



Social Innovation Lab

"We work across disciplines to inspire and empower people and organizations to solve emerging societal challenges."

Dr. Vasil Kotevski



About us

Welcome to SmartUp – Social Innovation Lab, where we harness **the power of innovation** to drive meaningful social change.

As North Macedonia's first innovation lab, we set out with a clear mission: **to tackle pressing societal challenges through bold, forward-thinking, co-created solutions**. Our work centres on four core pillars: **education, youth, climate change, and public sector innovation**.

We are committed to shaping a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable future, **with and for all**.

Mission

We use tailored design processes to understand complex challenges & co-create lasting solutions by connecting & collaborating with organisations & individuals.

Innovation for social good

Vision

Our vision is to shape a sustainable, equitable, and prosperous region transformed by innovation and co-creation.

smartUp

Our Programmes

To co-create an enabling environment where better teaching and learning experiences can evolve.

Education

To empower youth to become active changemakers and contribute to the development of their communities.

Youth

To transform the public sector into innovative and citizen-centred institutions.

Public Sector Innovation

To accelerate the transition to a climate-resilient society.

Climate Change

Impact at a glance



EDUINO Collective Portal

EDUINO is the national platform for digital educational resources, offering video lessons, webinars, guides, and games to support innovative and engaging learning for educators, students, and parents.



SkopjeLab City of Skopje Innovation Centre

SkopjeLab is the first public sector innovation lab in the Balkans, established in July 2017 with a mission to co-create innovative approaches to address challenges facing Skopje and its citizens.



Generation Unlimited Youth Challenge

As part of this global program, we implemented local contests in 2018 and 2019, engaging young people to design innovative solutions to local challenges. Our incubation programs produced winners in the international top 5 challenges for two consecutive years.



Future Cities of South East Europe

Together with 4 other partners from SEE Europe, we worked on making our cities the best places to live, work, and visit by 2025.

Latest work

Promoting a Safe School Environment

We are working with students and educators to support children's right to quality education by strengthening protection, participation, and equality in schools through capacity building and improved support mechanisms.

Community Mobility Co-operatives

We are exploring how shared electric vehicle fleets and community-driven EV charging infrastructure can be supported and leveraged to advance community mobility in South East Europe.

Researching Mechanisms for the Operationalization of the National Development Strategy

We tested how strategic foresight can be leveraged to support North Macedonia's long-term development goals, with a focus on co-creating policy pilots and institutional integration.

Handbooks & guides

ИМПАКТ ИНВЕСТИРАЊЕ
НОВИ МОЖНОСТИ ЗА ФИНАСИРАЊЕ
И ИМПАКТ НА ОПШТИНИТЕ

Водич за развој на портфолио на импакт инвестиции
за Град Скопје

Impact investing
New opportunities for local
government funding and impact

A guidebook documenting the
process for creating an impact
investment portfolio for the
City of Skopje and outlining a
pathway for replication.

Learn more

Скопје
Јули, 2021

**Co-creating crowdfunding
models - policy framework and
models in North Macedonia**

A handbook for local
government and practitioners
synthesising knowledge from
the InnoFinRES project.

Learn more

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Innovation in education
A HOW-TO GUIDE TO INITIATE INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Innovation in education
A how-to guide to initiate
innovative practices

The guide collects learnings and
experiences from the EDUINO
project and community.

Learn more

Meet the team



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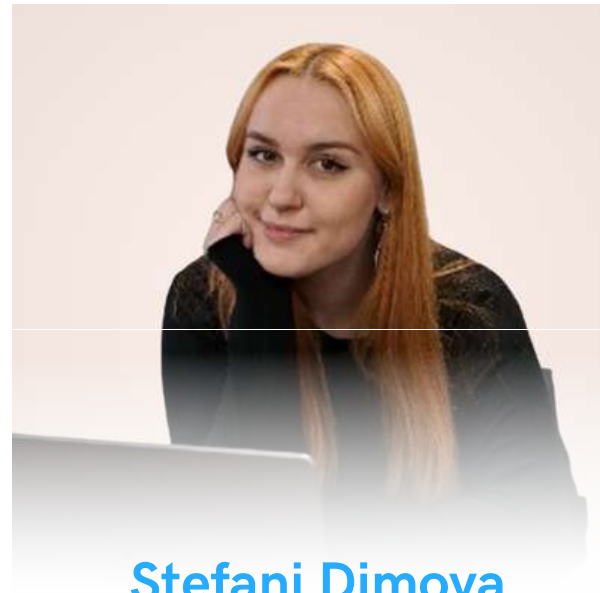
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Innovation for social good



International partners & donors

Supported by:



Pestalozzi Children's Foundation



on the basis of a decision
by the German Bundestag



Implemented by



Horizon 2020
European Union funding
for Research & Innovation

A group of people, including men and women, are smiling and holding up papers or drawings. The image is overlaid with a solid yellow color. The word "EDUCATION" is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

EDUCATION



Program: Education

Evolving Education
Through
Collaborative
Innovation

Goal: To co-create an enabling environment where better teaching and learning experiences can evolve.

Objectives:

- Empower teachers to become innovative educators & education innovators.
- Create and facilitate diverse learning experiences.
- Integrate technology effectively.
- Strengthen partnerships with parents and communities.

Our Approach to Education

We believe meaningful innovation in education comes from understanding learners' needs and the challenges educators face.

By working closely with stakeholders through participatory processes, we identify key needs, co-create ideas, and co-develop solutions tailored to specific contexts. This is how we ensure our work is grounded, user-centred, and delivers meaningful impact.

Education: What we offer

Our Education Program offers a comprehensive suite of services tailored to support educational institutions, policymakers, and organizations in their pursuit of innovation and excellence.

CO-DESIGN AND CO-CREATION

Understanding your needs comes first, leading to co-created, innovative solutions tailored to your goals and context.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Strong learning communities are cultivated, enabling the exchange of ideas, sharing of best practices, and collaboration toward shared goals.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS AND TOOLS

Customizing digital platforms to improve teaching and learning by offering rich resources, collaborative features, and tools for data-driven decision-making.

CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVES:

We offer training, workshops, and hackathons to build the skills needed for driving positive change and empowering educators and organisations to become agents of transformation.

Education: Examples of Our Impact

Our commitment to educational development has resulted in a significant impact on learners, communities, and societies worldwide. Here are a few notable examples:

- **EmpowerED - Digital Self Evaluation Form:** An innovative initiative that creates a digital tool to streamline the development of individual professional growth plans for **teachers in North Macedonia**. By digitizing the self-evaluation process, it addresses gaps in teacher development and helps educators design relevant, personalized plans.
- **Promoting Safe School Environment:** This project aims to strengthen legal measures that empower student participation and protect children, improve schools' ability to prevent and address violence, and promote inclusive teaching methods **supporting protection, participation, and equal opportunities**.



Education: Examples of Our Impact



- **SafeCyberEDU - Cybersecurity Training for Teachers:** With this project, we equipped educators in North Macedonia with essential online safety skills through an EduLab course, engaged **894 teachers** and **1,500+ webinar participants**, and promoted lasting cybersecurity awareness with ongoing access to resources.
- **EduInclusion - Innovation for Every Child:** This project co-created educational tools to **support children with Special Educational Needs** (SEN), especially in communication, by involving students, educators, and parents in a participatory process of research, design, and prototyping to ensure relevance and usability.
- **JUST SMART / Shtreber Education Portal:** SmartUp customized the platform for the Macedonian environment and trained **20 educators** to use digital learning tools effectively and create quality content.

Education: Examples of Our Impact



- **EDUINO: Collectively Improving Education Through Co-Creation and Innovation:** SmartUp took this opportunity to further develop an existing initiative, introducing the EDUINO community—a collaborative network of educators, parents, students, creators, designers, and developers dedicated to **improving education during this critical time**. The school closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic led to the creation of the EDUINO Collective Portal.
- **Creative Business Cup (N.Macedonia):** Largest global competition for innovative and creative startups, with local entries in over **70 countries**. The competition aimed to help startups scale their businesses by offering space, tools, and knowledge, while also establishing national and international connections. The initiative included a 7-day Business Academy and a national multi-sector debate, contributing to the development of creative industries in the country.

Education: Examples of Our Impact



- **New Technologies as Entrepreneurship and Innovation Boosters - 3D Modeling and 3D Printing Workshops for High School Students (N.Macedonia) #2:** Equipped **32 high school students** with hands-on experience in 3D technologies, sparking interest in integrating 3D technology into schools. Participants learned modeling software and printed their own designs, gaining valuable skills.
- **#Inno4Edu - Setting Up an Enabling Environment for Improving Quality Teaching and Learning Through Co-Creation and Innovation (N.Macedonia):** A national educational portal that promotes collaborative creation of learning resources. It engaged teachers, parents, and children through interactive events and challenges. The platform supports **diverse learning tools** and socio-emotional development, with plans for long-term integration into national education.

Our belief

If you want to be incrementally better, **be competitive.**

If you want to be exponentially better, **be cooperative.**

We see problems as **opportunities**, and we believe that individuals and communities are the best agents of **sustainable development.**



Partner with us

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