Validating HumanEdge

Market Fit, MVP, and Go-to-Market Strategy

Purpose of This Research

We are seeking a market research partner to help us validate HumanEdge's market fit, define a viable MVP, and sharpen our go-to-market strategy. This research is a strategic learning sprint to help us launch HumanEdge with confidence, clarity, and credibility. It will shape how we connect with buyers, refine what we build, and ultimately unlock the potential of a product designed to tackle economic inequality at scale. This work will help us determine what to build, for whom, and how to deliver it effectively.

The job market has changed—but most skills training hasn't.

Young people today are entering a workforce reshaped by AI, uncertainty, and transformation. Entry-level roles are disappearing or evolving, and yet most training systems still teach for the jobs of yesterday. As a result, too many young people—especially those from historically excluded communities—are left behind, not because they lack talent, but because they're not being equipped for what's next. At IYF, we believe unlocking youth potential is the smartest bet we can make—for the economy, for equity, and for our shared future.

HumanEdge flips the script.

It's not just a training program—it's a new kind of pathway. HumanEdge is a modular, AI-integrated curriculum designed to help young people thrive in a world where collaborating with machines is just as important as connecting with people. It equips learners with and assesses the human skills that AI can't replicate—and the fluency to lead confidently in an AI-augmented workplace:

- **AI fluency** – for working alongside intelligent systems with discernment and creativity
- **Higher-order thinking skills (HOTS)** – like critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and systems thinking

- **Life and leadership skills** – including adaptability, collaboration, and inclusive leadership

To ensure these capabilities are both gained *and recognized*, HumanEdge will incorporate **HumanEdge Signal**—a behind-the-scenes feature that translates validated skills into structured, machine-readable formats. These signals can integrate with HR tech systems and applicant tracking software, enabling employers to interpret and act on learner outcomes without needing to overhaul existing platforms. The product is designed for AI-enabled online delivery, with industry-specific adaptation packs and real-world simulations that ensure relevance and engagement without requiring in-person facilitation. It can be offered as a standalone product, as skills intelligence and/or development platform or integrated into existing human resource and corporate training systems.

Strategic Vision:

HumanEdge is designed as a scalable, revenue-generating product with projected earned revenue of **$1.5 million within 24 months of launch**. This initiative aligns with IYF's broader innovation and earned revenue strategy. HumanEdge is one of the first digital-first products designed to scale globally while advancing our mission to equip youth with equitable, future-proof skills. This research is a critical step in preparing the product for early sales traction, funder alignment, and enterprise or public sector partnerships.

Key Research Objectives

1. **Buyer Segmentation & Priority Identification**
   - Which segments—whether institutional buyers (e.g., corporate L&D, workforce agencies, online platforms, training providers) or individual consumers (e.g., learners, career switchers, recent graduates)—offer the most viable path for initial market entry?

2. **MVP Feature & Delivery Validation**
   - What version of HumanEdge—including content scope, digital platform design, and features—is most appealing and valuable to early buyers?
   - How should AI-enabled online delivery be configured or adapted for different buyer segments (e.g., integration into existing systems, support tools, credentialing options)?
   - Should **HumanEdge Signal**, our skills-to-signal infrastructure, be included in the MVP? We'd like insight into whether buyers value machine-readable skill outputs that integrate with ATS/HRIS systems—and what formats or credentials are most meaningful.

3. **Value Proposition, Pricing & Go-to-Market Insights**
   - What outcomes do buyers care about most? What would they pay for this product, and under what pricing structures (e.g., per user, license, subscription)?
   - What channels, partnerships, messaging, and sequencing are most likely to lead to early traction and long-term scale?

Working Hypotheses to Be Tested

- Buyers are seeking not just technical upskilling, but training that cultivates adaptable, ethical, AI-literate leaders.
- A modular, stackable curriculum format—with industry-specific adaptation—will appeal across multiple sectors.
- Corporate and workforce development buyers are under pressure to demonstrate ROI, DEI, and future-readiness—and HumanEdge aligns with those imperatives.
- Defining or referencing a skill ontology may improve product clarity and help buyers understand what HumanEdge delivers, especially in competitive procurement environments or for segments like workforce boards and education providers.

Potential Use Cases to Explore

Researchers are encouraged to test this use case alongside other sector-specific or generalist configurations to understand buyer preferences across contexts.

An online, self-paced "AI + HOTS for Logistics" learning pack designed for entry-level workers in warehousing and supply chain roles. Includes 4 core modules (AI fluency, critical thinking, adaptability, systems thinking), a final capstone simulation, and verified skill signal that can be integrated into digital resumes, applicant tracking systems, or talent platforms—ensuring the skills learners gain are both real and recognized.

Draft Buyer Persona Hypotheses

Buyer Type	Why We Think It's a Fit	What We Need to Know
Corporate L&D Manager	High pressure to future-proof talent and meet DEI goals	Will they value and pay for HumanEdge's integrated HOTS + AI model? What delivery support is needed?

Workforce Board	Need scalable tools for displaced worker reskilling	Can HumanEdge meet procurement and implementation criteria? What partnerships are required?
Online Learning Platform	Constant demand for differentiated content with impact	Would they license or white-label HumanEdge? What integration and credentialing is expected?
Education & Training Provider	Need to modernize curricula with transferable skills and AI relevance	Can HumanEdge align with academic cycles, digital infrastructure, and learner-level outcomes?
HR Tech & Talent Platform	Pressure to offer measurable, embedded upskilling for client workforce development	Would they embed HumanEdge into their ecosystems? What features and analytics would drive adoption?
Individual Learner	Seeking a competitive edge in a fast-changing job market	Will learners pay for HumanEdge directly? What pricing, format, and credentials would motivate them?
Career Switcher	Urgent need to build new, market-relevant skills for a transition	Can HumanEdge demonstrate fast, credible ROI (e.g., job placement, salary boost)?
Recent Graduate	Looking to stand out in hiring pipelines and develop skills not taught in school	How do recent grads find and choose learning pathways? What role do parents or advisors play?
Freelancers & Gig Workers	Motivated to stay relevant and marketable in an unstructured, AI-disrupted work landscape	How do we reach them? What platforms or communities shape their learning and purchasing decisions?

What We're Looking For

We're seeking a partner to lead a focused research engagement over a 6–8 week period that delivers decision-ready insight aligned to our strategic milestones.

Budget:

We anticipate proposals in the range of **$20,000–$30,000 USD** for a 6–8 week engagement, depending on methodology, scope, and team structure. We are open to tiered pricing and

phased approaches that align with clear deliverables. Value, clarity, and actionable insight will guide selection.

Suggested Deliverables

To inform HumanEdge's successful development and early market entry, we anticipate the following minimum viable deliverables:

1. **Buyer Interview Summary** – A thematic synthesis of insights from interviews or focus groups with priority buyer segments
2. **Competitive & Landscape Scan** – Build upon IYF's existing preliminary competitor analysis. This should not replicate earlier findings, but instead:
    a. Identify additional or emerging competitors not previously covered
    b. Deepen insights on pricing models, delivery formats, and value propositions
    c. Surface whitespace and buyer pain points that HumanEdge is uniquely positioned to address
3. **Buyer Segmentation Framework** – Prioritized personas and recommended sequence of go-to-market focus
4. **MVP Validation Brief** – Clear recommendations on feature prioritization, content packaging, and delivery expectations by segment, including whether defining or aligning with a recognizable skills ontology (e.g., for AI fluency, HOTS, or leadership skills) could enhance product credibility, buyer understanding, or procurement fit
5. **Go-to-Market Plan** – Messaging guidance, pricing options, channel and partner strategy, and early adopter engagement roadmap
6. **Executive Summary + Slide Deck** – Concise, presentation-ready synthesis of findings and key recommendations

This research will directly shape product development and go-to-market planning. It is not just a research exercise—it's a critical learning sprint to ensure HumanEdge launches with evidence-based positioning, buyer-aligned features, and the strategic clarity required to secure early sales and philanthropic investment. Findings will inform MVP design, pricing, packaging, and partnership priorities. We aim to enter early-stage funder and buyer conversations with evidence-backed clarity—not just conviction.

Proposal submission deadline: September 29th 2025

Contact: Liz Vance, Innovation Director, e.vance@iyfglobal.org

We are not seeking to provide a more detailed scope at this stage. Instead, we invite respondents to submit a full proposal that outlines their approach, proposed methodology, and what 'good' looks like for each deliverable. Please include any resource needs or assumptions that would support success.