TEASER

Teacher as Avatar

TEASER Innovation Digest:

8 Impulses for Digital Transformation

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Contents

Intro: Welcome to the future of vocational education and training

Artificial intelligence (AI) and avatars are penetrating the world of work and various industries at an unprecedented rate. This technological change creates an **urgent need for adaptation** in vocational education and training (VET), as trainers and trainees were often unprepared for this disruptive development. The TEASER project marks the transition from a phase of uncertainty to a **modern, pedagogically sound training practice**.

Short Editorial: The Mission of TEASER – From Technology-Induced Printing to Active Design

Until now, the integration of digital applications has often been abrupt – a process that has been further accelerated by the massive rise of generative AI such as ChatGPT. Many educational institutions were exposed to **technology-induced pressure to change** without the necessary strategies or competencies.

TEASER's mission is to turn this pressure into an **active design opportunity**. We do not see AI and avatars as a threat, but as a **"digital toolbox"** that enables educational staff to use technological innovations in a learning, safe and ethically reflected way. Our goal is to promote **"Digital Pedagogy",** in which the teacher is transformed from a pure knowledge broker to a mentor and curator of digital learning worlds.

By dovetailing management roadmaps, didactic guidelines and practical scenarios, TEASER ensures that human expertise remains the decisive authority. We rely on a **human-centered approach** that avoids the so-called "Turing trap": AI and avatars are consistently positioned as **digital assistants** that relieve teachers of administrative tasks and thus create new freedom for what really matters – social interaction and the individual support of learners.

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The digest at a glance: Why these 8 impulses will change your everyday training

This digest bundles the key findings from 27 months of transnational cooperation in the chemical, biology, IT and mechatronics sectors. The following eight impulses will serve as inspiration and guidelines for driving the digital transformation in your institution immediately:

1. **Pedagogy before technology:** We show you why every innovation must start with a pedagogical question ("If AI is the answer, what was the question?").
2. **Avoid the Turing trap:** Learn how avatars as complementary assistants amplify your expertise instead of replacing you.
3. **Management roadmaps** : Discover how a structured strategy dialogue between management and users breaks down technological hurdles.
4. **No-code & software hopping:** Get to know our low-threshold approach that allows you to create professional avatar content without programming knowledge.
5. **Best Practice Challenges:** We present you with 10 proven scenarios – from cybersecurity simulation to safety briefing at the autoclave.
6. **Microcredentials:** See how the AVATAR. AI course makes competence growth visible and valuable through digital badges.
7. **Ethical guardrails:** We provide guidance on data protection (GDPR) and the critical handling of AI hallucinations.
8. **A look into the future:** Get a preview of adaptive learning companions and the evolution towards intelligence-centered learning environments.

These impulses are aimed at sustainably increasing the **attractiveness of vocational education and training** and making your institution fit for the digital labour market of the future. Welcome aboard!

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Impulse 1: Pedagogy before Technology – The End of the Blind Hype

In the current education landscape, the rapid rise of tools like ChatGPT often leads to a "blind hype" where technology dictates the pedagogical strategy. The first TEASER impulse breaks with this pattern and establishes a clear primacy of pedagogy: technological innovations are not an end in themselves, but tools for solving real challenges in training practice.

Core message: It is not the tool that decides, but the pedagogical problem

The central guiding principle of the project is: **"If AI and avatars are the answer, what was the question?"**. Before a teacher decides on an AI chatbot or an interactive avatar, a precise **"educational question"** must be formulated.

- **The didactic anchor:** Each scenario developed in the project reacts to an identified problem, such as a lack of motivation on the part of learners in repetitive topics, administrative overload of trainers or the high complexity of technical systems.
- **Practical example:** Instead of "just trying out AI", SBG Dresden asked: *"How can safety instructions in the laboratory be made more consistent and motivating?"*. The answer was an avatar-based guide directly at the "point of action" that relieves the instructor.
- **Preservation of didactic sovereignty:** The pedagogical decision-making power always remains with humans; technology is merely the means to an end to strengthen the teacher's expertise ("Amplify"), not to replace it.

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Insight: Why we need to teach how to learn with AI before we use it

A key finding of the TEASER needs analysis is the finding that both educational staff and trainees are often insufficiently prepared for the **abrupt transformation process** caused by AI.

- **Demystifying technology:** To use AI effectively, educators need to understand that generative AI is at its core a "mathematical program" or a "stochastic parrot" that calculates probabilities but doesn't ask "why."
- **Learning about AI as a basis:** Before AI agents are integrated into the classroom, the development of **AI literacy** is essential. This includes knowledge of how Large Language Models (LLMs) work and the art of **prompt engineering** to achieve relevant results.
- **Checks & Balances: Teachers** must learn (and teach) to critically question AI outputs through **plausibility checks** . Since AI is prone to "hallucinations" (factually false information), the instructor acts as an indispensable guarantor of quality.
- **From user to designer:** The goal is to transform the teacher into a **"learning designer"** who designs tasks in such a way that AI is a tool for thinking and not a shortcut to a solution.

Conclusion of the impulse: Real innovation in VET does not come from the latest app, but from the ability to link technological potential to pedagogical needs in a reflective manner. Only when we understand how AI learns and where its limits lie can we anchor it as a **real partner for professional growth** in training.

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Impulse 2: Avoiding the Turing Trap – Human-AI Collaboration

The discussion about artificial intelligence in education is often characterized by the concern that technology could make humans superfluous. The TEASER project counters this fear with a clear model of **human-AI collaboration**. The goal is to deliberately avoid the **so-called "Turing trap".** Instead of trying to imitate or replace human teachers with digital systems, we use technology to amplify human expertise in a targeted manner.

Key message: Avatars do not replace teachers, they strengthen their expertise

A central leitmotif of our strategy is **complementation instead of substitution**. In a human-centered learning environment, the teacher remains the indispensable expert.

- **Didactic sovereignty:** The final decision on the use, control and evaluation of learning content remains with humans at all times; technology is merely a means to an end.
- **The teacher as prompt designer:** Only the specialist has the necessary background knowledge to precisely formulate didactic questions and create the best instructions (prompts) for the AI systems.
- **Scientific precision:** While avatars present content in a motivating way, the teacher acts as a guarantor of quality, verifying AI-generated information through plausibility checks.
- **Productivity booster:** By using systems like ChatGPT, teachers can massively increase their productivity – studies show increases of up to 35% in knowledge-based tasks.

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Highlight: The avatar as a "digital assistant" for repetitive tasks

The real "sweet spot" for the use of avatars lies in the assumption of **administrative and repetitive tasks**, which often tie up valuable time in everyday training.

- **Relief from standard instructions:** Avatars act as tireless **"digital twins"** or assistants who take over standardized safety instructions (e.g. on CNC machines or autoclaves). Thanks to QR codes at the "point of action", these instructions can be repeated by the learners at any time asynchronously and regardless of location.
- **Efficiency in planning:** AI agents such as the "Teaser AI Assistant" support lesson preparation. This drastically reduces the planning time for complex scenarios from about 40 minutes to just **5 to 10 minutes**.
- **Creation of pedagogical freedom:** This is the decisive advantage: By delegating the "always the same explanations" to the avatar, trainers gain valuable time resources.
- **Focus on social interaction:** The time gained is invested in what no AI can do: **individual support**, coaching with complex problems and social interaction with trainees.

Conclusion of the impulse: Bypassing the Turing trap means combining the strengths of both worlds. AI delivers consistency, speed, and 24/7 availability, while humans remain responsible for **empathy, critical reflection, and pedagogical leadership**. In this way, the avatar becomes the most valuable employee in the team of trainers.

Impulse 3: Management roadmaps – making digitalization a top priority

The introduction of artificial intelligence (AI) and avatars is much more than a technical upgrade for the classroom; it is a **profound school development process**. To ensure that these innovations do not fizzle out as isolated experiments by individual teachers, they must be strategically anchored in the core of the institution. The TEASER project provides a binding roadmap for this with the **management roadmaps** , which makes digitization a "top priority".

Core message: Without a strategic framework, technology remains piecemeal

Successful digital transformation does not succeed through the provision of hardware alone. While many educational institutions have digital strategies in place, practical implementation often remains fragmented or incomplete.

- **Create commitment:** The management roadmap serves as a navigation aid for the management staff (managing directors, department heads) to navigate the transition from vision to day-to-day operations.
- **Resource allocation:** One of the biggest barriers to innovation is the identified **lack of staff time**. The management level is obliged to create **structural freedom** for induction and content creation.
- **A structured phase model:** The implementation is not arbitrary, but follows four clear phases: from the needs analysis to the software planning (no-code approach) to the pilot and the subsequent review.
- **Ensuring sustainability:** A six-monthly strategy check ensures that the roadmap keeps pace with the rapid technological leaps in the AI sector.

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Insight: The strategy dialogue between management and users as a driver of transformation

The heart of the institutional anchoring is the **strategy dialogue**. It closes the often lamented gap between strategic decisions from the top **(top-down**) and practical application by the trainers at the grassroots level (**bottom-up**).

- **Goals of the dialogue:** The aim is to develop a common understanding of the influence of AI on the organizational structure, to realistically assess the personnel effort and to define ethical and data protection guidelines (GDPR).
- **Moderation through core questions:** In order to make the exchange targeted, the focus is on the core pedagogical question: **"If AI and avatars are the answer, what was the pedagogical problem we want to solve?"**.
- **Visionary thinking:** The dialogue uses methods such as the "vision question" (What would we do with a budget of €5 million?) to identify ideal states such as permanent virtual learning companions or automated teams of experts for content creation.
- **Transparency and acceptance:** Only through the continuous involvement of users in the decision-making process can reservations be reduced and broad acceptance of the use of digital assistants created.

Conclusion of the impulse: Making digitization a top priority means transforming the role of the management level from a mere administrator to **an enabler for innovation**. Through management roadmaps and a lively strategy dialogue, AI becomes an integral part of quality development, which ensures the **future viability and attractiveness** of the institution in the long term.

Impulse 4: Software hopping & no-code – innovation without programming effort

The biggest hurdle in the introduction of new technologies in vocational education and training is often the fear of technical complexity and a lack of IT skills. The TEASER project dispels this prejudice. Our approach proves that in order to create professional, AI-supported learning content, teachers do not need a degree in computer science, but only the right **"digital toolbox"** and a pinch of experimentation.

Core message: Low-threshold solutions enable quick success for all teachers

The success of the digital transformation stands and falls with the acceptance of educational staff. Therefore, TEASER consistently relies on a **low-threshold approach**.

- **No-code revolution:** We only use tools that can be operated without programming effort. Every instructor who can operate a word processor is able to generate their own avatars.
- **The principle of software hopping:** Instead of waiting for expensive and rigid individual software, we combine the specific strengths of different, generally available web apps. This "jumping" between applications (application hopping) makes us flexible, cost-efficient and independent of large IT budgets.
- **Inclusion and accessibility:** The ease of use enables a wide range of teachers to design learning media regardless of time and location, which massively increases the attractiveness of the training institutions.

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Tech Spotlight: How to Create Professional Educational Videos with AI Avatar Generators

The process of creation follows a clear **"technical chain",** which was successfully tested in the project and validated for everyday teaching.

1. **Step 1: Text optimization with ChatGPT:** Raw technical manuscripts are linguistically refined by the AI and converted into didactically appealing scripts. This ensures a natural flow of speech and reduces the cognitive load on learners.
2. **Step 2: Visual identity with image generators:** Using tools such as **Midjourney** , individual images are created for the avatars to create a visual identity that fits the respective department.
3. **Step 3: Audio synthesis with ElevenLabs:** To avoid "robotic" voices, we use specialized platforms for highly natural speech output. This noticeably increases the acceptance and attention of the trainees.
4. **Step 4: Animation in the avatar platform:**
    - **HeyGen:** Considered one of the most user-friendly tools. It allows lip-sync videos in over 40 languages and offers an intuitive interface for beginners.
    - **Synthesia:** The leader in professional training videos offers over 300 templates and is particularly strong in consistently conveying factual knowledge.
5. **Step 5: Distribution via QR code:** The finished video is hosted on YouTube and linked via a QR code directly on the machine in the laboratory or workshop.

The conclusion of the impulse: Software hopping and no-code tools massively lower the inhibition threshold. They transform teachers from passive users into **active producers of digital learning worlds**. In our pilots, the scenarios created in this way achieved a user-friendliness of **4.65 out of 5 points** – clear proof of the practicality of this approach.

Impulse 5: The TEASER Challenges – Best Practices from the Workshop and Laboratory

Theory is important, but in vocational education and training (VET), what counts most is the application in practice. The heart of the TEASER project is therefore the **10 tailor-made teaching and learning scenarios**, the so-called "teaser challenges". These scenarios have been specially developed for the requirements of **chemistry, biology, IT and mechatronics** in order to integrate state-of-the-art technologies such as AI chatbots and avatars into everyday training in a way that is meaningful and safe.

Key message: AI and avatars in practice

The central insight from all challenges is that the best use of avatars always begins with a **concrete problem from professional practice**. Technology is not used here for its own sake, but to specifically promote the professional, social and digital skills of the trainees.

- **Learning at the "point of action":** By using QR codes directly on machines, knowledge is made available exactly where it is needed.
- **Relief for trainers:** Avatars take over repetitive standard instructions, which gives staff valuable time for individual support in the event of in-depth technical problems.
- **Safe room for error:** Simulations allow complex processes or difficult conversations to be practiced safely before they are applied in reality.

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Best-of-scenarios: Insights into the departments

Chemistry & Biology: Precision and Safety (SBG Dresden, DE)

In the laboratory professions, the focus is on teaching complex processes and strict occupational health and safety rules.

- **Safety briefing at the autoclave:** An avatar demonstrates the correct sterilization of glass vessels via video and warns of the risk of scalding. This ensures a consistent quality of instruction.
- **Plant control at LC2030:** Trainees use avatars as "digital twins" that guide them asynchronously through **three-point calibration** and process image creation.
- **Cell culture technology:** Avatars act as digital tutors for aseptic work steps at the sterile workbench.

IT & Programming: AI as an Interactive Learning Partner (SCP Academy, CY)

Here, AI is not only used to convey content, but also as an active tool for problem solving.

- **Cybersecurity basics:** An avatar introduces theoretical concepts (e.g. phishing), while learners then **analyze real-world threat scenarios** using ChatGPT as a "digital detective".
- **Python "Coding Buddy":** During programming exercises, AI serves as a tireless assistant for **debugging** . This lowers the cognitive load when learning abstract syntax rules.

3. Mechatronics: Safety in the workshop (SC Kranj, SI)

The focus here is on the protection of trainees on potentially dangerous machines.

- **Interactive workshop security:** QR codes are attached to equipment such as CNC systems, welding machines or soldering irons. When scanning, eight different avatars explain the safety measures and emergency stop functions.
- **Success:** This modern, screen-based approach has **been proven to increase the retention rate of safety instructions to 85%.**

4. Special Challenge: Communication in Social Work (Graafschap College, NL)

Beyond the technical professions, TEASER shows the potential for training social skills.

- **Simulated dialogue with "Mrs. De Vries":** Students train professional feedback methods (4G model) in a protected, virtual chat room with an AI client without risking real consequences for real people.

Conclusion of the impulse: The TEASER challenges prove that the integration of AI and avatars increases the **attractiveness of training** and effectively supports educational staff in actively shaping the digital transformation process.

Impulse 6: Microcredentials – Making Competence Growth Visible

In a rapidly changing world of work, selective further training is often no longer sufficient. Trainers need flexible qualification paths that are documented in a contemporary manner. The TEASER approach meets this need through a modular course system that not only imparts knowledge in the end, but also **certifies it for the European labour market** through digital badges.

Core message: The AVATAR. AI online course as a modern qualification path

The **AVATAR. AI Blended Learning Course** is the operational bracket of the project and serves to actively channel the pressure for technological change into training practice. The course is hosted on a central **Moodle platform** and follows the guiding principle **"Practitioners for Practitioners".**

- **Modular structure:** The offer is divided into five learning units that follow progression levels (**Acquire, Deepen, Create**) that build on each other:
    1. **How does AI work?** (Fundamentals of Prompt Engineering and Large Language Models).
    2. **What is an avatar?** (Typology and didactic added value in the VET).
    3. **How to use it?** (Practical creation of your own avatars by means of "software hopping").
    4. **Is it safe?** (data protection, IT security and GDPR compliance).
    5. **Ethical concerns?** (Legal framework such as the EU AI Act and responsible use).
- **Low-threshold access:** The course combines text, video tutorials, and knowledge quizzes to give instructors an easy introduction to complex topics such as generative AI.

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Highlight: Digital badges to recognize new AI competencies

A central element in promoting **digital sovereignty** is the integrated system of **micro-credentials** based on **Moodle badges**.

- **Automated certification:** The system automatically assigns a digital badge for each successfully completed module. This assignment is technically configured to take place as soon as the participants have finished the learning activities and accessed the feedback form.
- **Quality assurance through the "75% hurdle":** In order to guarantee the depth of content and learning success, participants must achieve a score of **at least 75%** in the knowledge quizzes .
- **The overall certificate:** Those who have collected all five module badges automatically receive a **complete course certificate** confirming their qualification as **an AI-competent teacher**.
- **Branding "AI approved":** The badges contain the project logo and can be provided with the addition **"AI approved by TEASER team"** to signal the human final control and pedagogical quality of the content.

Conclusion of the impulse: Microcredentials transform teacher training from passive participation to active **competence demonstration**. They make the growth in media and information literacy visible in the sense of the **DigCompEdu framework** and thus strengthen the role of trainers as innovation drivers in their institutions.

Impulse 7: Ethical Guardrails – Trust through Transparency

The introduction of artificial intelligence and avatars in vocational education and training is not a purely technological project, but requires a **sound ethical foundation**. In order to create acceptance among teachers and trainees, ethical and legal guardrails must be understood as **strategic infrastructure competence** from the outset . The TEASER project relies on a human-centered approach that ensures that technological innovation is always in line with European values and legal standards.

Core message: Data protection and mandatory labelling as the basis for acceptance

Security and openness are the currency used to pay for trust in new educational technologies. Compliance with the **GDPR** is a top priority.

- **Data protection by design:** A central principle is **data minimization**. Trainers and trainees must be strictly instructed not to enter any personal, business-critical or confidential information into public AI tools such as ChatGPT.
- **Identity protection:** Cloning real people (face or voice) without their explicit written consent is a "red line" that must never be crossed. In order to minimize legal risks, the TEASER model prefers to rely on **fictitious persons in virtual scenarios**.
- **Radical transparency:** An ethical use of AI requires full disclosure about when and how the technology is used. Employees are required to disclose the use of AI tools and the **prompts** used to management and learners.
- **"AI approved" quality seal:** To signal human testing, content can be labeled with labels such as **"AI approved by TEASER team".** This makes it clear that despite AI support, a final human inspection has taken place.

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Insight: "Checks & Balances" – Training the critical handling of AI hallucinations

A crucial component of the new **"Digital Pedagogy"** is the realization that AI systems are not knowledge machines, but probability calculators that are prone to so-called **hallucinations** (factually false information).

- **The teacher as a quality guarantor:** In an intelligence-centered learning environment, the teacher acts as an **expert** who obligatorily checks all AI-generated technical texts and safety instructions for accuracy. Motivation through avatars must never be at the expense of **scientific precision**.
- **Examination competence of learners:** Trainees must be specifically enabled to critically question and improve AI content. This system of **"checks and balances"** promotes media literacy and protects against blindly trusting AI outputs.
- **Preservation of "Human Agency":** The goal of all ethical guardrails is to ensure human **agency**. The pedagogical sovereignty remains with the human being; the technology only serves as an assistant to create space for social interaction.

Conclusion of the impulse: Ethical guardrails are not an obstacle to innovation, but its **enabler**. Clear codes of conduct for employees and students create a legally secure space in which digital transformation can succeed as a process of partnership between humans and machines.

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Impulse 8: What's next? – From media to intelligence centricity

The conclusion of the TEASER project does not mark the end of the digital journey, but the dawn of a new era of learning. While educational technology has focused primarily on **media-centricity** in recent years – i.e. the use of static digital tools and hardware – we are now consistently moving towards **intelligence-centricity**. In this next phase, technological systems will no longer just present content, but will act as **active, thinking partners** that support the learning process in real time.

Core message: Thinking outside the box – Hybrid learning worlds and adaptive AI assistants

The future of vocational education and training lies in the seamless fusion of physical and digital reality into so-called **hybrid learning worlds**.

- **From static medium to adaptive companion:** Future developments will move away from simple VR solutions to **AI agents with adaptive feedback**. These systems use AI to dynamically adapt tasks and content to **the individual progress** and needs of the trainees.
- **Synergy of AI and Extended Reality (XR):** The combination of artificial intelligence with immersive technologies such as AR and VR opens up completely new training paths. **Augmented Virtuality (AV)** is particularly exciting here: learners can act in virtual environments while controlling **real physical devices** remotely, creating safe yet authentic learning spaces for careers in chemistry or mechatronics.
- **Real-time monitoring and support:** In the future, intelligent digital assistants will be able to continuously track learning progress and provide teachers with **automated learning progress analyses**. This enables pedagogical intervention at the exact moment when a trainee encounters a hurdle.

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Vision: The project as a "film trailer" for the future role of AI in education

Within the consortium, the TEASER project is often compared to a **"movie trailer".** This comparison makes it clear that the scenarios and strategies developed in the project are intended to show **"where the journey in the use of AI in practical training could go".**

- **The Path to Enlightenment:** In the context of the Gartner Hype Cycle, TEASER strives for the transition from the initial hype to the **"Slope of Enlightenment** ". The aim is to focus on **realistic, value-adding applications** that relieve everyday teaching in the long term.
- **Anticipating technological leaps:** In the future, institutional roadmaps must be flexible enough to integrate radical innovations such as **generative 3D environments** or life-size virtual tutors in a timely manner.
- **Lasting impact:** The vision is vocational education and training that remains attractive and competitive in the long term through modern, "green" and inclusive methods . The TEASER project provides the **didactic blueprint** and the necessary toolbox to digitally expand teachers and create new forms of interaction.

Conclusion of the impulse: TEASER's journey has shown that AI and avatars are far more than a passing trend. They are the building blocks of a **robust "Digital Pedagogy"** that empowers educational staff not only to accompany technology-induced change, but also to **proactively lead it as mentors and shapers**. The "movie" of digital transformation has only just begun – and you now have the tools to take on the leading role in it.

Outro: Become part of the network

The end of the official project period of TEASER does not mark the end of the digital transformation, but serves as a **starting point for the continuous use** of these innovations in European vocational education and training. We cordially invite you to take up the impulses developed in the project and integrate them into your own training practice. The TEASER consortium has initiated a lively, cross-border network in which you can now take on the leading role as an active designer. Use our **"digital toolbox"** to expand teaching processes in a human-centered way through AI and avatars and to sustainably increase the attractiveness of your training offerings.

Call to Action: Where to Find All OER Results

A central pillar of our sustainability strategy is the provision of all material results as **Open Educational Resources (OER)** under the free license **CC BY NC SA.** This enables you to copy the content in a legally compliant manner, adapt it to your specific needs and integrate it into your own learning management systems.

In our knowledge base you will find:

- **The Best Practice Guide:** A well-founded guide that bundles the "lessons learned" from the experiences made in the project in Germany, the Netherlands, Cyprus and Slovenia.
- **Didactic & Strategic Guidelines:** The "Instruction Manual" for teachers and the "Blueprint" for decision-makers in order to structurally anchor the transformation process in the institution.
- **The 10 TEASER Challenges: Ready-made** learning scenarios for chemistry, IT, biology and mechatronics, including the corresponding avatar videos and handouts.
- **The AVATAR. AI Online Course:** A modular qualification path for educational staff that makes new AI competencies visible through **digital badges** (microcredentials) after successful completion.

Direct access to the TEASER knowledge base and podcast

- **Central project website:** https://www.sbg-dresden.de/aktuelles/projekte/teaser – The heart of our dissemination, where all guides, scenarios and OER documents are available for download in five languages.

We look forward to welcoming you to our network and shaping the **future of vocational training** together. Stay innovative!

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