

Edtech startup scopes global opportunities with Expo 2020 Dubai grant award

Today (August 12) is International Youth Day and with the theme this year being “Transforming Education”, UK EdTech company ScienceScope, is leading the way in making education more inclusive and accessible for youth across the globe.

The Somerset-based start-up which develops technology to upskill students with tools around the ‘Internet of Things’ (IoT), has been awarded an Expo Live Innovation Impact Grant thanks in part to support from the Department for International Trade (DIT). The grant will be used to implement a digital pilot scheme at schools in the Gulf region and beyond.

ScienceScope has already started making in-roads globally outside of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), such as securing a deal with the National Institute of Education in Singapore last year, which will see the company build an IoT lab on-site and provide every school in Singapore with 300 micro:bits – its flagship product, within the next three years.

To further push the company’s export ambitions, DIT has provided it with an ‘Export for Growth’ grant to support international business development activities. Initiatives like Export for Growth have played a significant role in ScienceScope’s achievements, with total exports now accounting for 90% of overall sales.

ScienceScope CEO David Crellin said:

Since meeting with DIT to discuss the grant scheme at Expo 2020 Dubai, I knew it was the right opportunity to bring our products to schools in the region. The Gulf States represents a hugely untapped market where we can offer expertise to enhance the students’ learning experience around technology.

DIT really kicked things off with the grant application, and we were ecstatic once notified of being successful.

DIT became aware of ScienceScope’s domestic success and approached the company to discuss how its education technology could be taken into schools overseas. DIT’s International Trade Advisors (ITAs) kept in regular contact with the company to explore opportunities, one being the ‘Innovation Impact Grant Programme’ from Expo Live, which supports innovative initiatives that encapsulate the spirit of Expo 2020 Dubai.

David Crellin continues:

We're in discussion with quite a few nations about our products, including Nigeria, Ghana, Kazakhstan and parts of Malaysia which is fantastic. Our short-term ambition is to implement the Digital Maker Programme in schools across five markets within the next two years.

DIT is really focused on supporting companies like ours, and we've had a significant amount of support from them. Working with DIT has been invaluable as they really kick started our exporting process, and we look forward to pushing on with our international expansion plans.

The company's Digital Maker Programme is a scheme in which educators are empowered to support students in schools to develop innovation and creativity skills and demonstrate how technology interaction can be incorporated throughout the curriculum to solve real problems.

Laura Faulkner OBE, UK Commissioner General and Project Director for the UK Pavilion, Expo 2020 Dubai, said:

I am delighted that not only is DIT leading the UK's participation in Expo 2020 Dubai on behalf of Government, but we are also utilising this global platform to promote leading British expertise and innovation.

ScienceScope is a fantastic example of a pioneering British business setting the bar high in its sector. The company has been incredibly successful in finding new markets and helping to develop global solutions, allowing pupils and teachers to learn and teach to their full potential.

ScienceScope is based in Downside School near Bath, offering significant opportunities for the company to work with the students and teachers on a range of new projects. For example, in the autumn/winter term of this year, the EdTech firm will be implementing a Science and Technology project in which pupils will programme the micro:bit as a datalogger to conduct Science investigations into reaction time, sound level and cooling/heating curves.

Loss of brake control on a passenger train approaching Edinburgh Waverley

At about 07:26 hrs on Thursday 1 August 2019, train 1B26, the Edinburgh portion of the 23:36 hrs 'Lowland Sleeper' service from London Euston, failed to stop as scheduled at Edinburgh Waverley station. It was brought to a stand approximately 650 metres beyond its intended stopping point. There was no damage or any injuries as a consequence of the incident. However, the outcome could potentially have been much worse, had it led to a collision with another train.

The train comprised eight Mark 5 coaches hauled by a Class 92 electric locomotive that had been attached at Carstairs. On the approach to Edinburgh the driver discovered that his train's braking performance was well below normal. The RAIB's preliminary investigation indicates that he had no control of the brakes on the coaches because a brake pipe isolating valve was in the closed position when the train left Carstairs station. This meant that the only effective brakes on the train as it approached Edinburgh were those on the locomotive, which were insufficient to maintain control of the train. The train was brought to a stand by the operation of an emergency device in one of the coaches by the Train Manager, which caused the train brakes to apply.

The RAIB's investigation will identify the sequence of events that led to the incident and will include consideration of:

- how the isolating valve came to be closed at Carstairs;
- the preparation of the train at Carstairs, including the attachment of the locomotive and testing of the train's brakes;
- how the train was driven;
- the suitability of relevant procedures and working practices;
- the design and approval of the brake system fitted to the Mark 5 coaches; and
- any relevant underlying management or organisational factors.

The train operator issued a safety alert to the industry on 5 August 2019 (NIR 3350/224) reminding railway staff of the importance of carrying out the brake continuity test after all other train preparation activities.

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

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