

# STEAM LEARNING ECOLOGIES

## Stakeholders' Mapping template



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# Why is Stakeholder Mapping important

Stakeholder mapping is a strategic process that consists of **identifying and analysing the individuals or organizations who may play a role in your SLE**. It allows you to **choose how to engage them** depending on their interest in the project, and the impact they may have.

Stakeholder mapping can be a valuable tool in the planning phase of your SLE for several reasons:

1. **It allows you to prioritize engagement efforts.** Reaching out to a stakeholder, discussing the project idea, and agreeing on the collaboration details are time consuming activities. Therefore, it is important to identify early on which stakeholders could bring the most value to your project and focus your time and resources on engaging them, rather than less impactful ones.
2. **Communication and collaboration.** Effective stakeholder mapping involves understanding and empathizing with the stakeholders you will collaborate with. By considering their interests and motivations for joining your project, you can set the foundations for a meaningful and successful partnership which respects everybody's needs.
3. **It calls for meaningful reflection on your project idea.** As you will see, the first step in the stakeholder mapping idea consists in understanding and defining the scope of your project. By analyzing the initial idea, and the resources required to realize it, you can start identifying the needs, challenges, and potential benefits of your project early on, and plan the next steps accordingly.

## Stakeholder Mapping in Steps

### Step 1: Define the preliminary topic of your SLE

While the project details, learning paths, and activities will be defined with the stakeholders you will choose to collaborate with, it's important to have a preliminary idea that will guide you to reach out to the most relevant actors. Some factors to consider early on:

- **The learners involved:** how many, from which instructional levels, inside or outside of school hours?
- **The topic, or real-life problem** at the centre of your SLE. The SLE idea or topic should revolve around a real-life problem that students will be called to solve. This preliminary problem, or topic, will determine which types of stakeholders you should include in your stakeholder mapping exercise.
- **A preliminary idea of the main goal.** At this stage, it should be as broad as possible, such as “making students feel responsible for their local flora and fauna” or “building students’ healthy habits”. During the co-creation phase of your SLE, you will have the chance to define more specific goals with your partnering entities.





Example.

Students 7-8 yrs old from 4 classes.

Topic: AI for sustainability

Goal: familiarizing with AI tools and understanding its potential in helping address sustainability issues.

## Step 2: Establish the scope of your outreach

To understand which stakeholder groups you should engage, you must establish the scope in which you want your project to operate. In this case, the scope can be defined along two dimensions:

- **Topic.** Define which stakeholder groups have the expertise/experience/resources to contribute to your topic: NGOs, parents/youth associations, museums, libraries, sports centres, think tanks, governmental agencies, universities, local/national/international businesses to mention just a few. To guide your decision use the questions below.
  - What stakeholders are most **proximate to the topic/real-world problem** your SLE will address?
  - What stakeholder groups could have **expertise, knowledge, or materials** to support learners?
  - What stakeholder groups could **provide support and guidance** to learners throughout the project implementation?
- **Geographic boundaries.** When listing potential stakeholders, you could choose to include multinational organizations or local businesses, national agencies, or more local entities, such as public libraries and museums. The scale at which you will be working should be based on your topic, as well as on a realistic analysis of your institution's capabilities to reach out, engage, and manage certain types of partnerships. Some questions helping you assess the above-mentioned capability:
  - How would you rate your institution's experience in connecting with external institutions for the creation of multi-stakeholder projects?
  - How would you rate your institution's (principal, head of department, administrative offices etc.) support towards the idea of reaching out to new prospective partners?
  - Do you already have a network of local/regional/national stakeholders you could reach out to, or which could connect you to other relevant institutions?

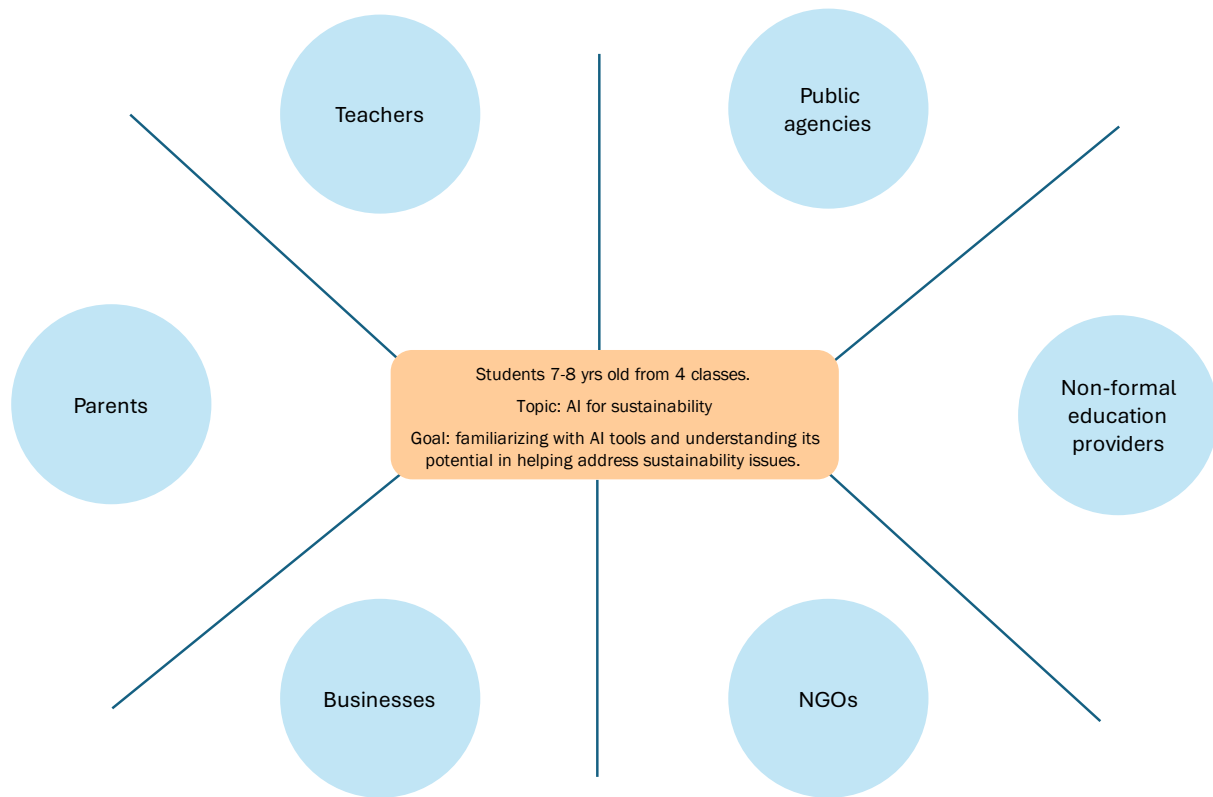
If support for the initiative is high, and your institution can already count on previous experience and/or a strong network of stakeholders, you might consider targeting bigger institutions.

Don't forget, however, that the ultimate goal should be developing a meaningful project revolving around the topic you chose. If the SLE, for example, focuses on the analysis of the endangered species in the nearby national park, local authorities and universities might be better equipped to provide their expertise, rather than national entities. If the project, on the other hand, intends to guide students in conducting an analysis of the national gender pay gap in STEM professions, involving a national statistics institution will be more beneficial.





Example.



## Step 3: find institutions, organizations and people for each group

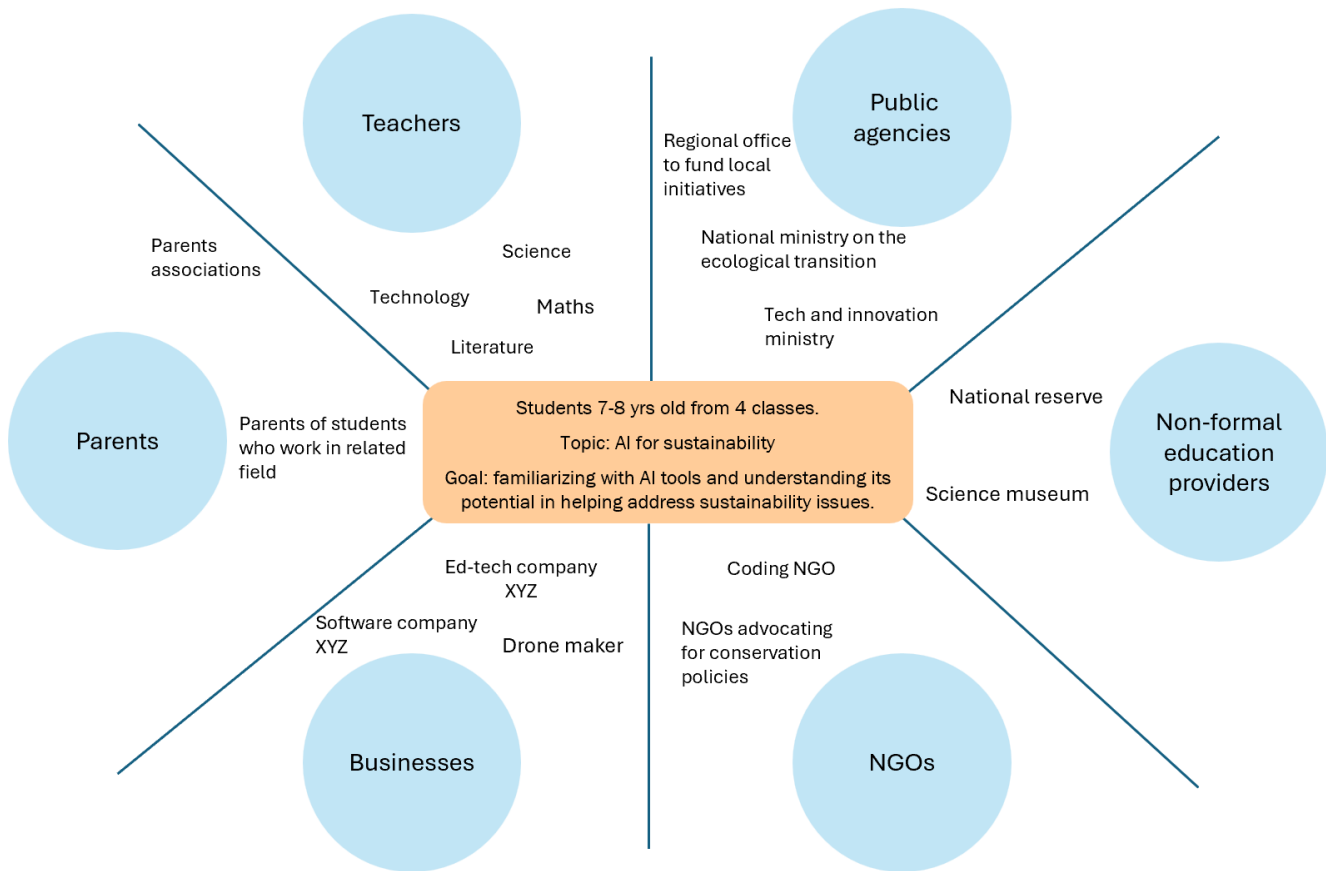
Having defined the main topic, and the groups of stakeholders to be involved, the next step consists in searching for organizations, institutions and people who are part of specific groups related to your topic.

To maximise the effectiveness of this step, involve other people in your team (other teachers, or colleagues from your institution) in this mapping exercise, explaining what geographic boundaries should they keep into consideration when looking for candidates.





## Example



## Step 4: Short-list stakeholders to be contacted

At this step, you will have a map of stakeholders who are relevant to your topic and who belong to groups that could bring an added value to its development. To prioritize which stakeholders you should try to engage, try to place them in the matrix below.

You can gauge **stakeholders' interest** either informally, through personal connections to somebody in the organization, or by researching their press releases or their CSR and ESG reports. Previous participation in similar projects can also signal potential interest in your project.

To define **stakeholders' impact**, you will still have to refer to the main project idea and objective. High impact stakeholders are those who could contribute relevant expertise, support and resources to the project at hand. To guide you in defining stakeholder's impact, research the following:

- Would the stakeholder be open to share resources for the SLE, either learning resources, or financial resources, under the form of equipment, or expertise? If yes, which of these are most critical to the success of your SLE?
- Would the stakeholder have the capability and willingness to support your SLE? Are there any stakeholder members who would be capable and willing to provide learner support? Prioritize stakeholders with previous experience in supporting learners, and with the human capital necessary to provide consistent support throughout the project.
- Could a collaboration with this stakeholder be sustained over time and for future iterations of the SLE? Prioritize stakeholders who have an interest to establish long-lasting collaborations.



To find an answer to these questions you may have to conduct preliminary talks with your stakeholders, or use previously-made connections with the organizations.

Based on the information researched, place the stakeholders identified in the previous steps in the four quadrants of your matrix. In the end, **you should focus on high interest, high impact stakeholders**, as the ones who are potentially easier to involve and who could bring a considerable value to the SLE.

When addressing stakeholders in the high interest/high impact quadrant, prioritize having a variety of groups represented, and keep in mind that different groups could bring different types of resources and support.

For example, while businesses may have an interest in providing equipment or financial support to the initiative, they might not have the resources to have their employees directly involved in the implementation of activities or to support learners. Associations and NGOs may be more prone to offering this type of human-intensive support, but not have the financial means. For this reason, we encourage you to look for synergies and complementary impacts when reaching out to stakeholders.

You should also note that adding stakeholders in a SLEs increases substantially and non-proportionally the time needed for communication, coordination and monitoring of stakeholder engagement. Therefore, it is crucial to **strike an optimum balance between number of stakeholders and the input they can offer**. You should prioritize stakeholders who could offer learning resources that are decisive for developing learning paths to be followed by learners in your SLE. Another valuable input is stakeholder support throughout learning paths, offering career opportunities and developing career skills as well as for showcasing female models and female engagement in STE(A)M. This note should further help you prioritize stakeholders within the high-interest/high impact quadrant.

Low interest, high impact stakeholders can also be engaged through targeted communications about your project, which could create the opportunity for future collaborations. For example, during the pilot phase of our SLE in Ireland, low interest-high impact stakeholders who heard about the success of the SLEs, became partners during the new iteration of the project (the scale-up phase). Examples of this kind reveal how interest and impact may evolve during an SLE, especially if the project also had opportunities to share the experience with the local community and beyond. For this reason, this matrix should not be considered as static, but evolving with the implementation of an SLE.

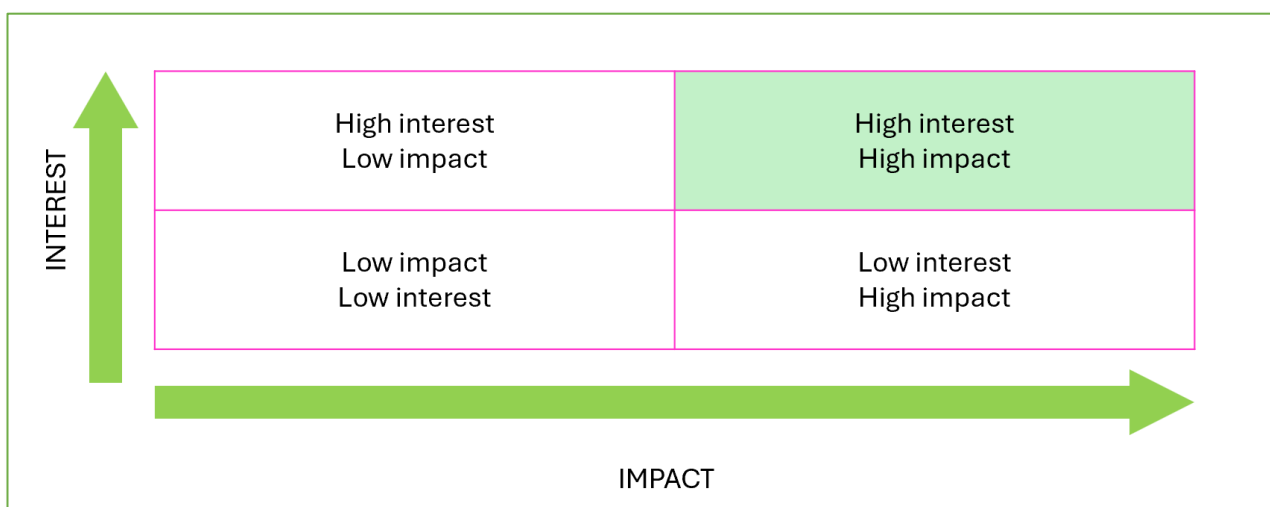


Figure 1. Stakeholder Mapping Matrix



## Bibliography

Stakeholder Mapping Tool. Education First. Available at: [https://www.education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Stakeholder\\_Mapping\\_Toolkit.pdf](https://www.education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Stakeholder_Mapping_Toolkit.pdf)

Mendelov Stakeholder Matrix.

