

In the framework of the Seventh Plenary Session of the IX Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education of the OAS

PROFUTURO SIGNS AN AGREEMENT WITH THE OAS TO PROMOTE DIGITAL EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Bahamas, February 10, 2017. With the commitment of encouraging the development of Digital Education in the area, the executive secretary for the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission CITELE, Oscar León, and Kim Osborne, the executive secretary for Integral Development of the Organization of American States OAS, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sofía Fernández de Mesa, the director of ProFuturo, to establish a framework for the ProFuturo program implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the purpose of improving the educative quality through digital education.

This new agreement for the expansion of ProFuturo is in line with the commitments and the objectives planned during the 2030 ICT Alliance for the Americas, promoted by CITELE and signed in June 2016 by the Secretary General of the OAS, Luis Almagro; César Alierta, President of Fundación Telefónica and the main ICT companies of Latin America. This alliance aims to meet the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the UN, reducing poverty through the integration of ICT to the national policies of the member states of the OAS.

Towards Implementation of the Inter-American Education Agenda

The director of ProFuturo, Sofía Fernández de Mesa, participated in the Seventh Plenary Session of the IX Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education of the OAS titled "Towards Implementation of the Inter-American Education Agenda – Building Alliances, Education and Information and Communication Technologies," where she talked about the importance of digital education to meet the objectives of the Inter-American Education Agenda, as well as the potential of digitalization for the general development of countries and their societies, in terms of innovation, productivity, efficiency and competitiveness, with positive consequences for their economic growth.

Fernández de Mesa also stated that the implementation of ICT in education allows for expanding the coverage of an education of a greater quality for everybody at a lower

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cost, stressing that a true democratization of the access to knowledge can be achieved through digital education, guaranteeing equal opportunities for everybody.

In addition, during her intervention, the director of ProFuturo talked about the goal of expanding the geographical scope of the program, bringing it to the Latin American countries where Telefónica operates, and made a formal call to the Caribbean governments asking for their support in the implementation of the program in their countries. These actions for the expansion of ProFuturo are supported by the OAS and are defined on the Memorandum of Understanding, which was signed during the meeting.

Commitments to the 2030 ICT Alliance for the Americas

The commitments of Telefónica to the 2030 ICT Alliance for the Americas aim to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) #3 and #4 and are organized, apart from ProFuturo, around 3 open and free training platforms developed by Telefónica Educación Digital:

1. **ScolarTIC** : a learning social space of innovation and educational quality that offers free online courses and classroom resources as well as talks, presentations and workshops aimed at teachers and future teachers. At present, more than 220,000 teachers participate on this platform.
2. **STEMByME** : a learning and entertainment space for young Ibero-American people that aims to awaken their interest in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) for the purpose of providing them with new experiences for the acquisition of knowledge. At present, more than 120,000 young people participate, learn and carry out challenges on this platform.
3. **MiríadaX**: the first Ibero-American MOOCs (Massive Online Open Courses) platform that focuses on encouraging knowledge in higher education. MiríadaX has 3 million users, more than 500 courses and a network formed by more than 100 universities and institutions with 1,900 teachers, with the goal of supporting the dissemination of free and collaborative knowledge between the students and the experts.

The activities that are currently taking place on these platforms to meet the commitments to the 2030 ICT Alliance for the Americas are as follows:

- Launch of the competition **“STEM4GoodAmericas”** associated with **STEMbyME** and **Scolartic** for the creation of mobile applications by young entrepreneurs from 14 to 18 years old. This competition aims to improve the quality of education and

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develop ICT talent in the new digital economy. Teachers and students can now participate and register on: <https://www.stembyme.com/stem4good-registrate>.

- Training of teachers from the Inter-American Teacher Education Network (ITEN) through SclarTIC, with activities that promote educational innovation in the classroom and through technical cooperation with the Ministers of Education from the Americas. Therefore, all teachers that are trained on SclarTIC will obtain a certificate of completion accredited by the OAS.
- Development of MOOCs on [MiríadaX](#), aimed to promote Digital Education and key contents for the development of democratic values. The OAS will have their own space within [MiríadaX](#) with online courses (MOOCs) with key contents about democratic values.

About ProFuturo

ProFuturo is an educational programme introduced by Fundación Telefónica and Fundación Bancaria "la Caixa" whose mission is to reduce the world's education gap, through providing quality digital education to children in vulnerable areas of Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and South-east Asia. The initiative is based on incorporating technology, educational content and teaching-learning methodologies for teachers and pupils alike with the aim of transforming the education of 10 million boys and girls by 2020. Additionally, the intention of the project is to accept and encourage participation from other companies and institutions, with the ambition of creating a great international network of centres for teaching, learning and sharing knowledge so that, between all of us, we can achieve better education worldwide.

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