NEWSLETTER

December 2020

DIG-IT
Digital Education
Initiatives &
Timely Solutions

The University of Malta is currently leading an Erasmus+ project, entitled *Digital Education and Timely Solutions* DIG-IT in collaboration with La Sapienza University, Rome, Cyprus University, Cyprus, University of Primorska, Slovenia, JAMK University, Finland, and Saint James Hospital in Malta http://project-digit.eu/. At the halfway point, the following outputs have been delivered:
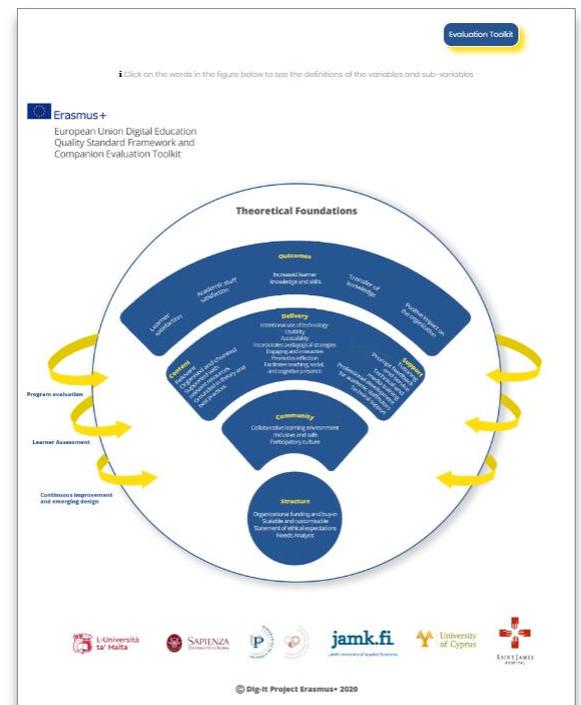
1. The *European Union Digital Education Framework and Companion Evaluation Toolkit* has been designed and published;
2. The 9- module course entitled *Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Online Study-Units* has been designed and delivered in 5 countries.
3. The Train-the-Trainer course to develop Digital Education Champions for the graduate of the nine module course has been designed and delivered in five countries.
4. Two healthcare apps (1) ECG Interpretation and (2) Management and Leadership for nurses have been designed and delivered.
5. Two publications in print in academic journals; one submitted for publication; two publications in process.
6. Two conference presentations, two additional conference presentations accepted.
7. The second Transnational Project Meeting (TPM) was conducted.

European Union Digital Education Framework and Companion Evaluation Toolkit

Created to act as a quality standard, the interactive European Union Digital Education Framework and Companion Evaluation Toolkit (EU-DEF) was adopted to guide the design, delivery and evaluation of education programs, study units, sessions courses, and modules. The EU-DEF proposes five critical dimensions of an effective online product or event—structure, community, content, delivery, and support – required to elicit five levels of outcomes, the pinnacle of which is organizational change.

The variables and sub-variables in the framework were identified from an extensive review of literature from existing digital education frameworks and models (link to table) and highlight what an educator should consider when designing, delivering and evaluation effective digital education.

Open the link and click on the words in the framework to access the variables and sub-variables definitions: http://project-digit.eu/index.php/digital-education-quality-standards/. The European Union Digital

Education Quality Standards Framework and Companion Evaluation Toolkit was designed and published in the refereed journal *Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and eLe*arning. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/02680513.2021.1936476;

Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Online Study-Units" 9 module course

The *Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Online Study-Units* (9-module course), was offered during the period 02/2020 – 04/2020 to 43 academic staff members at the University of Malta and eight additional participants, i.e., representatives of the DIG-IT partners, from Finland, Cyprus, Italy, and Slovenia. The course was delivered by Prof. Colla Mac Donald, supported by Naomi Mifsud, and James Cilia.

The Dig-IT participants took the course so they can learn and then teach the course at their respective universities in the future. One hundred and thirty-five (135) academics staff representing 17 faculties and departments have successfully completed this course to date.

The course was designed for academic staff who have little or no online teaching experience, to develop the confidence, knowledge and skills required to effectively design, deliver and evaluate digital education events. The course is organised into convenient modules: Introduction; Content; Delivery; Support, Structure, Community and Outcomes to align with the EU Digital Education Quality Standard Framework http://project-digit.eu/index.php/digital-education-quality-standards/. Academic staff apply their learning in practice guided by an interactive RoadMap with hyper-links to what they are expected to read (Read Its!), do (Apply Its!), and discuss (Discuss Its!) in each module. Learners are further supported by videos, eDocs, learner profiles, resources, discussion forums, announcements, and eSamples sharing former learner assignments. This course requires a weekly commitment of 5-6 hours, and it has a 2 ECTS value. This course has been evaluated and the results are published in the *International Journal of Social Policy and Education, 3*(2), 54-80). ISSN 2689-4998.

eLearning Award:

The *Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Online Study-Units Course*, was selected for an Honorable Mention award in the eLearning category of the 2020 international Best eLearning Course Competition, sponsored by the International eLearning Association www.ielassoc.com. Click here to view it: http://project-digit.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/IELA_2020_Academic_EL_HM_Online-Study-Units-Course_Certificate.pdf

Train-the-Trainer course

The Train-the-Trainer course was delivered by the Jyväskylä (JAMK) University of Applied Sciences, Finland experts' Leena Seriola, Tuukka Kivioja, and Sanna Häkkinen. The course took place during the period 11/2020 – 12/2020. All DIG-IT partners were represented in the course by participants that had already completed the 9-module courses. With their successful completion of the Train-the-Trainer course participants received the 'eLearning Champion Certificate'.

Academics who successfully complete the course are invited to become eLearning champions for their department or faculty, and enroll in a brief follow-up train-the-trainer course (three modules requiring three hours each). The course was evaluated and the results are currently being written up for a publication in a refereed journal. The course is currently being revised based on the feedback from the evaluation and will be taught in five countries in November 2022.

The DIG-IT project designed and delivered two healthcare apps in collaboration with Saint James Hospital to deliver training on (1) ECG Interpretation and (2) Management and Leadership for nurses http://project-digit.eu/index.php/healthcare-resources/. Several hundred learners have already completed these modules.

Second Transnational Project Meeting (TPM)

The second TPM of the project was realized on the 26th of November 2020. The TPM was organized online, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All partners presented current results and discussed the project progress and the upcoming steps.