Press Release

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## International Education Day: January 24th

# Sonae Invests in Education and supports over 200,000 students in 2023

- **"Education is the most powerful catalyst for the social and economic development of society," says Daniel Fonseca, Head of Corporate Branding and Communication of Sonae.**
- **Sonae's corporate social responsibility policy focuses on education, contributing to the elimination or mitigation of factors of inequality and exclusion to promote a more inclusive, empowered, and resilient society.**

Sonae reinforced its support for education in 2023, investing in over 200,000 students, directly and through its numerous partners from north to south of the country. This number reflects Sonae's corporate social responsibility policy, aiming to provide equal opportunities for children, youth, and adults, facilitating their access to education.

Daniel Fonseca, Head of Corporate Branding and Communication of Sonae, states: "Education is the most powerful catalyst for the social and economic development of society. It acts as a social elevator and contributes to the elimination or mitigation of factors of inequality or social exclusion. Therefore, at Sonae, we prioritize education in our corporate social responsibility strategy, seeking to develop and support initiatives that facilitate access to the best education and promote innovation in teaching."

To foster academic performance and equal opportunities, Sonae works closely with various organizations, such as Teach For Portugal, currently based at the Sonae Campus in Maia, and EPIS Association. "We believe that a child's academic success and potential should not be determined by their postal code but by their merit. Hence, it is essential to promote equal access to quality educational opportunities," emphasizes Daniel Fonseca.

Sonae aims to contribute to academic success but also to prepare young people for the challenges and opportunities of the global economy. With this purpose, Sonae supports Junior Achievement Portugal, a partnership that has been ongoing since 2006 and involves Sonae volunteers.

With the goal of driving new educational models and helping develop digital skills, Sonae supports institutions such as ENSICO, which promotes computer science education, and 42, a programming school without classes, schedules, and completely free, aiming to revolutionize digital skills for everyone.

Sonae exists to create a lasting positive impact on businesses, people, communities and on the planet. Managing a diverse portfolio of businesses in retail, financial services, technology, investments, shopping centres and telecommunications, we make the most of our expertise and push ourselves to create the future we all want and need. Creating today a better tomorrow, for all.
Find out more at www.sonae.pt

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"At Sonae, we are convinced that developing students' digital skills, stimulating their creative and computational thinking, and preparing them for the challenges of the 21st century is absolutely fundamental. Therefore, we support computer science education not just as a tool but as a form of expression, communication, and collaboration that allows us to solve problems, from the simplest to the most complex," says Daniel Fonseca.

Sonae also advocates for comprehensive education that develops multiple skills and provides diverse stimuli, promoting creativity and more conscious, sensitive, and critical citizens. For this reason, Sonae supports Educational Services of institutions such as the Fundação Serralves, Casa da Música, or the Galeria da Biodiversidade, contributing to access to artistic and cultural education for all.

Another concern of Sonae in the field of education is the empowerment of women, supporting the Girl Move Academy and the PROMOVA Programme, fostering the creation of environments that respect and value the individuality of all.

**Promoting innovation in teaching and lifelong learning**

Sonae's strong social commitment to education was reinforced in the last year with the launch of the Sonae Education Award, an initiative aimed at promoting innovative and inclusive projects with a significant impact on improving access and quality of education. The award, which distributes 100 thousand euros, had as winners the NoCode Institute, which competed with a digital platform with the mission of requalifying and relaunching careers of professionals at risk due to the digital economy, and EKUI (Equity, Knowledge, Universality, and Inclusion), a project that aims to eliminate barriers in linguistic communication through four forms of literacy.

Community impact is a crucial condition in initiatives supported by Sonae, making it one of the social investors in the Impact Partnerships of the Portugal Social Innovation program since 2021.

"We are daily partners of institutions, providing financial support, consulting, and access to the Sonae networking, promoting the dissemination of projects and making our volunteers available for initiatives that need them most, through skills volunteering," explains Daniel Fonseca.

Sonae is also committed to reskilling for future jobs and lifelong learning, being one of the promoters of the Reskilling for Employment (R4E) program, within the European Round Table for Industry, aiming to requalify one million Europeans by 2025. In Portugal, this initiative materializes in PRO_MOV by Reskilling 4 Employment, the national program that brings together companies and the State to promote the training of professionals for future jobs through reskilling and integration into the job market.

**Education has always been a priority for Belmiro de Azevedo**

Education and training have always been a priority for Belmiro de Azevedo, who promoted investment in people, considering that his own path was only possible due to the opportunities he

had to develop his potential through studies. This commitment went beyond the borders of Sonae, leading to the dedication of the Belmiro de Azevedo Foundation to education as one of its priority areas, the creation of an education think tank - the EDULOG think tank, the emergence of Colégio Efanor, which is currently a leader in school rankings in Portugal, and a corporate social responsibility policy that places education as one of its main axes of investment and action.

"At Sonae, we see support for education as a strategic investment in the sustainable development of the communities where we operate and the country. We are committed to being agents of change, empowering and reskilling various generations through knowledge and educational opportunities we provide, directly and with our partner institutions," concludes Daniel Fonseca.