

Craftopolis – the creative learning environment

The creative learning environment guides students in creativity and working life problems, and teaches them how to use multidisciplinary information and problem-based processes in flexible and versatile ways in order to find, develop and design more consumer-oriented products. The new product concepts can be based on e.g. stories, history, cultural heritage, trends or customer research. The learning environment aims to meet the challenges of increasing competitiveness, consumer awareness, different lifestyles and society. The learning environment uses creativity and creative methods. Creativity plays an important role in the EU's policy to make the EU the most competitive and dynamic information society by 2010 (Lisbon Agenda).

The structure of the learning environment is flexible and versatile. Use of the e-CIT learning environment is not limited to a certain didactic model, but can be tailored to the didactic system of the country or of a class. It can for instance be applied for all three years or just one year of studies. Because it is virtual, the learning environment opens new doors in how and where learning can take place.

The pedagogic approach of the learning environment is constructive, containing elements of experience (through stories), problem-based learning, and, of course, creativity. Information is processed actively.

The learning environment contains 53 tasks divided into three levels of difficulty. The first level relates to practising basic skills (entrepreneurship, product development,

etc.), while at the second level, students start to combine the bits of information they have acquired. The third level is the most demanding, including holistic problem-detecting and solving, and requiring the application of skills obtained on both the preceding levels. Each task is presented in the form of a story taking place in the city of Craftopolis. The teacher is able to select the levels and tasks most suitable for the teaching and the class.

How can you use e-CIT in your school?

The e-CIT creative e-learning environment is not tied to time or place. It contains learning material and does not require a specific curriculum; instead, it can be applied to various curricula. The e-CIT learning environment is easy to use. It does not require specific computer software or extended knowledge of ICT. You can manage with basic skills.

Below are some examples and possibilities related to the use of the learning environment.

Teaching materials

- Study materials for courses, for use in normal teaching. The most suitable tasks can be selected from the list.
- Can be used completely virtually or combined with face-to-face teaching.
- Can be applied to longer or shorter periods of study, e.g. one year or three years.
- Can be developed to be a part of the school's curriculum.
- Use during training periods: the students'

obligatory training periods in companies might include normal studies. If the host company is located far away, it is difficult for students to participate in classes. A virtual learning environment enables simultaneous participation.

Individual needs

- Students often have different backgrounds. The learning materials can be tailored to their needs.
- The learning materials can be customised to the different study orientation needs of the students.

Overlapping schedules and skipping classes

- Overlapping schedules: if two courses are organised at the same time, students do not need to skip classes if one of them is virtual.
- Late entry and long absences: students can catch up with the studies using e-CIT if entering the school late or after a lengthy absence.
- Enables strict timetables for both students and teachers.
- Personal study speed: class must follow the average rate of learning, which can be frustrating for faster and slower learners. E-learning enables learning at one's own pace.

Distance

- Can be used in regions with difficult connections and long distances.
- Enables comments and monitoring of the studies by experts and teachers living in other areas.
- Equalizing students: allows the same possibilities for all, regardless of the place of residence.

International, national, mixing practices

- Enables internationalisation and multidisciplinary in learning.
- Enables providing examples of how the same problems are solved in different cultures.

How do I participate?

There are two versions of the learning environment:

1. The free-to-use version containing all the material necessary for teaching. There are a number of tasks, plus a gallery and other areas of the learning environment to use. The free version does not provide any services and does therefore not store any of the students' work (in the tasks).
2. The service-providing version. This version stores all the phases of the tasks. The service-providing version is usable against a small licensing fee each year. For this version, please contact the administrator.

If you wish to use the Craftopolis learning environment in teaching or need more information, please contact

tanja.oraviita@taik.fi
or telephone on
+358 (0)6 357 6332.

More information can be found on the website at <http://www.muova.fi/e-cit>.



Partners

P1. Western Finland Design Centre MUOVA, University of Art and Design (UIAH), University of Vaasa (UWASA) (Finland)

P2. Estonian Academy of Arts, Design innovation centre (EAA) (Estonia)

P4. TAIKU, Seinäjoki Vocational Educational Centre (Finland)

P5. Taito Group, The Finnish craft organization (silent partner) (Finland)

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Education and Culture

Leonardo da Vinci

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