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Imagination: The Superpower of the 21st Century

“These deep powers of imagination are at the heart of what it is to be human being.” - The late Sir Ken Robinson, Founding iOi Patron

Children today face an uncertain future. In a world that is changing faster than ever before, our outdated education system is underpreparing our children for our future world. The World Economic Forum estimates that by 2025, 85 million jobs may be displaced by a shift in the division of labour between humans and machines. Critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity top the list of skills that employers believe will grow in prominence in the next five years. Yet these skills continue to be undervalued in our current system.



We know that some children might be lucky enough to access extra-curricular activities to support these skills, but the majority of children, and particularly those from marginalised or disadvantaged backgrounds, are being left behind. Data published by the Government in September 2022 showed the attainment gap between disadvantaged primary school pupils and their better-off peers has widened to its largest level in 10 years due to the impact of COVID 19. For pupils with special educational needs, just 18 per cent are now reaching the expected levels.

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At the Institute of Imagination (iOi), we believe that every child should have the opportunity to develop the critical skills needed to live in an increasingly unequal world. Our strategy focuses on supporting children through two core streams of work; Impacting Children and Impacting the System.

Impacting Children

We have four key delivery streams to directly support children and educators in their ecosystem. In all areas of our work, we focus on four main competencies which are original thinking, resilience, aspiration and curiosity. We design our programmes to ensure there is an interdisciplinary focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Maths. Our programmes are entirely free of charge for 5 -11 year olds from the most marginalised and disadvantaged communities.

iOi Schools Programme

An explorative and immersive cross-curricular programme providing creative learning across the arts, sciences, and digital technologies. The 3 stage programme includes teacher CPD, live workshops broadcast into the classroom by our facilitators, and a show-and-tell session.

Digital Heroes

Digital Heroes is an immersive digital access and digital skills programme for children who may not otherwise be in traditional education settings. The programme is designed to increase creative thinking, digital literacy and skills, as well as build children's confidence and aspiration.

Platforms

Through our website we provide access to our programmes for children, families and educators who can watch, experience and discover how iOi can spark imagination and inspire creativity through learning.

Products

Our Imagination Box has been designed to inspire creativity and imaginations, supporting intellectual and emotional development specifically for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) but available to all children.

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Impacting the Learning System

As an Institution, we believe we have a responsibility not just to be a doer but also a catalyser, to share our expertise and accelerate our campaign to bring creativity back into our learning system. This is a new stream of work for the iOi but with the strong ties we have already developed with thought leaders , by 2025 we will:

- Deliver and publish Imagination unique Research to underpin future programmes and campaigns
- Launch our Imagination Matters Campaign to raise profile, amplify thought leadership, share learnings, and create change
- Host an Imagination Summit for leaders around the world to champion the power of the imagination
- Create an Imaginator Network to ensure the voices of diverse groups of children are heard
- Develop Imagination Awards to recognise and encourage schools, companies and educators who are going the extra mile to champion creativity



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Impact

The Institute of Imagination is committed to capturing and demonstrating our impact across all of our work to ensure our charitable aims are making a difference, to improve our work across our programmes, platforms and products and to report back to stakeholders including funders and participants. Over the years we have used various methods to measure our impact according to the context of the need for our work and our proposed solutions. Today, led by our new Theory of Change, our Impact Measurement Framework has been re-assessed, studied and further refined by our team with the support and guidance of impact and data partner, Trust Impact.

How we measure Impact

Our Impact Measurement Framework (IMF) works through a collection of reliable, valid and pragmatic impact data using assessment measures and impact tools across four key measurement indicators. We measure the progress made by participants, baselining before and capturing the same data after, to measure the change that has taken place. Our IMF focuses on four categories: Creativity and creative thinking, Aspiration, Value of imagination and creativity as a key skill, Value of the conditions for imagination and creativity to thrive.

Our Impact

Since we launched in 2011 over 140,000 children aged 5-11 and their families have participated in our work. As a result we have also reached many more hundreds of thousands of parents, teachers and carers through our wider work.

In the past 2 years, we have engaged **64,200** children and young people, **5773** children with SEND, **63** schools, and **656** teachers and education professionals.



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Imagination: The Superpower of the 21st Century Campaign

We receive no government or statutory funding, relying entirely on the generous support of philanthropists who share our vision. And that's why we are launching "Imagination: The Superpower of the 21st Century" campaign to raise £5 million to champion the power of imagination and to help more children reimagine their futures.

We aim to scale our tried and tested programmes into schools and community hubs to reach 500,000 marginalised children by 2025. We will also train and empower educators and community leaders to deliver creative learning experiences to millions more.

Not only that, we are collaborating with leading academics and thought leaders in imagination to champion the importance of imagination, creativity and ambition for these children.

We would be delighted to share more information about our work with you. Please email Amandeep at amandeep@ioi.london. Thank you for your time and consideration.



'From uncertainty comes challenge and the opportunity to reimagine our world' - Basil Demeroutis , Chair of Trustees