



experimental school environments

deadline for pre-proposals: 18 november 1997
proposal deadline: 16 february 1998

experimental school environments

There is a need to balance current introduction of technology in schools with a long term vision of the future. Esprit, the European Commission's IT research programme, will provide up to 13 million ECUs for projects that aim at investigating new paradigms for learning in schools. Launched by Esprit's Long Term Research unit, "Experimental School Environments" (ESE) is a visionary and exploratory initiative, that aims to research new kinds of IT-based tools or environments designed for the enhancement of learning. This effort is the result of a collaboration between the European Commission's directorates for Industry (DGIII), Telecommunications (DGXIII) and Education (DGXXII). The ESE call focuses on early learning, typically children in the age range of 4 to 8. Children in this age are at their most open and expressive, not having yet been pre-conditioned into particular modes of thinking or expression.



ESE will look at the development of key skills such as creative problem solving, self-expression, working in teams and above all learning to learn, making learning a fun and engaging experience through innovation in technology. The new paradigms should encourage the active participation of pupils and teachers, and extend to include parents or members of the community if necessary, empowering the people involved with meaningful roles in the learning process. The educational tools designed to enable new approaches to learning could be based on new types of devices, artefacts, or environments, that support interaction with one or more senses. The tools could be portable, wearable or sharable, and could have toy-like or game-like characteristics. They could be based on new systems that allow for the easy creation and access to information, supporting interaction and sharing between groups of people. With ESE, Esprit hopes to bring together schools, children, teachers, educationalists, technologists, IT industries, publishers, toy-makers, artists, and designers, to explore new relationships between technology and learning.



Esprit explores new learning futures for kids



Projects launched under the ESE call will be encouraged to interact and will benefit from a range of i3net services. i3net, the European Network for Intelligent Information Interfaces, already provides services for thirteen cooperating projects which began work in the summer of 1997. Exploring and prototyping radically new human-centred systems and interfaces for interacting with information, which are aimed at the broad population, these projects share an important number of objectives with the envisioned ESE research projects. For information on the research and its progress, and i3net's activities, consult the i3net Web pages or contact the Coordinator.

i3net Coordinator Niels Ole Bernsen

The Maersk Mc-Kinney Moller Institute for Production Technology Odense University, Campusvej 55, 5230 Odense M, Denmark tel. +45 6557 3544, fax +45 6615 7697

e-mail coordinator@i3net.org, URL <http://www.i3net.org/>

Additional details on the ESE initiative can be obtained at the following WWW address

<http://www.i3net.org/schools/>

or from the Esprit Long Term Research unit, by contacting either

Norman Sadeh

Norman.Sadeh@dg3.cec.be

tel: +32 (2) 2953287, fax: +32 (2) 2968390 or

Jakub Wejchert

Jakub.Wejchert@dg3.cec.be

tel: +32 (2) 296 8032, fax: +32 (2) 296 8390