

PRESS RELEASE

The foundations of these two organisations have formed a strategic alliance to launch the ProFuture Project and establish a foundation with the same name

TELEFÓNICA AND "LA CAIXA" TEAM UP TO PROMOTE DIGITAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN IN EMERGING COUNTRIES

- **The ProFuture Project, inspired by Pope Francis, will promote education and training for children, young people and members of the most disadvantaged groups in order to help generate equal opportunities based on digital skills.**
- **Having implemented an initial pilot educational project in Angola, the ProFuture Foundation will now launch similar operations in other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and Asia.**
- **To roll out the project, the ProFuture Foundation will sign agreements with the main local private, public and third sector stakeholders in the field of international cooperation.**
- **The project entails the provision of mobile digital classrooms equipped with hardware and software, teacher training in the use of information technologies and ensuring the accessibility of the content and the platform.**

Madrid, 14 July 2016.- César Alierta and Isidro Fainé, presidents of the Telefónica and "la Caixa" Banking foundations respectively, today signed a strategic alliance in the Spanish capital. The agreement is for the joint development of the ProFuture Project and the establishment of a foundation of the same name, launched to promote equal opportunities through the provision of quality and equitable education based on the use of digital tools.

The establishment of this new foundation, whose president will be Julio Rimoldi, is inspired by the vision shared by both the two presidents and Pope Francis with regard to the role that education can play in reducing poverty and promoting social transformation.

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In this way, then, the two institutions will unite their efforts and combine their resources to develop and deliver digital education and a model for local implementation, as well as contributing their recognised experience in the field of education to the initiative.

An initial pilot project has already been introduced in Angola, and the ProFuture Foundation will build on this experience by launching similar operations in other countries on three continents: Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and Asia. For each separate initiative, agreements will be signed with the main local stakeholders in the field of international cooperation in the private, public and third sectors.

The objective that the newly-established ProFuture Foundation pursues is to promote quality, equitable education for children and young people from the most disadvantaged groups, providing digital tools that will enable them to acquire skills through the new technologies and thereby contributing to the advance of their societies.

To achieve these goals, the project will focus on the following activities:

- The introduction of a mobile digital classroom, equipped with both hardware (a case containing a laptop-server, a varying number of tablets and a projector) and software (educational platform and content) at schools located in vulnerable areas. This resource is self-powered for a whole school day, and the educational platform works without the need for Internet connection. All that is required is occasional connection with Internet in order to update content.
- Training teachers in the use of information technologies, the educational platform and its content, and in innovative teaching methods.
- Designing a model adapted to real circumstances in refugee camps.
- Ensuring the accessibility of the content and the platform to people with disabilities.

The ProFuture Foundation will also promote training activities in the particularly vulnerable environment of refugee camps, and will provide accessible content for students with disabilities.

Telefónica and its foundation aim to become an example of innovation and diversity, and to use the opportunities offered by information technologies to provide access to quality education focused on new educational methodologies and twenty-first-century competences, in multiple languages and using an interactive format. The initiative will also focus on delivering better training for teachers and providing them with tools to enable them to complement and improve their skills.

In César Alierta's view, "education is the most effective way to reduce social inequalities and improve prospects in the emerging countries. The main priority will be

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digital education, which is the key. Without education there is no progress, and the development of digital education will help to foster equal opportunities and training, wherever people are, in remote villages in the Andes, the Amazon or Sub-Saharan Africa".

Through its Social Outreach Programme, "la Caixa" Banking Foundation pursues the priority goals of contributing to the welfare of people and promoting equal opportunities, with particular attention to the most vulnerable groups. The organisation's activities revolve especially around social programmes aimed at transformation, which account for a large proportion of the 500 million euro annual budget devoted to Social Outreach. Considered a driver for individual and collective advancement, education is the main focus in many of these projects.

For his part, Isidro Fainé described the cooperation between the two organisations as "ambitious and inspiring". The Telefónica president also noted that: "Helping to eliminate the digital divide in the areas where we will launch ProFuture may mark a turning-point in the lives of many children and young people. We want to open the door to new opportunities for them, and the convergence of technology and education is, undoubtedly, the best way of achieving just that. In order to help build a better future for these people, the Telefónica Foundation and "la Caixa" Banking Foundation will channel all our resources and experience into the ProFuture Project".

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