



PROJECT UPDATE, July 2009

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WORKING GROUP ACTION

The Working Groups met for the first time in San Diego, California on 18-19 April 2009 to begin shaping the White Papers they are to produce before the end of 2009 to review the current state of the art and to identify research and development work that needs to be done in the second and third years of the project.

Each Working Group has a leader and a small core team engaged by the project and a considerable number of other researchers who have chosen to join them in their work.

21st Century Skills

Leader: Senta Raizen, WestEd, Washington DC, USA

Core team members: Ola Erstad, University of Oslo, Norway; Joan Herman, University of California, Los Angeles, USA; Margaret Honey, New York Hall of Science, USA; Martin Ripley, Formerly Qualifications & Curriculum Authority, UK

Two members of the core team are actively at work fleshing out the outline for its White Paper developed at the San Diego meeting. Several pages of the Introduction have been drafted. One of the team is collecting relevant frameworks of skills and has a researcher producing a comparison that will be drafted during the first two weeks in July. A third member will prepare a draft on the priorities for assessment, also in early July.

Methodological Issues

Leader: Mark Wilson, University of California, Berkeley, USA

Core team members: Isaac Bejar, Educational Testing Service, USA; Kathleen Scalise, University of Oregon, USA; Jonathan Templin, University of Georgia, USA; Dylan Wiliam, Institute of Education, University of London, UK

During the past months the Methodological Issues Group has worked on an outline of the key issues that need to be addressed by the project from a measurement standpoint. This document is based on the issues raised during the San Diego conference, concentrating in four domains that serve as a nexus of more specific technical issues:

- Definition of the constructs
- Policy issues
- Methodological challenges
- Evaluation of group competences

The group is assembling a set of reference materials and practical examples to create a resource collection to help illustrate the challenges and potential solutions to these issues.

Technological Issues

Leader: Benő Csapó, University of Szeged, Hungary

Core team members: John Ainley, Australian Council for Educational Research, Australia; Randy Bennett, Educational Testing Service, USA; Thibaud Latour, Centre de Recherche Public Henri Tudor, Luxembourg; Nancy Law, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

After the San Diego meeting, the group continued the discussion on structuring the issues and identifying the ones that should be dealt with in its White Paper. A two-day workshop was conducted at the University of Szeged, with the participation of several members of the project. Beyond the Szeged research group, three major research centres were represented.

The group has identified the key developments of the field, the major research groups dealing with similar issues, the technological bottlenecks that prevent the proliferation of technology-based assessment, and possible research areas that may help to overcome the difficulties.

Classroom Learning Environments and Formative Evaluation

Co-leader: John Bransford, University of Washington, USA; Marlene Scardamalia, University of Toronto, Canada

Core team members: Bob Kozma, Kozmalone Consulting; Edys Quellmalz, WestEd, USA; Dan Schwartz, Stanford University, USA

The team leaders and Bob Kozma have developed a shared view of 21st Century skills that will drive its reviews. Drafts from the Working Group on 21st Century Skills have been of considerable assistance; these drafts are being used to establish priorities for identifying relevant classroom learning environments and formative assessment routines. The group may also collect some cases that don't seem to fit 21st Century skills in order to provide contrasting cases and to help with communication.

The second front for the group's work is to begin a "bottom up" search for classroom environments that clearly seem relevant for 21st Century skills. This may eventually help with some redefinition of 21st Century skills.

Policy Frameworks for New Assessments

Leader: Linda Darling-Hammond, Stanford University, USA

Core team members: Founder country nominees have been invited; Seamus Hegarty, International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA); Andreas Schleicher, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

This Working Group is in the process of being formed. Research has begun on the policy systems for performance assessment already in place in some of these countries, plus a few others beyond the Founder countries. Each member will contribute information on the assessment system frameworks in use in these countries, and on salient current and future policy issues affecting assessment contexts.

FIVE FOUNDER COUNTRIES JOIN PROJECT

The Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills project provides for countries to participate at two levels with up to six invited to be Founder Countries. Those invited have been selected on the basis of national education quality, technological advancement particularly in education, geographic and cultural balance, and experience in international cooperation in education.

Australia, Finland, Portugal, Singapore and the United Kingdom have joined as Founder Countries. One further invitation has been issued and a response is awaited. Now that the Founder Countries have joined, other countries that have expressed interest in connecting with the project will be invited to join.

CONFERENCE ON DRAFT WHITE PAPERS SCHEDULED

The Working Group leaders will meet in San Francisco on 17-18 October 2009 to review and discuss advanced drafts of the White Papers and to consider the details of the proposed research and development agenda for 2010 and 2011.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

When the core teams have produced first drafts of their White Papers they will share them for review and comment with the broader membership of their Working Groups. This collaborative work is being undertaken in a *basecamp* site managed at the project headquarters at the University of Melbourne.

This *basecamp* site has recently undergone a restructuring to facilitate clearer lines of communication within project areas. A large group of individuals and organisations wishing to Get Involved in the project have now been registered and initially allocated to the new 'Project Updates' area. These people will receive email alerts when updates are made to the project website (www.atc21s.org). Notification that this *Project Update* has been posted will be the first such message received. Others wishing to receive such alerts can register via the 'Get Involved' form on the website.

