



Digital Promise Awards First Edtech Provider to Receive New AI Product Certification

SoapBox Labs is recognized by Digital Promise and the EdTech Equity Project for its work to intentionally identify and mitigate racial bias across its technology

OCTOBER 20, 2022 | Washington, D.C. – Global nonprofit [Digital Promise](#) and the [Edtech Equity Project](#) awarded the first product certification to an educational technology (edtech) company that met the criteria for the [Prioritizing Racial Equity in AI Design](#) Product Certification. These product certifications serve as rigorous, reliable signals for education companies, school administrators, educators, and families looking to select technology that was designed to intentionally meet learners’ authentic and variable needs.

Speech technology company [SoapBox Labs](#) is the first company to receive the Prioritizing Racial Equity in AI Design Product Certification. SoapBox Labs’ voice technology has been designed specifically for kids’ unique speech patterns and powers some of the most widely used digital learning tools for literacy and language instruction and assessment across all grades PreK-12.

To earn the certification, SoapBox Labs submitted evidence confirming that they are:

1. Intentional and transparent about the design of their technology to prioritize equity;
2. Critical, collaborative, and reflective in the iterative improvements of their technology to commit to developing an equitable tool; and
3. Accountable for delivering technology that establishes equitable and powerful learning experiences and outcomes that recognize and address learner variability.

"This award not only recognizes SoapBox Labs' commitment to racial equity but also constitutes a meaningful step forward for the edtech industry," said Nidhi Hebbar, co-founder of the Edtech Equity Project. "[Fellow co-founder] Madison Jacobs and I are thrilled to see SoapBox Labs deliver best-in-class voice-enabled technology that sets a high standard for the industry by investing in the critical work required to ensure their AI works well for learners of color".

In an effort to mitigate racial bias throughout product design, this Product Certification prioritizes racial equity by proactively identifying and minimizing racial bias in product

algorithms and design as well as requiring products to be transparent about the design processes and the actions they take to identify and reduce racial bias. This certification is the first in a stack of Product Certifications that will recognize edtech products that center racial equity throughout design and development.

“AI has tremendous promise to impact learning, especially for supporting teachers and learners who are furthest from opportunity,” said Vic Vuchic, chief strategy officer at Digital Promise. “That said, AI can have bias that impacts certain populations disproportionately. That is why Digital Promise is so excited to partner with the Edtech Equity Project to signal critical design best practices that can mitigate these biases for educators and learners of color. This product certification will help educators and learners find products that are committed to implementing these best practices and focused on making sure AI works for learners of color.”

Applications for the [Prioritizing Racial Equity in AI Design](#) Product Certification are now open on the Digital Promise [platform](#).

Visit Digital Promise’s website to learn more about Product Certifications. Resources to create equitable edtech tools can be found in the [Edtech Equity’s toolkit](#).

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About Digital Promise

Digital Promise is a global nonprofit working to expand opportunity for every learner. We work with educators, researchers, technology leaders, and communities to design, investigate, and scale innovations that support learners, especially those who've been historically and systematically excluded. Our vision is that every person engages in powerful learning experiences that lead to a life of well-being, fulfillment, and economic mobility. For more information, visit the [Digital Promise website](#) and follow [@digitalpromise](#) for updates.

About The Edtech Equity Project

The Edtech Equity Project provides edtech companies with tangible, technical practices for more equitable product design and development, and provides guidance for schools to prioritize racial equity during the edtech evaluation and procurement process. Our goal is to create strong partnerships across schools, communities, and the edtech industry to champion the needs of Black and Brown students. For more information, visit the [Edtech Equity Project](#) website and follow [@edtechquity](#) for updates.