



Media Release
Monday 19 March
For immediate release

New education platform empowers Kiwi teachers in the 21st century

The Mind Lab by Unitec's Digital Passport empowers teachers in New Zealand to realise the opportunities of the new digital curriculum and bring 21st century skills to today's students.

The Mind Lab's Digital Passport is a new video-based learning platform designed for New Zealand teachers or parents with children in Years 1-10. The Digital Passport has been created by a team of 12 Mind Lab educators to enable teachers to develop and skills and understanding to deliver the new digital technologies curriculum.

The Passport delivers video content, workshops and downloadable content to bring the new curriculum to life. The Digital Passport covers The Ministry of Education's Digital Curriculum, focusing on Computational Thinking, and Designing and Developing Digital Outcomes as well as all of the progress outcome areas required to understand the Digital Technologies curriculum.

The new web-based learning platform utilises specialist knowledge from The Mind Lab's nationwide teaching community of 4,000 teaching professionals. Since 2014 The Mind Lab has delivered a Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Practice (Digital and Collaborative Learning), to 1 in every 4 teachers from Kaitaia to Invercargill.

Frances Valintine, The Mind Lab Founder and Chair, says, "Nothing is more important in education than the ability to develop students with the skills, confidence and the ability that prepare them for their road ahead. Teachers, like parents, employers and leaders, need to embrace change to ensure we can all succeed in the face of new information, updated knowledge and technological advancement."

"The Digital Passport is designed for teachers and parents to share and build understanding and confidence with the new Digital Technologies curriculum for students from Year 1 - Year 10. It simplifies the language and complexities of digital technologies and builds knowledge that can be directly applied in the classroom or in the family home," Valintine says.

An ongoing partnership with The NEXT Foundation, the philanthropic trust committed to education and environment, enables The Mind Lab to bring the Digital Passport to teachers around New Zealand

completely free of charge. The partnership with NEXT Foundation ensures all primary, intermediate and secondary teachers as well as school principals have free access to the education resource.

NEXT spokesperson, Frank Janssen, says NEXT is delighted to support the Digital Passport initiative. He says he sees it as a natural progression for NEXT following the success of The Mind Lab's postgraduate technology qualification for teachers.

"NEXT has supported several thousand teachers in gaining the Postgraduate technology qualification through The Mind Lab. Now the Digital Passport will enable thousands more to access digital education. This investment acknowledges the important role our teachers play in adequately preparing New Zealand children for the future," Frank says.

David Parsons, one of the contributors to the Digital Passport and National Postgraduate Director of The Mind Lab, says, "The Digital Passport provides an opportunity for teachers across New Zealand to engage confidently with the new digital curriculum and enable their students to develop fluency in computational thinking and digital outcomes. It provides a set of resources that exemplify the student centred, creative and critical approach to digital skills that are essential to future focused education."

The Digital Passport is made up of four video-based workshops and 12 supplementary modules, and teachers are guided by experts through key progress outcomes as laid out in The Ministry of Education's new digital curriculum. Each workshop and module is accessible for all educators, covers key topics in a real world context, includes practical examples of learning activities, can be consumed at any time and any place there is an internet connection, and is accompanied by downloadable resources.

The free access offer for primary, intermediate and secondary teachers and principals ends July 22nd 2018 and all enquiries can be directed to digitalpassport@themindlab.com. Parents and organisations can purchase the resource online for \$39.95. While the passport has been designed for educators teaching Years 1-10, it's useful for anyone wanting to understand how education is changing and how we can be on the right side of the tide of change - including parents, librarians, and Early Childhood Educators.

About The Mind Lab

With its national coverage and focus on student education, teacher training and postgraduate teacher education The Mind Lab by Unitec has become the largest education facility of its kind in New Zealand in their five years of operation.

For more information or an interview with a Mind Lab spokesperson please contact:

Catherine Knowles
The Mind Lab by Unitec
09 964 4444
catherinek@themindlab.com