Future Proof Skills

Equipping students with the skills to thrive in a changing world of work

The nature of work is changing. This period of profound and rapid change is being shaped by <u>digitization</u>, <u>automation</u>, <u>artificial intelligence</u>, <u>climate change</u>, and <u>interconnected remote work</u>. Employers are looking for people who can collaborate to solve complex problems and create new innovations.
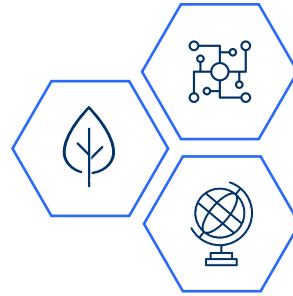
To respond, Education Development Center developed Future Proof Skills. This comprehensive **work-readiness and skills-development program is designed for higher education students and graduates** and will enable them to not only join the workforce, but to also thrive in any type of work environment.

Youth Workforce Skills and Learning Outcomes

Moving beyond traditional technical skills, Future Proof Skills focuses on the competencies, behaviors, and abilities required by today's labor market and for the jobs of the future to prepare students to join the workforce.

In Future Proof Skills, students develop competencies in eight skill areas:

Resilience, Adaptability, and Continuous Learning
Adapt to new and changing situations by being open to learning new skills and coping with the unexpected

Communication and Collaboration
Effectively communicate and collaborate online and in person in a diverse work setting

Critical Thinking
Test and develop creative solutions to complex problems by using critical-thinking and analytical skills

Creativity and Innovation
Develop innovative solutions that give a business an edge in the market and meet the needs of the consumer

Digital Skills
Thrive in digital-centric workplaces and use technology tools in the workplace comfortably and responsibly

Navigating Career Pathways
Set career goals that align with market opportunities and personal interests and build a professional network and a career portfolio to find work

Diversity and Inclusion Skills
Mindfully interact and communicate with people from different backgrounds and set a positive example for others

Green and Blue Skills
Consider the environmental impact of workplace decisions and identify economic opportunities that benefit the planet

How Students Learn Is as Important as What They Learn

Through work-integrated learning, students develop and implement workplace projects for local businesses, providing them with real-world experience solving problems and developing creative solutions.

Learning takes place online, as well as in person, to increase students' comfort level in working digitally.

Our Methodology:

Depending on a program's preferences, the workplace project process can take place after Career Pathways or in parallel.

CAREER PATHWAYS

Students:

Identify local and global industry trends

Improve **core skills**, such as resilience, professional behaviors, emotional intelligence, and networking

Develop a career portfolio and a professional development plan

Evaluate their skills in comparison to local demand

WORKPLACE PROJECT PREPARATION

Students:

Conduct informational interviews with workplace staff

Explore workplace problems

Co-create a workplace project

Develop a digital skill

WORKPLACE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Students:

Implement a workplace project

Apply a digital skill

Analyze data for decision-making

Consider **inclusion** and **environmental** factors

Produce a final deliverable

Teaching and learning methodologies

Blended learning:
– E-learning lessons
– In-person classes deepen learning

Student-driven learning:
– Self-paced learning requirements
– Opportunities to make choices

Work exposure:
– Workplace observations
– Informational interviews

Workplace projects:
– Works with a host organization
– Addresses a workplace problem
– Results in a final product

Digital skills development:
– Identifies a digital skill to improve
– Aligns with skills and goals

EDC partners with higher education institutions—colleges, universities, and TVETs—to align academic programs, prepare graduates to meet local labor market needs, and strengthen local education and economic systems. Future Proof Skills is a flexible program and is always adapted to the local system.

IN LIBERIA

2,600 youth from **11** institutions will have gone through Future Proof Skills by 2026, improving job readiness and contributing to the economic self-reliance and resiliency of Liberian youth.

IN LEBANON

In Lebanon, EDC prepared **10** universities to enhance graduates' job readiness for local and global markets, training over **1,000** staff across **39** campuses.

IN VIETNAM

Vietnam National University will use Future Proof Skills for their new regional leadership training program.

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I joined the Future Proof Skills program from its inception, and the skills I have acquired through this training have opened doors to numerous opportunities, including digital skills, work-based activities, project implementation, business start-up, and management.

—Talha V. Al-Sheriff, Liberia

Supporting Youth to Address Climate Change

Through the <u>Our World, Our Work</u> initiative, EDC has committed to a 10-year mission to meaningfully integrate at least 1 million young people into the green economy and empower them toward climate action.

Initiatives include:

The Environment, Climate, and Biodiversity of the Mekong Region, developed with Columbia University: Using data-driven and practice-informed methods, youth explore environmental, climate, and biodiversity issues; develop foundational knowledge; and identify solutions.

Future Proof Skills for Leadership: An adaptation of Future Proof Skills for young environmental leaders, focusing on sustainability in the workplace and finding one's place in the green and blue economy.

Leadership in Action: An adaptation of the workplace project methodology where young leaders tackle environmental issues in collaboration with local organizations.

For further information on Future Proof Skills please contact <u>OWOW@edc.org</u>.

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Education Development Center

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