

IPA's Partnerships for Tech in Education (P4T-Ed) - Round 2 Request for Expressions of Interest

Up to 50% sponsored research and testing partnerships in
EdTech

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About Partnerships for Tech in Education (P4T-Ed)

The Partnerships for Tech in Education (P4T-Ed) initiative, established by [Innovations for Poverty Action](#) and the [Jacobs Foundation](#), aims to unlock the potential of technology to enhance learning outcomes globally, by fostering a long-term, evidence-based approach in EdTech.

Strengthening Research and Testing (R&T) in EdTech

P4T-Ed will support EdTech providers to use data and evidence to improve their solutions and have more impact. Advancing these goals could involve addressing the following challenges:

- How can we better understand our user base and design our solutions to meet their needs?
- How should we prioritize product improvement opportunities to enhance take-up, user experience, and efficiency?

- How can my organization create an analytics and monitoring system that tracks both impact and growth?
- How can we generate credible evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of our solution and strengthen a cohesive impact narrative?
- How can we identify the necessary adaptations before scaling the solution to new markets (e.g., populations or geographies)?

After the overwhelming response to our first round in 2023, we are pleased to open a second round of sponsored R&T partnerships to solve these and similar challenges with organizations implementing education programs with digital or EdTech solutions.

We expect to launch two further rounds of partnerships in late 2024 and early 2025.

Building on the lessons from IPA's review of the [EdTech evidence landscape](#), the technical assistance could fall under these high-level categories:

- 1) Developing or refining R&T strategy, which can include:
 - a) Co-developing an R&T strategy for product improvement; and
 - b) Assessing current R&T strategies to identify areas for improvement.
- 2) Providing capability strengthening support for R&T execution, which can involve:
 - a) User research and applying user-centered design principles;
 - b) Implementing rapid cycle testing methods like A/B testing, prototyping, and piloting focused on users, content, or operations;
 - c) Leveraging data and analytics to inform decisions; and
 - d) Reviewing internal and external evidence and assessing the potential for replicability of findings across different contexts.

If your organization is selected, we will collaboratively define the specific scope of the R&T support to ensure it addresses the needs of your organization.

Request for Expressions of Interest

Interested organizations can submit their expressions of interest using this [online form](#). The application process can take approximately three hours. You can find all the questions in [Annex C](#); we suggest drafting them in a separate document and, once ready, submitting your answer through the online form.

Eligibility criteria

Applications will be considered if they comply with the following eligibility criteria:

1. **EdTech work in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs):** P4T-Ed will only consider applications that demonstrate both:
 - a. Provision of EdTech services and
 - b. Provision of these services in LMICs.
2. **Co-funding requirement:** P4T-Ed will only consider applicants who can cover 50% of the cost of the partnership.

Funding requirements

P4T-Ed will sponsor 50% of the R&T support costs for the organizations selected through a competitive process. It will thus be expected that selected organizations bring additional resources to cover the 50% remaining of the R&T partnership costs. This approach allows us to support more organizations and ensures strong and impactful alignment with partners' needs and their readiness to adopt rigorous R&T practices. We ask that interested organizations carefully consider their ability to meet this co-funding requirement.

For organizations interested in applying, it is essential to understand the financial framework of our support. While specific support levels will be co-designed with selected organizations to ensure relevance and impact, the approximate total cost of a R&T partnership to IPA can fall between \$30,000 and \$150,000 USD, out of which 50% would be already covered by this initiative. We provide the following preliminary ranges for illustrative services to help applicants gauge potential investment levels¹:

- Development or refinement of R&T strategies: The cost range for support under this category is between \$30,000 and \$80,000 USD. Therefore, selected organizations should have between \$15,000 and \$40,000 USD available for a partnership.
- Providing capability-strengthening support for R&T execution: The cost range for support under this category is between \$40,000 and \$150,000 USD. Consequently, selected organizations should have between \$20,000 and \$75,000 USD available for a partnership.

¹ For more details on the services we can provide, please refer to page 1 of this document, see slides 30-41 of the [landscape review](#), and/or consult [Annex A](#).

The scope and budget for each partnership will be co-created with selected organizations following the submission of their expressions of interest.²

Selection criteria

The applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis based on the following criteria:

- 1. Financial feasibility:** Co-funding ensures impactful alignment with partners' needs and their readiness to adopt rigorous R&T practices. P4T-Ed will assess each applicant's ability to meet this requirement.
- 2. Priority geographies:** While P4T-Ed is open to EdTech providers from all low- and middle-income countries, the initiative aims to have half of the partnerships implemented in Colombia, Ghana, and Cote d'Ivoire as priority countries. We encourage EdTech providers from outside these three countries to submit applications.
- 3. Potential for influence:** This criterion consists of two sub-criteria:
 - a. Direct influence on EdTech solution,** understood as the partnership's ability to meaningfully influence its results and practices associated with learning within the engagement. P4T-Ed will be evaluating:
 - i. Whether the partnership will significantly enhance the applicant's capacity to use data and evidence more effectively to improve their product and demonstrate its results;
 - ii. The applicant is willing to adopt a data-driven continuous improvement approach;
 - iii. The organizational capacity to actively engage in the partnership and adopt recommendations; and
 - iv. The expected impact of the Edtech solution on learning outcomes and the evidence supporting the achievement of that impact.
 - b. Indirect influence on the wider EdTech sector is** understood as the partnership's ability to influence the research and testing practices in the EdTech sector. In doing this, P4T-Ed will also consider how established the applicant organization is.
- 4. Potential for tech-focused rapid-cycle learning:** P4T-Ed will be assessing the organization and its EdTech solution's potential to leverage the unique benefits of EdTech through rapid-cycle iterative learning, by looking at i) the extent to which

² For more information on the types of EdTech use cases considered for P4T-Ed, consult [Annex B: Type of Organizations](#). Note that use-cases outside that list will also be considered.

tech is part of the solution and ii) the extent to which the learning activities to be supported are taking advantage of technology or data, which is only possible because of the ed-tech nature of the solution.

IPA encourages expressions of interest from diverse teams and organizations. We welcome expressions of interest from organizations working with historically underrepresented groups and we highly encourage applications from organizations that are from the countries where they work. To learn more about IPA's commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion, please see [our website](#).

Application instructions and next steps

Applicants can submit their expression of interest by completing [this form](#). While the request for expressions of interest will close at the end of day on May 31, 2024 [Eastern Daylight Time], applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Therefore, we encourage interested organizations to send them as early as possible to increase the chances to be selected.

The P4T-Ed team will follow this timeline:

1. Deadline for EOI: May 31st, 11:59 pm ET.
2. Around the third week of June, shortlisted applicants will get notified and asked for additional information on their applications, such as more details on their R&T practices, ideal start of the engagement if selected, among others .
3. All applicants will be notified of the decision by mid-July 2024.

If you have questions about P4T-Ed or the request for expressions of interest, please contact p4t@poverty-action.org.

Terms and conditions

- The request for expressions of interest is not and shall not be considered an offer by IPA.
- All expressions of interest must be received on or before the date and time indicated on the request for expressions of interest.
- Expressions of interest will be rejected if no response is provided to our follow-up communications.
- All partnerships will be subject to IPA contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of funding.
- IPA reserves the right to accept or reject any expression of interest or cancel the request process at any time and shall have no liability to the responding organizations submitting expressions of interest for such rejection or cancellation of the request for expressions of interest.
- IPA reserves the right to accept all or part of the expression of interest when subsidized services are provided.
- All information provided by IPA in this request for expressions of interest is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time, and all responding organizations will be provided with notification of any changes. IPA is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by responding organizations or for any claims asserted therefrom.
- The responding organizations are solely obligated to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by responding organizations or any third parties, in connection with the response.

Annex A: Previous partnerships under P4T-Ed

Ei Mindspark: Behavioral Interventions for Data-Driven Adaptation in Schools on SouthEast Asia

Ei's personalized adaptive learning platform, Mindspark, is widely used across 10+ states in India as well as in countries like UAE, South Africa, and Mozambique. Mindspark not only offers personalized learning opportunities for students but also generates data that teachers can use to enhance their classroom teaching practices toward adapting teaching. Ei aimed to increase teacher's usage of students' data to make classes more effective. P4T-Ed is **supporting them in designing and testing a behavioral intervention to shift teacher behavior toward accessing, understanding, and applying this data to implement adapting learning.**

Scaling Impact: Localized Multiplatform Education Content in Sub-Saharan Africa

This organization creates localized multiplatform education content that has been proven to improve children's learning outcomes. As they work to scale their content to over 40 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, they are faced with a need to reconsider their learning approaches as they serve more children across more varied contexts. P4T-Ed is supporting them to **develop an organization-level learning agenda to incorporate at-scale learning considerations.** Additionally, P4T-Ed and this organization are **co-creating a set of principles for a user research and testing strategy that is credible and feasible at large levels of scale** while preserving their unique co-creation approach with children.

Coschool: A Cohesive Impact Narrative for a Latin American EdTech

This leading EdTech organization in Latin America is dedicated to promoting socio-emotional learning and well-being within school communities. To better articulate their product offerings and streamline learning practices, Coschool aimed to develop a cohesive impact narrative supported by evidence. In partnership with P4T-Ed, Coschool **refined the theories of change for their products and crafted a learning strategy that strengthens the impact model.** This collaboration has enabled Coschool to adopt a systematic approach to program improvement, paving the way for a lasting impact on students, educators, and school communities.

Annex B: Types of EdTech solutions

P4T-Ed aims to partner with organizations that develop or implement digital education programs or integrated programs with digital components, both from the for-profit and non-profit sectors. Organizations working in this wide spectrum are encouraged to apply:

- Adaptive and individualized learning approaches: Use platforms that either adapt learning experience (homework, readings, exercises) based on student performance or allow for students to manage their own individualized learning experiences.
- Broadcasting & Standardization: Provide uniform instruction through devices (e.g., TVs, projectors) or through materials for teachers (e.g., step-by-step scripts)
- Collaboration platforms for teachers and students: Facilitate digital exchange and discussion among teachers and students; create peer learning, support opportunities, and facilitates information sharing.
- Behavioral and informational interventions: Support behaviors that might be impacted by lack of information, or cognitive and behavioral biases; interventions include reminders to prepare for exams and notifications about the importance of education.
- Games: Enable students to learn social and cognitive skills through play, on mobile devices, tablets, and computers
- Parental & community support: Foster parents' understanding of content and helps them to better support their children's learning through phone calls, SMS, etc.
- Teacher professional development: Build teacher capacity through online courses and trainings, coaching or peer-to-peer learning

Annex C: Application Form Questions

General questions

1. What is your name?
2. What email should we use to send updates about your application?
3. What is the name of your organization?
4. What is your role in the organization?
5. What is the type of organization?
6. In which year was your organization created?
7. Please, confirm that you are aware of our co-funding requirements and that your organization is able to meet them

About your organization and the EdTech solution

8. Please provide a short description of your organization (approx. 50-100 words)
9. Please describe the problem you are trying to solve with EdTech (approx. 50-200 words)
10. Please provide a short description of your EdTech solution (approx. 50-200 words)
11. Which of the following use cases aligns the most with your EdTech solution
12. Which educational levels does your EdTech solution target?
13. In which countries does your EdTech solution operate?
14. What is the approximate number of active users your EdTech solution currently has?
15. Please list any important prizes, recognitions, or grants your organization or EdTech program has received
16. Please provide a detailed description of the current research and testing practices for your edtech solution (approx. 200-500 words)
17. Please describe the specific challenge your EdTech solution is facing that could be addressed as part of this project AND what type of support you would like to receive under the P4T-Ed initiative (approx. 100-300 words)

Questions about the type of support

18. To better understand how we would work with your team, please list the key positions that would be actively involved in this project, and what role they could play in a partnership
19. Considering all the staff involved in the previous question, approximately how many person-days (total) will be available from your team for this engagement
20. Please describe the expected impact of your EdTech solution. Additionally, specify the type of evidence you have to support these expectations
21. What is the estimated maximum amount your organization could allocate to co-fund a project under this initiative?