



October 2023

DigiEduHack Webinar: Digital Education Innovations (18/10/2023)



Organiser

Tallinn University, Estonia.

Guests

- **Balázs Horváth**, Co-Founder of <https://kimitisik.eu/>, Hungary
- **Martin Rusek**, Head of the Department of Chemistry and Didactics of Chemistry of the Faculty of Education, Charles University, Czech Republic.
- **Päivi Kousa**, ethical AI expert, senior lecturer in higher education pedagogy at the university of Jyväskylä.
- **Lieselot Declercq**, co-founder & director of [d-teach](#), Belgium

Webinar

The DigiEduHack webinar #6 “How to support the adoption of digital education innovations” commenced with a dynamic opening, featuring two speakers who outlined the agenda and set the tone for the discussion. The speakers conveyed the promise of a wide-ranging discussion to follow, emphasising the diversity of topics to be covered. Moreover, the speakers emphasised a collaborative approach, bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds, including the private and public sectors, students, teachers, and professionals. This underlined the importance of collective efforts to drive change and innovation in technology usage, with a particular focus on the intriguing concept of “hack compassion.”

The second segment shifted the spotlight onto two esteemed guests, Balázs Horváth and Lieselot Declercq, both luminaries in the realm of digital education. Lieselot introduced herself as a co-founder of [d-teach online school](#) and [d-teach online training](#) in Belgium, specialising in personalised learning for learners across various stages, from primary to secondary and lifelong. She eloquently emphasized the pivotal role of digital skills and online education in supporting diverse student groups, including expats, digital nomads, and gifted children. Her mention of Icons, an initiative uniting online schools worldwide, hinted at the global impact of digital education. Balázs, co-founder of [Kimitisik](#), a Dutch company with a North American base in Vancouver, provided insight into their work, focused on innovation, entrepreneurship, and education innovation. They play a crucial role in training educators across the globe. Balázs emphasized their commitment to equipping educators with AI and challenge-based learning methodologies, as well as their efforts in building consortia for European funds and other projects. The discussion unravelled the demand for collaboration and digital educational tools, with both Balázs and Lieselot sharing examples of successful collaborations. Recognizing the importance of online education and its role in creating an inclusive and accessible society, they laid the groundwork for understanding how technology can bridge gaps. Balázs and Lieselot also delved into the essential skills required for online teachers. They underscored the multifaceted nature of these skills, encompassing instructional design, management, technical competence, communication, and social skills. Furthermore, they stressed the significance of collaboration between academia, online schools, and the tech sector in addressing the evolving landscape of online education. The conversation then moved into the realm of hackathons as a valuable tool for fostering innovation in

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Also, it would be good to find a spot to mention the Ethical Guidelines on the use of AI and data in teaching and learning for educators, which is one of the flagship actions of the Digital Education Action Plan: [Ethical guidelines on the use of artificial intelligence \(AI\) and data in teaching and learning for educators](#) - Publications Office of the EU (europea.eu)

education. Balázs and Lieselot shared their experiences as hosts of such events, illustrating how hackathons encourage participants to explore problems and opportunities in education. They also hinted at the transformative potential of AI and generative AI in prototyping ideas for hackathons.

The third part of the webinar introduced a new guest, Päivi Kousa, who joined Balázs in delving into the critical topic of the skills educators need to understand and work with AI. Päivi, a senior lecturer of higher education pedagogy and a researcher, brought a valuable perspective to the discussion. She emphasized that educators should start with the basics of AI, focusing on general principles and understanding the effort required to create AI-based tools. Recognizing the technical complexity, Päivi recommended freely available resources such as MOOCs and encouraged educators to explore their institutions' AI-related tools and IT departments. Balázs echoed the importance of educators engaging in self-education to acquire AI skills. He suggested practical starting points, like automating administrative tasks with AI, such as generating slide decks or pre-reading materials. His mention of the "[AI for Educators](#)" LinkedIn group showcased a platform for educators to share best practices and tools related to AI. Furthermore, he emphasized the need for critical thinking when using AI and preparing learners to do the same. The discussion then shifted to the complex topic of ethical AI. Balázs brought to light the multifaceted nature of both AI and ethics, touching on the development of ethical AI guidelines and suggestions by various organisations and the EU. The emphasis on trustworthiness, transparency, non-harmfulness, equality, and other ethical considerations highlighted the challenging path of implementing these principles in practice. Päivi added an important layer to the conversation, emphasizing that ethical considerations extend to questions of equality and accessibility in AI and education. This underscored the pressing need to bridge the gap between those with access to AI tools and those without.

In the fourth section of the webinar, participants Lieselot Declercq and Martin Rusek engaged in a reflective discussion on creating a culture that embraces digital education. The central theme was nurturing a culture that supports digital education, acknowledging the lingering discomfort among many teachers with digital teaching. The speakers brought attention to resources such as the "[Distance Teaching Tips](#)" Facebook group, which provides invaluable support for online teaching. The importance of personalization and collaborative learning took centre stage. The value of digital communities and online courses for educators to learn about AI and digital education was vividly portrayed. The discussion underlined the necessity of being critical when employing digital tools and resources, recognizing that in this digital age, the roles of students, teachers, and parents are evolving. Adapting to these changes and providing support became the rallying cry. The conversation then shifted to innovative approaches to digital education. Various methods and tools were discussed, but the overarching message was that innovation isn't merely about the tools themselves, but how they are applied and integrated into the curriculum. Collaboration between educators, the edtech sector, and academic experts emerged as an essential component of this transformative process. Martin introduced an innovative project that uses AI and eye-tracking technology to support students in the lab. This ingenious initiative involves chatbots that assist students, allowing teachers to observe and provide support as needed. The role of students in accepting AI tools and the need to educate them about the appropriate use of AI in their academic work became focal points. The emphasis on fostering

critical thinking and designing meaningful tasks reinforced the importance of a holistic approach to digital education.

The fifth and final section of the webinar encapsulated the core discussions related to the use of AI in education, particularly in enhancing teaching and learning. The speakers passionately emphasized the need for collaboration between AI and human educators, painting a vivid picture of the challenges related to accessibility and ethics in digital education. One of the key points explored was the imperative of ensuring that online education is accessible to all learners, irrespective of their socioeconomic status. This includes addressing issues related to internet connectivity and electricity in regions where access to these resources is limited. The webinar portrayed a strong commitment to making education inclusive, highlighting the socio-ethical dimension of technology in education. The conversation then transitioned into the critical topic of responsible AI usage in education. Ethical considerations took the front seat, emphasizing the paramount importance of ethical practices and avoiding biased data when training AI models for educational purposes. The gravity of responsible AI implementation resonated as a core principle guiding the integration of technology in education. In closing, the webinar laid the groundwork for DigiEduHack events, providing an exciting glimpse into the future. These events, focused on exploring how AI can enhance education, are designed to be open to a wide range of participants, including students, teachers, and anyone with a passion for education and innovation. It was a fitting conclusion, underscoring the potential of AI in education, while highlighting the importance of ethical and accessible approaches to digital learning. Resources such as the [Ethical guidelines on the use of AI and data in teaching and learning for educators](#), part of the [EU Digital Education Action Plan](#) can be of valuable help for teachers and educators in the process.

In summation, the webinar resulted in thorough overview of AI-related insights and ideas transformative potential. It discussed the integration of AI-technologies in education while highlighting the need for ethical and inclusive practices.