an Effective Digital Education Ecosystem*, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1787/c74f03de-en>

Digital Education Action Plan (2021–2027), primarily Priority 1—fostering the development of a high-performing digital education ecosystem—through the integration of AI tools and digital skills assessment into education systems, and Priority 2- by enhancing digital skills and competences for learners.

Developing innovative learning and teaching approaches using AI to personalize learning and empower both students and educators with real-time data and feedback.

Equipping students with future-proof digital competencies: it supports foresight in education, anticipating the needs of the digital and green transitions, as well as future job markets and civic engagement.

The project addresses topic 6 of the present call, i.e. Digital education: Assessment of digital skills and competences contributing to its objectives in the following ways:

- Identifying, developing, testing and/or assessing innovative approaches that have the potential to be mainstreamed in order to improve education and training systems, as well as the effectiveness of policies and practices in the field of education and training: DIGI-FRAME will identify, develop and test an innovative Digital Skills Assessment Framework and Digital Skills Assessment Platform, with the final scope to integrate them in the lower secondary school curricula, mainstreaming them at policy-level through the active involvement of key policymakers and stakeholders.
- Launching pilot actions to test solutions and address future challenges, aiming to create sustainable and systemic impact: DIGI-FRAME aims to address future challenges integrating AI-driven assessment tools into Digital Skills Assessment Framework and Digital Skills Assessment Platform for better evaluations taking into account key factors that ensures compliance with ethical norms, ethical principles and related core values.

Supporting transnational cooperation and mutual learning on forward-looking issues amongst key stakeholders and empowering them to develop innovative solutions and promote the transfer of those solutions in new settings, including capacity-building of relevant stakeholders: DIGI-FRAME aims to support transnational cooperation and mutual learning implementing its innovative actions in six different EU countries and promoting them in different educational contexts involving a consortium of 13 different organisations

Thus, DIGI-FRAME will allow to identify factors and criteria which are necessary for developing a comprehensive and robust assessment methodology for digital skills, supporting the creation of a progression model to assess digital skills, focusing on the lower secondary school level responding to the scope of topic 6 of the Erasmus+ Forward-Looking projects call- Digital education: Assessment of digital skills and competences.

Objectives

General objective:

DIGI-FRAME aims to develop a comprehensive and robust assessment methodology framework for digital skills, using innovative AI systems, embedding digital skills in the curriculum at lower secondary school level to prepare students for the jobs of the future, but also for real life problems and challenges.

Specific objectives:

- to guarantee effective project and financial management, through careful coordination and effective measures for planning and monitoring;
- To explore, map and analyse the feasibility of existing assessment frameworks (including methods and tools) and identify good practices about the level of digital skills at lower secondary school level in different EU countries;

- To design and co-create ethical, effective, purposeful AI systems for assessment of digital skills at lower secondary school level of education and training;
- To pilot and finalise the AI-driven Assessment Framework and Platform with lower secondary school teachers and students and scaling up actions for wider implementation.
- To ensure high quality of the project implementation and effective impact on the targeted groups (teachers and students) at school level and beyond the stakeholders directly targeted in the project, on private and public policy-drivers at local, regional, national and European levels;
- To ensure that the project results and benefits will be spread effectively to the right stakeholders and policymakers and drivers of innovation within and after the project's lifetime and mainstreamed at system level.

Considering all the above objectives, DIGI-FRAME directly contributes to promoting inclusive and equitable quality education and fostering digital competence assessment frameworks for students at lower secondary level. the project supports lifelong learning opportunities and aims to reduce digital inequalities; finally by encouraging digital transformation in education systems across Europe through its focus on innovation in educational practices, developing an AI-Powered Assessment Methodology.

Activities

The Phase 1: Analysis and Content Development Phase (WP2- WP3) foresees the following activities:

- Systematic mapping and review of existing digital skill assessment frameworks, tools and methodologies;
- Identifying national and regional curricula for digital skills in lower secondary education;
- Collecting good practices in AI-driven and technology-enhanced assessments;
- Categorising key digital skills domains, learning outcomes and competencies covered in different assessment frameworks;
- Conducting interviews/surveys with educators, policymakers, and edtech experts, gathering insights from teachers and students on the effectiveness of current assessments, identifying gaps and challenges in assessing digital skills at the lower secondary school level;
- Processing of data collected (quantitative & qualitative) through a comparative analysis;
- Co-Creation workshops with key stakeholders and experts to collaboratively shape the framework;
- Developing a structured framework to guide the creation of an AI-Powered Assessment Methodology;
- Designing an AI-Based Assessment Platform.

The phase 2: Deploying and Scaling up Phase (WP4), foresees the following activities:

- International training event for project's staff, including lower secondary school level teachers of partner schools;
- Setting-up the AI-Based Assessment Platform;
- Deploying the Assessment framework in pilot schools, monitoring students' performance, evaluating AI accuracy and collecting data on students' interactions and engagement levels;
- Optimizing AI-Based digital skills assessment framework and platform;
- Scaling up actions for wider implementation across schools.

Moreover, the following horizontal project's activities are foreseen:

- Project and financial management (WP1);

- Quality Assurance, Evaluation and Monitoring (WP5);
- Dissemination, Sustainability and Mainstreaming (WP6).

The project was designed and will be implemented based on a structured set of approaches that ensure quality, consistency, and effectiveness.

Public resources

D2.1	Comprehensive Analysis of Digital Skills & Assessment approaches
D2.2	Strategic Recommendations for an Enhanced Assessment Framework
D3.1	AI-Based Digital Skills Assessment Framework (Draft)
D3.2	AI-Based Digital Skills Assessment Platform (Prototype)
D4.1	Optimized AI-Based Digital Skills Assessment Framework
D4.2	Optimized AI-Based Digital Skills Assessment Platform
D5.2	Impact assessment report
D6.1	Dissemination Strategy and visual identity package
D6.2	Action plan for the sustainability and transferability of project deliverables

Expected Impact

Project Target groups:

Primary Target groups:

- Lower secondary school teachers and staff;
- Lower secondary school students;
- Partners' organisations.

Secondary target groups:

- School leaders;
- Local/regional education authorities.

Other beneficiaries:

- Policymakers in education and digital transformation;
- EdTech developers and digital skills experts;
- Teacher training centers, teacher associations, universities, EU-level networks

Project impact on Primary Target groups:

Within the project's duration and beyond, DIGI-FRAME will influence the school level involving lower secondary schools' students and teachers in project activities, aiming to enhance digital skills evaluation practices. The development and piloting of AI systems for assessment will provide teachers with instruments to understand and address their students' digital skill levels more effectively.

Project impact on Secondary target groups:

DIGI-FRAME has strong potential to positively impact the educational system. Successful assessment methodologies developed within the project could be considered for integration into the

national curriculum for lower secondary education. Awareness-raising and capacity-building will be initiated through collaboration with local education authorities and targeted activities for teachers. Project impact beyond the stakeholders directly targeted in the project:
By promoting policy uptake, the project can contribute to formalising the use of AI-driven assessment tools within national education strategy, helping to bridge digital competence gaps and better prepare students for the evolving demands of the future workforce.

Partners

Organisation	Country	Official Website
CESIE ETS	Italy	https://cesie.org
I.C. Cassarà-Guida	Italy	https://www.iccassaraquida.edu.it
Headway A.E.	Greece	https://www.headway.gr
Directorate of Secondary Education of East Thessaloniki (DDE ANAT THESS)	Greece	https://dide-v.thess.sch.gr
INCOMA – International Consulting and Mobility Agency	Spain	https://incoma-projects.eu
Colegio San Francisco de Paula (CIS-SFP)	Spain	https://www.csfp.es
CARDET	Cyprus	https://cardet.org
GrantXpert Consulting Ltd	Cyprus	https://grantxpert.eu
The Junior and Senior School (TJSS)	Cyprus	https://www.tjss.ac.cy
ReadLab – Research Innovation and Development Lab	Greece	https://read-lab.eu
Appworks d.o.o.	Serbia	https://appworks.rs
Primary School "Nada Popović"	Serbia	https://osnadapopovic.edu.rs
Transilvania University of Braşov (UNITBV)	Romania	https://www.unitbv.ro

Evaluation approaches and activities

According to the project description, CESIE ETS will subcontract an independent external expert evaluator to carry out the quality assessment of the project. The evaluator will produce two reports, a mid-term evaluation (M18) and a final evaluation (M36), providing objective and evidence-based feedback on the project's implementation, quality, and achievements.

Subcontracting an external evaluator is essential to ensure an impartial and professional assessment conducted by an experienced expert who is independent of the project consortium. The evaluator will analyse the project's progress, validate the quality and relevance of the activities implemented, and assess the results and impact achieved throughout the project lifecycle. The reports will identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for improvement, and recommendations to support informed decision-making.

The mid-term evaluation (M18) will provide the consortium with a comprehensive assessment of the project's progress during its first half, enabling partners to identify any necessary adjustments, strengthen collaboration, and optimise the implementation of the remaining activities.

The final evaluation (M36) will offer an overall assessment of the project's outcomes, impact, and added value, validating the results achieved and providing recommendations for their sustainability,

transferability, and future exploitation. Together, the two evaluation reports will constitute a valuable quality assurance tool, supporting continuous improvement during implementation while strengthening the long-term legacy of the project.

Tasks of the external evaluator

The evaluator is expected to carry out the following tasks:

Task	Description	Period/Deadlines
Participation in partner meetings (online/bi-monthly)	If requested and retained useful by the external Evaluator	October 2026-April 2029
Participation in bilateral meetings with project partners	If requested and retained useful by the external Evaluator	October 2026-April 2029
External quality assessment report: interim (D5.3)	- Production of the report - The report will include observations, and recommendations for improvements, as well as an assessment of the impact achieved - Sensitive, EN	October 2027
External quality assessment report: final (D5.4)	- Production of the report - The report will include observations, and recommendations for improvements, as well as an assessment of the impact achieved - Electronic, EN	April 2029

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Exclusion from participation

Tenderers will be excluded from participating in this procurement procedure if:

- they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Beneficiary can justify;
- they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the Beneficiary or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests.

Exclusion from the award of contracts

Contracts may not be awarded to tenderers who during the procurement procedure:

- a) are subject to a conflict of interests;
- b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Beneficiary as a condition of participation in the contract procedure or fail to supply this information.

Tenderers must certify that they are not in one of the situations listed above by filling in the declaration of honour attached to this invitation.

AWARD CRITERIA

Pre-requirement

Availability for the remainder of the project's implementation period (01/08/2026 to 30/04/2029).

Selection criteria for the external evaluator

The external evaluator will be selected based on a number of technical criteria. These include the following competences and experiences:

- Knowledge of education and digital transformation: Demonstrated expertise in digital education, digital skills development and competence assessment; Good understanding of the Digital Education Action Plan (2021–2027), DigComp framework and other relevant European policy initiatives; Knowledge of European education systems and education policy, particularly in the field of school education.
- Experience in evaluation of EU funded projects (evaluation experience of at least two projects, incl. projects co-funded by the Erasmus+)
- Proficiency in English language (at least C1), very good writing skills.
- Expertise in AI and digital assessment (desirable): Experience in projects involving Artificial Intelligence in education, educational technologies, learning analytics or digital assessment systems; Understanding of ethical, legal and technical aspects related to the use of AI in education, including trustworthy AI principles and data protection requirements.

Further to this, the quality of candidatures will be evaluated based on:

- Quality of the proposed evaluation plan (including methodology to be used).
- Financial evaluation will be carried out based on the cost proposal (total price including VAT).

SELECTION PROCEDURE

The contract will be awarded to the tender offering best value for money. All requests to participate and tenders declared as satisfying the requirements and criteria announced in advance will be evaluated by a committee. The commission's reports and written records are for official use only and may not be communicated to the tenderers nor to any party other than CESIE ETS, project partners and EUROPEAN EDUCATION AND CULTURE EXECUTIVE AGENCY (EACEA).

The quality of the candidatures will be evaluated by assigning a maximum of 100 points to candidates for qualitative criteria (competences and experiences: max. 60 points; proposed evaluation plan: max. 40 points). Each tender reaching a minimum of 60 points in the technical criteria will be included in the financial evaluation.

Financial evaluation will be carried out as follows: the candidate with the lowest Total Price will be awarded 100 points for the financial score. The other candidates will be awarded points based on the following formula:

Financial score = (lowest Total Price/Total Price of the bid in question) x 100

In order to determine the best value for money tender for the award of the contract, the quality/price ratio of 80/20 will be applied in the following way:

The points awarded for technical quality (overall technical score) multiplied by 0,80

The points awarded for the price (financial score) multiplied by 0,20



LANGUAGE OF THE TENDER

The tender must be submitted in English. Tender submitted in any other language will be automatically rejected.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The tender must be submitted filling in the template of Annex 1. Tenders submitted in any other format will not be considered.

The Declaration of honour duly filled in and signed must be attached to this template (Annex 2).

The tender and the declaration of honour must be submitted in electronic version (PDF version) to the following email addresses: risorseumane@cesie.org

The object of the email must indicate "Tenders external evaluator of 101259579-DIGI-FRAME" The original copy shall be provided upon specific request by the Beneficiary.

The deadline for the submission of the tender is 23/08/2026

Any tender received after the deadline will be rejected.

TIMELINE

- Invitation to tender issued: 03 September 2026
- Closing date for submission of tender: 20 September 2026
- Evaluation process: 21 September – 27 September 2026
- Evaluation contract period: from 29 September 2026 to 31 May 2029



CONTACT DETAILS

Questions regarding particular aspects of this Invitation to Tender or any other matter relating to the tender should be directed to: risorseumane@cesie.org



ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Template to answer the invitation to tender

Annex 2 - Declaration of Honour