



Digital Promise and CAST Announce New Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Product Certification

The Product Certification serves as a signal to district leaders for edtech products that enable meaningful participation from all students.

JANUARY 17, 2022 | Washington, D.C. – Global education nonprofit, [Digital Promise](#), in partnership with and education research and development nonprofit, [CAST](#) and with support from the [Educating All Learners Alliance](#), is excited to announce a new [Universal Design of Learning \(UDL\) Product Certification](#) to help inform educators who are evaluating the accessibility and usability of edtech products. With the number of edtech products to consider and the usage of those products increasing daily, this new certification promises to increase the clarity and transparency that educators have in making important purchase decisions.

The UDL certification is designed to evaluate how strongly an edtech product’s design is aligned to the UDL framework. It reviews how the product promotes high expectations so a wide range of learners are able to achieve their learning goals through intentional design features that are essential for some and available for all learners. Products must provide transparent communication about accessibility practices and conformance to customers, and must align to the UDL Guidelines, demonstrating how the product’s design features provide multiple ways for learners to engage with the learning experience, access the learning materials, and express their knowledge and skills.

“Inclusive design for learning is essential to meet the unique strengths and needs of learners,” said Christina Luke Luna, chief learning officer overseeing pathways and credentials initiatives at Digital Promise. “Digital Promise is thrilled to partner with CAST on the Universal Design for Learning Product Certification to recognize the edtech products that prioritize inclusion and align with UDL Guidelines.”

The UDL framework and guidelines are used globally to make learning more inclusive. UDL is central to edtech product design—accessibility standards and the UDL framework and guidelines ensure products prioritize multiple ways for users to build background, engage, and share learning. Earners of the certification will also receive a digital Open Badge, which

indicates the product has gone through the UDL product certification process and has been verified by CAST's evaluation.

"Education leaders are charged with making informed decisions that protect students and elevate learning, but too often they are inundated with information that isn't helpful or specific enough to meet their needs," said Lindsay E. Jones, chief executive officer of CAST. "CAST's UDL Product Certification helps motivate edtech developers to create more inclusive products, while enabling schools and districts to cut through the noise and make more informed choices when looking for products that are accessible and meet the needs of all their learners."

"Our hope is that, similar to badging associated with privacy or data interoperability, educators can look for this certification for a clear signal regarding which tools are accessible and designed using UDL. When we can shift to centering these best UDL practices in edtech, all students, not just students with disabilities, will benefit," says Erin Mote, executive director at InnovateEDU. "We look forward to adding this certification to our [Tech Tool Library](#), a library which features accessibility features and information for popular edtech products all in one place."

Since February 2020, Digital Promise has issued more than 100 certifications to tools intentionally designed to meet learners' needs. Additionally, Digital Promise offers Learner Variability certifications based on a whole learner teaching found in Digital Promise's [Learner Variability Navigator](#).

Applications remain open on the Digital Promise [website](#) for product developers interested in applying for the certifications. For more information on Product Certifications, please visit: productcertifications.digitalpromise.org.

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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 CAST

Founded in 1984, nonprofit CAST's mission is to transform education design and practice "Until learning has no limits®." Our primary levers of change are the [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#) framework and the [UDL Guidelines](#). Winner of the Smithsonian Innovation in Education award and many other honors, CAST conducts research and development, provides technical assistance and professional development, and publishes exceptional media for the education market.

About the Educating All Learners Alliance

In March 2020, InnovateEDU started the Educating All Learners™ Alliance (EALA), an uncommon coalition of organizations committed to resource sharing and community-building that supports the efforts of the education community to meet the needs of students with disabilities and learning differences. The Alliance represents voices from a diverse range of communities, including disability advocacy, parent, special education, civil rights, and K-12 nonprofit education organizations. For more information, visit the [EALA website](#) and follow [@educateall_org](#) for updates.