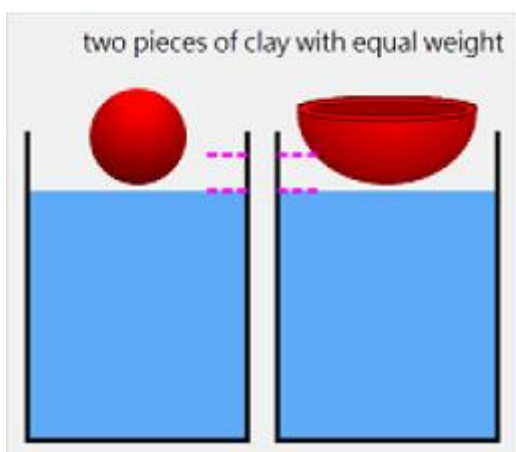Dear Go-Lab teachers,

This is the first Go-Lab newsletter after the summer break. We hope you had a good break and have started the new school year refreshed and with new (Go-Lab) energy.

The first usage data after the break showed that September 2018 was our record month ever in terms of sessions on Golabz (>14.000 sessions). For our current project (Next-Lab) it was an exciting period! Right before the summer, we had our review from the EU. Three external reviewers rated the project and they were very positive about the results. The reviewers were a little concerned about the (growing) functionality of Go-Lab and had the impression we were offering maybe too many facilities for teachers. Of course, we like to offer you as many labs and authoring possibilities as possible, but we also understand the worries of the reviewers. So, we are now working on extending our support (many new videos on Golabz/Graasp have been posted), as well as introducing quick guides for initial usage of Golabz and Graasp. Last but not least, we are also removing functionalities that are not used often or that are not functioning. Furthermore, we plan to remove apps that are very rarely used, and for now we have removed the Mindmeister app from our collection.

To guarantee the quality of the labs we offer, we make regular checks on the availability and functioning of all of them (currently > 550). Most of our labs come from third parties who of course may stop supporting a lab. For labs that do not function for a while, we contact the owners and, in some cases, we remove these labs from our collection.
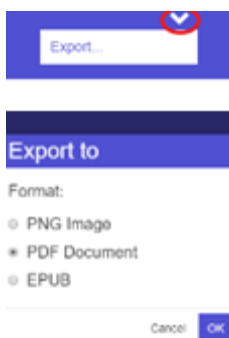
The main set of labs that we had to disable are all the remote labs that were published by RemLabNet. These labs are no longer supported, unfortunately, so we cannot offer them

anymore. Luckily, we can add a set of labs that mostly replaces these ones, namely the labs from the ISES collection which we will add soon to Golabz. Two other labs we needed to remove were Loaded Beam and Change Environment, they didn't function anymore and were not further maintained by the owner. Luckily, we were (and will be) able to add a series of new labs. NTNU from Taiwan added a new series of labs that display in Traditional Chinese and English and we added a few math labs from the Freudenthal Institute from the Netherlands. We will also soon be adding new ones from the ChemCollective collection, a number of new PhET labs, Physics at School Labs, and new labs from Virtual biology labs. We are also working on new translations of existing series, such as the Concorde labs.

You may have noticed some recent changes on Golabz. Now you can select the portal to be displayed in French or Swahili, (next to English). These two languages come from our GO-GA project and are related to our work in Benin and Kenya (together with Kenya our first target countries in GO-GA).

We have also created country collections of labs, and in the future collections of ILSs, for these countries. We might also assemble national collections for other countries in the future. Golabz will soon have an extended search facility so that you can also search for persons or institutions and filter the search results for only labs or ILSs to be displayed.

A new feature we offer is the possibility for students to save their personal ILS as an eBook using the EPUB standard format in addition to saving their ILS as a pdf document or a png image. To do so, the students have to select the export option of the popup menu below the chevron on the top right of the standalone view.

This eBook can be opened using any eBook reader available on their device or computer. Each inquiry learning phase is turned into a chapter in the eBook and includes the content provided by the teachers, the inputs made by the students in the support apps, as well as learning analytics in the case where a dashboard is offered.

Finally, until now we have focused on getting individual teachers on board, from now on we will also try to make contracts with schools. In these contracts, for which we have to agree on a fee with the school, we will offer schools extra apps, a dedicated training program for teachers, and/or professionals support for the design of ILSs. If you think your school would be interested in such an agreement, please let us know! This is a necessary action to ensure the sustainability of the project. This initiative doesn't change or alter in any way the already existing support and free infrastructure and contents existing and currently being offered.

Best regards and lots of Go-Lab fun!

Ton de Jong
Next-Lab coordinator