

GestaltBar - The Digital Workshop

-  **OBJECTIVE**
To teach students in lower secondary education how to confidently use digital technologies
-  **PROJECT PARTNERS**
Schools, youth service organizations, local educational organizations nationwide
-  **DURATION**
Since 2016

Do you know how to install software, program machines or configure a PBX? More and more of these skills are finding their way into general education requirements – and hiring requirements for jobs. If young people want to confidently navigate the digital world and improve their career prospects, they have to learn how to use digital tools competently and creatively. Deutsche Telekom Stiftung has created a project to help them: “GestaltBar - The Digital Workshop”.

GestaltBars are intended for 7th and 8th grade students enrolled in lower secondary education. The project brings together schools, youth service institutions and other local partners such as companies, chambers of crafts or the Maker Movement. The partners bring in experienced specialists who provide expert guidance and educational support for the teenagers. The courses cover a variety of topics, including 3D printing, robotics or app development. The actual topics themselves relate to a general competency model similar to the one underlying the North Rhine-Westphalia Media Passport. Classes are taught at schools or at partner facilities as either electives or extracurricular activities.

The purpose of the GestaltBars is to improve the students' ability to participate in the digital world, particularly on their future career path. Deutsche Telekom Stiftung decided to focus on learners enrolled in lower secondary education because so few programs specifically targeted this group. For example, many “FabLabs” – open digital workspaces for teenagers – are affiliated with universities. Students enrolled in lower secondary education, however, often



Photo: Deutsche Telekom Stiftung

At the GestaltBars, students enrolled in lower secondary education learn how to competently use digital tools.

THE STUDENTS ALSO IMPROVE THEIR SOCIAL SKILLS

steer clear of university programs, particularly if they are located outside their neighborhoods and require transportation.

The GestaltBars, by contrast, are close by, are not bound by school curriculum requirements and address this target group's particular needs. This includes bringing in local partners specialized in media education who have experience in working with teenagers with special educational needs. That way, the students not only learn how to use digital technologies,

but improve their social skills as well. After successfully completing the modules, they receive a certificate that they can include with job applications and thus gain a surer foothold in the working world.

The first GestaltBars have been set up at four pilot locations: Berlin, Bonn, Hamburg and Cologne. The foundation has decided to coordinate the organization of the programs and contribute to the financing. The project is expected to be expanded to all German states over the medium to long term.

More information:
www.telekom-stiftung.de/en/gestaltbar

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DEUTSCHE TELEKOM STIFTUNG

Deutsche Telekom Stiftung was established in 2003 to strengthen Germany's position as an education, research and technology leader. It is one of the country's main corporate foundations with an endowment of EUR 150 million. Deutsche Telekom Stiftung's mission is to improve education in the digital world concentrating on the so called STEM subjects science, technology, engineering and mathematics. It focuses on four core areas: Education Drivers, Education Opportunities, Education Innovations and Education Dialog.

In Education Drivers, the foundation supports people who inspire others to study STEM subjects. Education Opportunities involves projects to prepare children and teenagers to succeed in STEM fields and participate fully in our connected world. In Education Innovations, the foundation invests in researchers and teachers who specialize in STEM subjects. Finally, Education Dialog comprises all the projects in which the foundation works with policymakers and civil society to improve education in a digitized world.