

# HYBRID SOCIAL HACKATHON WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL SETTINGS

## GUIDE FOR ORGANISING THE EVENT



Title: Hybrid social hackathon with university students in international settings.  
Guide for organising the event.

Authors: Alžbeta Brozmanová Gregorová, Zuzana Heinzová, Radka Marčeková,  
Ľubica Saktorová, Ivana Šimočková, Jana Šolcová

Reviewers: We want to thank all members of the SLIDE consortium for their feedback  
and suggestions on the final version of the guide.

Publisher: BELIANUM. Publishing house of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica.

Year of publishing: 2024

Scope: 3,05 authors sheets

ISBN 978-80-557-2221-4  
EAN 9788055722214  
DOI 10.24040/2024.9788055722214  
<https://doi.org/10.24040/2024.9788055722214>



The Hybrid social hackathon with university students in international settings. Guide for organising the event is an output of the SLIDE project that has received funding from the European Union Erasmus+ Programme under Grant Agreement 2021-1-BE02-KA220-HED-000032235. The information in this document reflects only the authors' view. The European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).



## Content

INTRODUCTION .....	4
1. INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL HACKATHON WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL SETTINGS .....	5
1.1. WHAT IS A SOCIAL HACKATHON? .....	5
1.2. BENEFITS OF ORGANISING A SOCIAL HACKATHON WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.....	5
1.3. TYPES OF SOCIAL HACKATHONS.....	6
1.4. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL HACKATHON .....	7
2. DIFFERENT ACTORS IN A HYBRID SOCIAL HACKATHON WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS .....	9
2.1. ORGANISING TEAM AND LOCAL INSTRUCTOR.....	9
2.2. UNIVERSITY STUDENTS .....	11
2.3. COMMUNITY PARTNERS.....	11
2.4. MENTORS .....	11
2.5. JUDGES .....	12
2.6. MODERATOR.....	13
2.7. TECHNICIAN .....	13
3. HOW TO ORGANISE SOCIAL HACKATHON WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL SETTINGS .....	14
3.1. PREPARATION BEFORE THE SOCIAL HACKATHON .....	14
3.1.1. Setting the topic and goals of the social hackathon.....	15
3.1.2. Establish the student's teams and prepare students for the event .....	16
3.1.3. Find the community partners, define the challenges and establish cooperation	17
3.1.4. Find the mentors.....	18
3.1.5. Find the judges, elaborate the evaluation criteria and decide about the prices..	18
3.1.6. Find partners and sponsors for the event.....	20
3.1.7. Find the spaces and set up the online platform.....	20
3.1.8. Prepare the Code of Conduct for the social hackathon .....	21
3.1.9. Create a communication and promotion plan.....	22
3.1.10. Prepare the webpage about the social hackathon .....	23
3.2. DAY D – SOCIAL HACKATHON EVENT .....	24
3.3. AFTER THE SOCIAL HACKATHON .....	27
REFERENCES AND USEFUL INFORMATION.....	29
LIST OF THE ATTACHMENTS .....	30
Social Hackathon Consent and Registration Form and Registration for Participating Students .....	31



Social Hackathon Consent Form for Participating Jury Members, Mentors, Local instructors and Community Partners Representatives.....	33
Social Hackathon Registration Form for Participating Jury Members, Mentors and Local Instructors .....	35
Registration of community partners and their challenges for the social hackathon .....	36
Guide for the SLIDE partners to prepare for the social hackathon .....	37
Your steps and your responsibilities before the event .....	37
Our timeline.....	38
Information about the event for community partners .....	39
Information about the event for mentors.....	40
Information about the event for judges .....	41
Information about the event for students .....	42
Guide for the local instructors to prepare for the social hackathon .....	43
Role of the local instructor before the event .....	43
Role of the local instructor during the event .....	44
Role of the local instructor after the event .....	46
Guide for the mentors to prepare for the social hackathon .....	47
Role of the mentors during the event .....	47
Overview of the program .....	48
Guide for the judges to prepare for the social hackathon .....	49
Role of the judges during the event .....	49
Final pitches and presentation of solution .....	49
Instructions for the students what they should deliver .....	51
Template for information on the website prepared by student teams .....	52
Scenario for the evaluation focus group with the local instructors.....	53
Social hackathon feedback for community partners .....	54
Social hackathon feedback for mentors and jury members.....	55
Feedback for student teams.....	56
Certificates for students and community partners .....	57







## INTRODUCTION

This manual has been created as part of the Erasmus+ project 'Service-Learning as a pedagogy to promote Inclusion, Diversity and Digital Empowerment, or SLIDE (01/01/22 – 31/12/24). In practice, there are many different forms of hackathons and social hackathons. However, within the project, we have created a particular type of social hackathon that engages university students from various universities, disciplines and fields of study to solve community partners' challenges. This type of social hackathon greatly enhances international learning and collaboration, as students from other countries join in solving the challenges of the defined community partners from another country. To facilitate contact between community partners and students and to involve as many people as possible from different countries and backgrounds in the social hackathon to strengthen social inclusion, we have designed a hybrid form of the social hackathon. The hybrid form, on the one hand, allows the creation of a creative and inclusive environment for students at their home university. At the same time, the online environment allows connecting with students from other universities and partners and mentors from different countries.

The first version of the manual was created to organise a social hackathon within the SLIDE project. After the organisation, this version was updated and supplemented with examples of challenges and projects that students worked on during the social hackathon and hints and tips that we came up with while organising it and based on the feedback of individual participants involved in the organisation and the course of the social hackathon.

We hope the manual will be a valuable companion for those who organise similar activities at their universities or communities.

SLIDE TEAM



# 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL HACKATHON WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL SETTINGS

## 1.1. WHAT IS A SOCIAL HACKATHON?

A social hackathon is an event that brings together people, typically from diverse backgrounds and expertise, to collaborate on solving social issues or creating projects that positively impact society. Participants work together in teams to develop innovative solutions, often using technology, to address healthcare, education, poverty, environmental sustainability challenges, and more. Social hackathons are a way to harness a community's collective creativity and skills to drive positive change.

## 1.2. BENEFITS OF ORGANISING A SOCIAL HACKATHON WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

**Fostering collaboration and teamwork:** Organizing and participating in a social hackathon requires teamwork, collaboration, and effective communication. Social hackathons unite individuals with different skills, expertise, and perspectives to solve complex social issues. This collaboration can lead to innovative solutions and the development of valuable soft student skills in both academic and professional settings.


**Creating networks:** Social hackathon participants can generally network with like-minded individuals passionate about social change. This can lead to new connections, partnerships, and opportunities for future collaborations. Moreover, a student social hackathon provides a platform for students to interact with peers from different disciplines, universities, and backgrounds. This can create networking opportunities, foster collaboration, and build community among participants.

**Skill development and personal growth:** Students can develop new skills and knowledge while working on a social hackathon project. This can include digital, technical, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication skills by participating in a social hackathon. They can also gain practical experience in project management, ideation, and prototyping.

**Community impact:** Social hackathons have the potential to create a tangible and meaningful impact on society by addressing social challenges and developing solutions that can benefit communities and individuals. Student social hackathons can address pressing social issues in the local community or beyond. By tackling these challenges, students can make a meaningful impact and contribute to positive societal changes.

**Education and awareness:** Student social hackathons can raise awareness about critical social issues, promote empathy and understanding, and educate participants about the importance of social responsibility and community engagement. By showcasing innovative solutions, social hackathons can inspire others to act.

**Empowering participants:** Social hackathons can enable students to use their skills, expertise, and passion for social good. Organising a social hackathon can provide individuals with a platform to make a difference, build confidence, and connect with like-minded changemakers. It



empowers communities and community partners: in the social hackathon, they take up the role of 'experts' and 'student coaches'.

**Innovation and creativity:** Hackathons are known for fostering innovation, experimentation, and entrepreneurship and encourage students to think outside the box, come up with creative solutions, and experiment with new technologies. This encourages innovation and a spirit of entrepreneurship among participants.

### 1.3. TYPES OF SOCIAL HACKATHONS

These are just several examples of the types of social hackathons that exist. Every hackathon has unique focus, goals, and impact areas and can provide valuable opportunities for participants to collaborate, innovate, and create positive social change.

**General Social Hackathons:** These hackathons address various social issues or challenges, allowing participants to choose the problem they want to work on. They attract diverse participants with varied skill sets and interests.

**Civic Tech Hackathons:** Civic tech hackathons focus on using technology to improve public services, government transparency, civic engagement, and social impact. Participants work on projects that address governance, urban planning, health care, education, and more issues.

**Environmental Hackathons:** Environmental hackathons concentrate on finding sustainable solutions to environmental challenges such as climate change, pollution, waste management, and conservation. Participants work on projects that promote environmental protection, resource efficiency, and eco-friendly practices.

**Social Justice Hackathons:** Social justice hackathons tackle issues related to human rights, equality, diversity, inclusion, and social justice. Participants work on projects to address systemic injustice, discrimination, and inequality, and promote social change and advocacy.

**Health and Well-being Hackathons:** Health and well-being hackathons focus on improving public health, mental health, wellness, and access to healthcare services. Participants work on projects to enhance health outcomes, promote healthy behaviours, and address health disparities.

**Education Hackathons:** Education hackathons aim to innovate and improve education systems, learning experiences, and access to quality education for all. Participants work on projects that enhance teaching and learning, provide educational resources, and support student engagement and success.

**Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Hackathons:** These hackathons focus on developing technologies and solutions to aid in emergency response, disaster preparedness, and humanitarian assistance. Participants work on projects that support disaster-affected communities and improve resilience in crises.



## 1.4. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL HACKATHON

A hackathon is an event that brings together experts and creates a collaborative environment to solve a problem. While most hackathons revolve around computer programming and IT, many other industries follow suit. Today, finding hackathons in HR, economics, music, and the like is possible. ([www.hackathon.com](http://www.hackathon.com)). It is essential to follow certain basic principles to ensure that a hackathon remains a social hackathon and stays true to its mission of addressing social issues and creating a positive impact. Here are some fundamental principles to consider:

**Focus on Social Impact:** The primary goal of a social hackathon should be to address social issues, contribute to positive social change, and create real-world impact. All aspects of the event, including problem statements, project selection, judging criteria, and outcomes, should prioritise social impact over profit or competition.

**Clearly Defined Social Mission:** The hackathon's social mission or theme should be clearly defined to guide participants in selecting and working on projects that align with the overarching goal of addressing social challenges. The organiser must ensure that all activities, workshops, mentorship, and resources provided during the event are geared towards achieving the social mission.

**Engagement of Stakeholders and Experts:** The hackathon is designed and organised with the involvement of stakeholders, subject matter experts, community members, and representatives from relevant organisations. Their input helps ensure that the event focuses on relevant social issues, addresses real community needs, and generates sustainable solutions.


**Collaboration with Nonprofit Organizations:** It is essential to partner with nonprofit organisations, social enterprises, grassroots movements, or community groups working on the issue areas targeted by the hackathon. Collaborating with established organisations can help guide participants, provide context, and facilitate the implementation of projects beyond the event.

**Promotion of Diversity and Inclusivity:** Create a welcoming and inclusive environment that values diversity of perspectives, backgrounds, and lived experiences. Encourage participation from individuals with different skills, knowledge, and expertise to foster interdisciplinary collaboration and generate innovative solutions.

**Measure and Communicate Impact:** Another fundamental principle is to develop metrics and tools to measure the impact of the projects developed during the hackathon. The organiser tracks outcomes, gathers feedback from stakeholders, and communicates the social impact achieved by participants to ensure transparency and accountability.

**Fostering a Culture of Learning and Continuous Improvement:** Participants should be encouraged to learn from each other, share knowledge and resources, and collaborate on solutions that have the potential for long-term impact. Moreover, opportunities for networking, mentorship, and skill-building must be provided to support participants in their social innovation journey beyond the event.

**Element of competition:** Hackathons should be competitive because competition fosters innovation, motivation, and high performance among participants. It encourages individuals and teams to push their boundaries, think creatively, and develop unique solutions. The competitive



atmosphere also simulates real-world pressures and deadlines, preparing participants for professional challenges while driving the creation of high-quality, impactful projects.

By following these basic principles, organisers can ensure that their hackathon remains true to its social mission, empowers participants to create meaningful impact, and fosters a community of changemakers dedicated to addressing pressing social challenges.

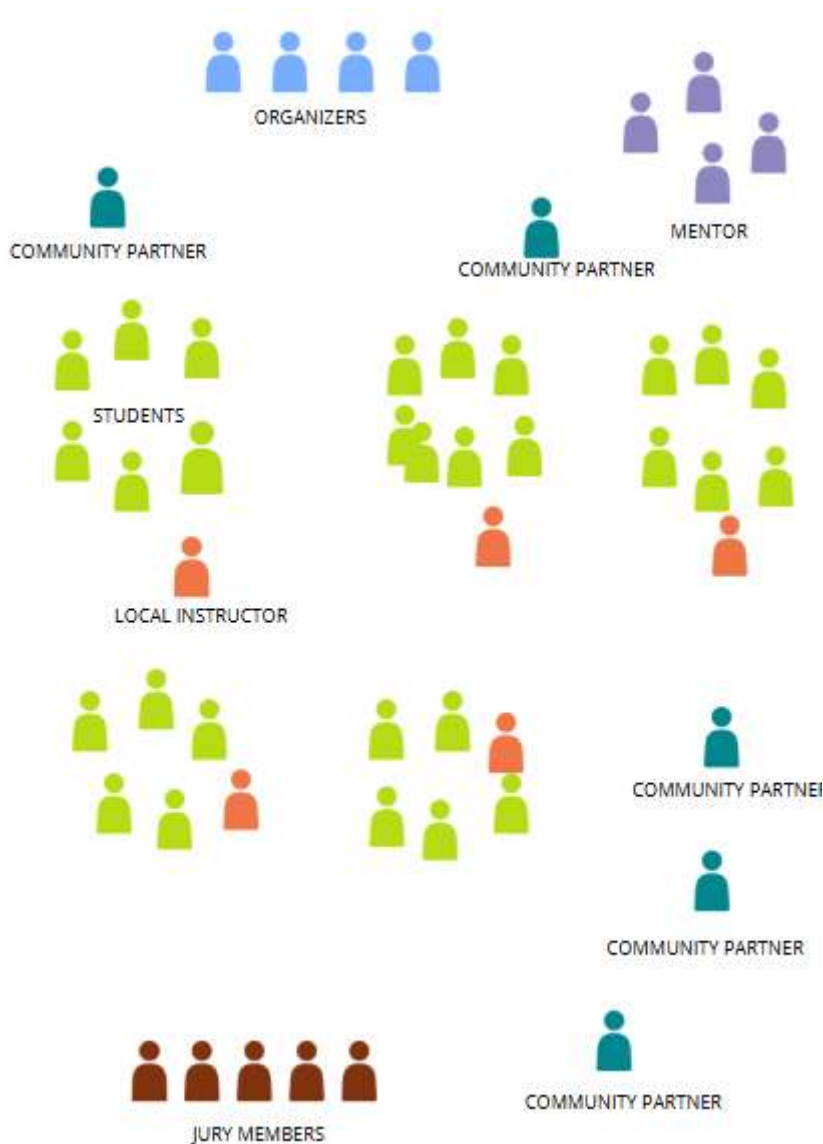


There are several ways to organise a social hackathon. In the SLIDE project built on the principles outlined above but adapted the actual social hackathon process and organisation to allow it to be organised by university teachers, to **enhance the international dimension** of learning, to contribute to digital empowerment solutions for community partners, and to exploit the potential of combining a physical and online social hackathon. For this reason, some steps and roles of stakeholders differ from social hackathons organised as open events. Still, in our case, the intention was also to foster international and interdisciplinary cooperation. With the hybrid format, these requirements can be achieved in the following ways:

- **Student teams are encouraged to be interdisciplinary, and international students are encouraged to join the event.**
- **Student teams are connected to a community partner from another European country. This will raise their awareness of how local problems are often linked to more global structural issues.**
- **The mentors who will coach and support the student teams and judges are from countries with other nationalities.**

## 2. DIFFERENT ACTORS IN A HYBRID SOCIAL HACKATHON WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

A social hackathon involves a whole team preparing, running, and evaluating it. Each team member has a specific role and responsibilities, which must be apparent to each person before the event is organised. Therefore, those approached to participate in the event must clearly understand these roles and responsibilities.



### 2.1. ORGANISING TEAM AND LOCAL INSTRUCTOR

The organising team comprises people responsible for preparing, organising, evaluating, and promoting the social hackathon. We have divided their responsibilities into the following areas:

Responsibilities in the preparation of the social hackathon:

- they are the authors of the title of the event
- they are responsible for choosing the venues in which the event will take place and the platform through which online communication will take place

- set the objectives of the hackathon
- set the date and time of the hackathon and the schedule of the event
- decide when the different phases of the event will take place, how long the preparation will take, who will be involved in the collaboration, who will have what responsibilities,
- determine the rules for the operation and organisation of the event,
- establish a code of conduct for the event
- arrange registration for the participants of the event
- approach community partners and secure agreements with them
- provide partners with a form describing the specific activities and data they require from them, guiding them on what tasks they can assign, what criteria they can need to be fulfilled, and what information is still missing so that students can work accordingly
- decide which students will be invited to participate in the social hackathon
- reach out to students for participation, communicate with them about their responsibilities and tasks, explain the process to them, and are responsible for which students form which groups based on what criteria and requirements
- prepare students for the event
- approach mentors and judges for participation, explaining their roles and responsibilities
- decide who will moderate the event
- provide technical support
- prepare the event space, responsible for the zoning of the rooms (work zone, rest zone, etc.)
- prepare, in cooperation with community partners and judges, the criteria for the evaluation of the projects
- find sponsors
- prepare prizes for winners
- monitor the progress of the event preparation, check it and take action if changes to the process are needed.

#### Responsibilities during the social hackathon:

- document the progress of the event
- provide participants with access to fun activities aimed at relaxation and lightening the atmosphere
- provide Wi-Fi coverage of the event in cooperation with the technicians
- ensure the end of the event and clean-up of the premises

#### Social hackathon evaluation responsibilities:

- obtain feedback on the event from individual participants and evaluate it
- issue follow-up activities after the event

#### Responsibilities in promoting the social hackathon:

- publish the event agenda
- prepare event website
- share information about the event on social media
- communicate the results of the event externally

In the organising team, there is a specific position of the **social hackathon coordinator** who manages all the work of the partners and a role for the **local instructor**.



## LOCAL INSTRUCTOR

This person is a teacher from the university, or more than one person can fill this role. His/her role is not only to reach out to the students and prepare them for the event itself but also to accompany them during the event and provide them with the necessary support. This person also monitors the time during the event to ensure that the team of students is connected with other students at the event, mentors, and community partners.

## 2.2. UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Students are competing participants in the event, coming up with ideas and solutions.

- after signing up for the social hackathon, they form teams (4-6 participants each)
- the student teams chose one problem for which they will try to find a solution during the hackathon event
- the teams chose the topic in advance to allow them to prepare for the event (ex., preliminary research, preparing questions for the community partner, etc.), helping them to be more efficient during the hackathon event
- during this day, students work together, coached by a local instructor and mentors
- are present at the event physically and connect online with their community partners, with international experts on their topic, etc., to discuss the problem they are trying to solve
- give feedback to the organisers on the event



We worked with 11 student teams from 7 countries during the SLIDE social hackathon. They were from different study fields and universities.

## 2.3. COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Community partners are active partners, such as social enterprises and NGOs, that propose a challenge.

- set the challenge (case), identify the problem/need, the objectives, the requirements they expect to meet, provide information on what data they have and explain in detail what they expect from the output, and actively communicate with the organisers
- collaborate in the definition of the project evaluation criteria
- during the implementation of the social hackathon, they actively speak out, communicate with the students and provide relevant information
- provide feedback to students and event organisers
- after the activity, they are responsible for the follow-up of the solution

## 2.4. MENTORS

Mentors provide professional or technical support in designing solutions.

- they communicate with students during the event, they can motivate them, give them tips on how they can improve their results, how they can move forward
- During the hackathon event, mentors rotate all the time.

The mentor coordinator has a separate, critical role in a hackathon. His/her responsibilities are to introduce the mentors to the methodology used in the hackathon, track the mentors' rotation during the event to ensure that each team gets the mentoring they need, organise information transfer between mentors about ongoing mentoring, 'hand over the mentoring stick' (regular quick meetings with all mentors), and collect feedback from mentors. This person is part of the organising team.

**Tips for local instructors and online mentors** (based on the tips prepared by [Marie Rosalie Hanni from Eventornado](#)):

- **Check in on teams regularly**, at least twice a day. Participants feel more connected and noticed when they receive social communications. But don't disturb them too much. It's okay not to be needed, too. Instead of forcing feedback on a team, ask if they want to meet at a specified time.
- **Encourage the teams**, encourage teams and their enthusiasm without dismissing their ideas, no matter how unusual. Avoid imposing your ideas and help lift their spirits when they're stuck. Celebrate all victories, big and small. Criticising ideas can hinder their creativity, so instead, ask how they developed the concept and praise what you like. As a mentor, provide hope and fresh insights amidst confusion and uncertainty, assuring teams they are doing well. This boosts their confidence and keeps progress smooth.
- **Help the teams stay focused**. Mentors need to make sure they know where the teams need to get—what goal they want to achieve during the social hackathon, whether they are planning a working prototype of the product or a wireframe to showcase the idea, how they will present their ideas at the end, or if they need to prepare slides, etc. Mentors should keep the team focused on the end goal and get them back on the right track if they drift away.
- **Make sure everyone works together**. Sometimes, teams might need help dividing roles. Team members come from various backgrounds, each with their own skills, expertise, and goals. A hackathon mentor can help people find their roles and ensure everyone is on the same page. For example, who will pitch the idea in the end?
- **Teach them to fish**. Even if a mentor is an expert at what they do, they can only see the world through a specific lens. But, regarding mentoring, the most crucial talent they can have is asking the right questions. Because the mentor is the expert, many teams want mentors to provide them with ready-made answers. Avoid offering them rigid answers at all costs; instead, assist them in developing their solutions. The mentor's ultimate purpose is to help the team make judgments.



After the experience with organising the SLIDE social hackathon, we recommend choosing the mentors after you know the challenges so that you can have only 2-3 people with specific expertise. Because we had the role of the local instructor, who has a similar role as a mentor, you can organise an event without mentors, and the local instructor takes the responsibilities of mentors.

## 2.5. JUDGES

Since one of the crucial elements of hackathons is the element of competition, an international jury should be selected to evaluate the solutions of the student teams, and a prize should be awarded to the winning team. The international jury should consist of members of universities, NGOs, etc. Their responsibilities are:

- work together to determine the criteria for evaluating the projects,
- evaluate individual projects and choose the winner.

## 2.6. MODERATOR

The moderator accompanies the whole event. It can be an event coordinator or a different person.

- introduces the objectives of the hackathon,
- introduces the schedule of the event and the rules of the event, introduces the participants, introduces the code of conduct during the event, communicates all important organisational details,
- is the intermediary between physically participating students and those participating virtually,
- monitors the event's timing and ensures that the agreed course and timetable are adhered to.
- announces the results of the event, the winners of the event,
- is responsible for the kick-off session,
- moderates the final discussion and the after-party.

## 2.7. TECHNICIAN

The technician provides the technical support for the event and is responsible for the smooth running of the event from a technical point of view. If the event is hybrid and people are in different localities, it is better to have technical support in every location.

- responsible for quality Wi-Fi internet connection
- responsible for the technical connection of all participants
- responsible for using the premises following the event's objectives (lighting, microphones, other technical equipment, etc.).



We prepared a small guide for each group to help SLIDE partners, local instructors, community partners, mentors, and jury members understand their roles and responsibilities. These guides were sent to these people before the event. You can check them in the attachment:

- [Guide for SLIDE partners](#)
- [Guide for the local instructors](#)
- [Guide for the mentors](#)
- [Guide for the jury members](#)

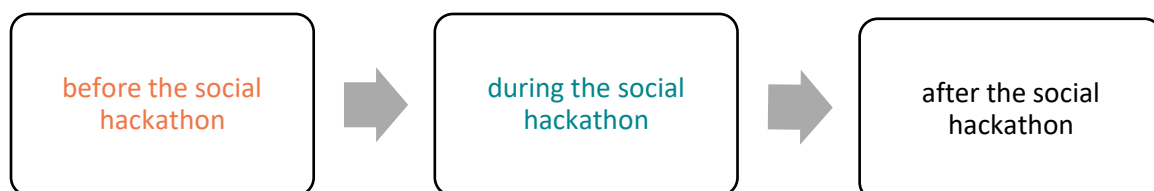


### 3. HOW TO ORGANISE SOCIAL HACKATHON WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL SETTINGS

The organisation of a social hackathon can be divided into three basic steps: before the event, during the social hackathon, and after the event. In each step, the individual participants have different responsibilities. According to several recommendations, preparation for the event should start 6 months before the event. The first thing you plan is when the social hackathon will take place. The timeline for preparing the whole event will depend on that.



At SLIDE, we even started planning a year before the event to ensure it ran smoothly and clarify roles with each other. The more people are involved in the event's organisation, the more it is necessary to think about organising things and seeking consensus in aligning mutual expectations.



#### 3.1. PREPARATION BEFORE THE SOCIAL HACKATHON

As stated by [Sabreen Swan from Eventornado](#), too often, organisers focus all their efforts on the day itself and, as a result, need more strategy to create an event that inspires innovation and change. So, the key to a successful social hackathon is preparation.

##### **Before the social hackathon, you need to:**

- Set the topic and goals of the social hackathon;
- Establish the student's teams and prepare students for the event;
- Find the community partners with the challenges and establish the cooperation;
- Find the mentors;
- Find the judges;
- Find sponsors;
- Find the moderator and technician;
- Find the spaces and set up the online platform;
- Set up the evaluation criteria;
- Decide about the prices;
- Create a communication and promotion plan;
- Prepare the code of conduct for the event;
- Prepare the website;
- Prepare the schedule for the social hackathon day.



Example of the timeline for the social hackathon preparation from the SLIDE project

	June	July	August	September	October	November
Reaching students and forming teams						
Registering teams for the social hackathon						
Preparing students for the event						
Reaching out to community partners, establishing cooperation and defining challenges						
Creating a list of partners and challenges						
Reaching out to mentors, judges, sponsors						
Creating lists of mentors, judges, and sponsors						
Decide about the coordinator of the mentors and judges.						
Find the moderator and technician.						
Find the local spaces and decide online platform.						
Prepare the code of conduct for the event.						
Set up the evaluation criteria and decide on prices.						
Prepare a communication plan.						
Prepare the website and registration.						
Introducing challenges from community partners to students						
Selection of challenges to address by students						
Prepare the schedule for the social hackathon day.						
Social hackathon event						

### 3.1.1. Setting the topic and goals of the social hackathon

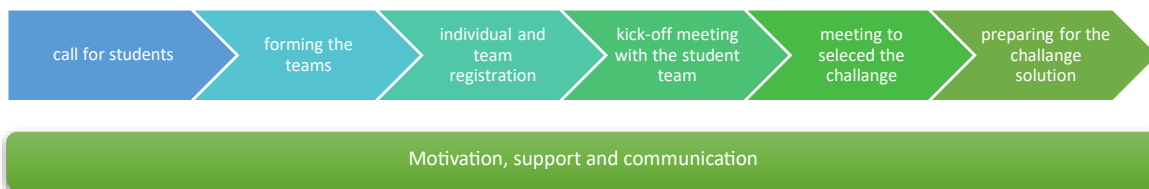
What do you want to achieve with the social hackathon? Do you want to focus on a specific technology, problem, or challenge? Clearly defining the goals will help you focus your efforts and ensure everyone is on the same page. If you don't frame the hackathon correctly, it's unlikely that you'll yield the results you're looking for. When defining goals for a social hackathon, it's essential to consider the target audience, theme, duration, resources available, and desired outcomes. Clear communication of goals helps participants understand the purpose of the social hackathon and align their efforts accordingly. Additionally, incorporating these goals into the judging criteria ensures that projects are evaluated based on their relevance and contribution to the social hackathon's objectives.

## SLIDE EXAMPLE

In the SLIDE project, the topic of the social hackathon was “**Digital bridges and gaps in society**”. The objectives of the social hackathon were:

- to equip students with skills to participate in digital education fully, but also with skills to make connections with local communities and sensitise students towards digital inclusion and digital empowerment of community members;
- to develop intercultural understanding and international collaboration;
- to address specific challenges or problems faced by community organisations or communities connected with digitalisation and develop innovative solutions within a defined time frame which will be transferable to other organisations or communities.

### 3.1.2. Establish the student's teams and prepare students for the event



In a social hackathon with university students, either students can choose to sign up for the social hackathon based on a published call for applications or teachers at the university will identify and reach out to students to form teams.

When introducing the idea of a social hackathon and why students should get involved, discuss the benefits they can gain. More and more universities and higher education institutions have organised hackathons for their students, producing thousands of ambitious ideas and creating an innovative student culture. Whether your theme is science, technology, math or engineering, social hackathons are a fantastic way to unite students, inspire innovation and teamwork, and solve real-world problems that students care about.

Sabreen Swan from [Eventornado](#) shares some of the benefits of organising a hackathon for university students:

- Hackathons help cultivate students’ networking skills
- Hackathons inspire healthy competition
- Hackathons inspire students to take risks
- Hackathons help students boost their resumes/portfolio
- Hackathons get students in front of potential employers
- Hackathons help students develop public speaking skills
- Hackathons help students develop superior problem-solving skills

At some universities, students can be awarded ECTS credits for participating in the social hackathon.

## SLIDE EXAMPLE

For example, in the SLIDE project, Matej Bel University (Slovakia) and the University of Zagreb (Croatia) awarded students for their participation with 1 ECTS credit.

Students participating in the social hackathon “Digital Bridges and Gaps in Society” mentioned these benefits:



- Developed practical skills, including time management, teamwork, working efficiently under pressure and AI tools.
- Gained knowledge about problems that various social groups can face and how students contribute to their solution
- Learning to implement digital solutions in a real challenge
- Developed ability to persist and find practical solutions to problems

A student team consists of 4 to 6 students. The students can be from different disciplines and should be fluent in English. Not everyone on the student team needs to be fluent in English, as roles on the team can be determined and adapted according to the student's preferences and abilities. If English language proficiency would be a significant barrier to participation, a translator may be considered.

Once the teams are formed, all members must register as hackathon participants. [The registration form is in the attachment](#). The local instructor will conduct a face-to-face meeting with the teams or teams of students to better prepare them for the event itself.



**Draft content for the local instructor's kick-off meeting with the student team** (approximately 2 hours) from the SLIDE project.

- Introduction
- Clarification of the basic idea of the social hackathon process and the roles and responsibilities of the student team
- Team activity, e.g. drawing a standard coat of arms
- Definition of students' expectations and concerns
- Planning students' personal goals concerning their personal and professional development
- Creating rules for functioning in a team
- Agreeing on a communication platform within the team and with the local instructor
- Conclusion and next steps

After registration, competition teams meet at least one month before the social hackathon. This meeting introduces and selects the challenges proposed by the community partners. Students will receive more specific information on the challenges, procedures, and criteria for evaluating the deliverables at the brainstorming session. The team meeting before the social hackathon is aimed at a good understanding of the hackathon and its challenges. The student teams chose one problem for which they will try to find a solution during the social hackathon event. The teams chose this topic in advance to allow them to prepare for the event (ex., preliminary research, preparing questions for the community partner, etc.), helping them to be more efficient during the social hackathon event.

Before the event, the local instructor communicates with the students, motivating and supporting them in preparing for the event.

### 3.1.3. Find the community partners, define the challenges and establish cooperation

Community partners are the 'challenge owners'. They are directly related to the challenge question and are vested in any solutions. Ideally, solutions from the social hackathon can be tested or used by the community partner to have a real impact. Community partners also serve as experts on the theme and challenges of the social hackathon and can explain the challenge in more detail. They are also involved in the creation of the evaluation criteria.





In the SLIDE project, when selecting community partners, the following considerations were taken into account:

- The community partner is (reasonably) fluent in English. If not, a translator should be present.
- The community partner is committed to being present at (at least in part of) the social hackathon event, allowing student teams to discuss the problem.
- The community partner proposes a problem linked to 'digital gaps/bridges in society', which is transferable to different countries (linked to a broader global issue).

When reaching out to community partners, introduce the theme and goals of the social hackathon and clarify the benefits for the partners and their roles in preparing, implementing and evaluating the event (They are introduced above). After the introduction, send the partners a form to register and describe the social challenge ([See attached for an example used in the SLIDE project](#)). You can also enter into a cooperation agreement with the partner to implement the social hackathon. It would be best if you built a mutually reciprocal partnership with the partner, so make sure, on the one hand, that the solution to the challenge will have a real impact and relevance for the partner and, on the other hand, that the partner understands that his/her role in the process of implementing the social hackathon is also to provide the necessary information and guidance to the students.

You can check na [challenges proposed by community partners during the SLIDE social hackathon here](#).

#### 3.1.4. Find the mentors

Mentors are the glue that keeps student teams together and focused, which may be the crucial difference if they finish a project. The primary responsibility of mentors is to motivate and assist participants in coming up with fresh ideas and attempting new things. We recommend inviting mentors who represent different fields: business, technology, marketing, public service development, design, IT, environmental experts, media, and professionals dealing with vulnerable groups—the more diverse the pool of experts, the better.

After explaining the mentors' roles and responsibilities, invite them to register for the event (See attached for an example of registration used in the SLIDE project). Before the event, please communicate with the mentors and give them tips for good mentoring.



As part of the SLIDE project, local mentors shared mentoring duties with mentors present online during the social hackathon. After the event evaluation, we recommend having fewer mentors and closely connected with the challenges. You can also organise an event without mentors; local instructors can take the role of mentors.

#### 3.1.5. Find the judges, elaborate the evaluation criteria and decide about the prizes

Since one of the crucial elements of hackathons is the element of **competition**, a **jury** should be selected to evaluate the solutions of the student teams. The jury can consist of members of universities and NGOs; you can also involve community partners and sponsors to become the jury members.

After explaining the judges' roles and responsibilities, invite them to register for the event ([see attached for an example of registration used in the SLIDE project](#)). Before the event, involve them in discussing the criteria for evaluating the social hackathon solutions.

Judging a social hackathon can be incredibly difficult. Without clear criteria to judge teams on, judges are left to evaluate ideas based on initial redactions, external opinions and other non-reliable factors, potentially passing up on great talent. Choosing the “best project” can come with much pressure.

Clarifying your evaluation criteria early in the process can help ensure the objectives of the social hackathon are clear to all participants and provide a framework for evaluating the event's results. Having clear criteria can also help to ensure that all teams are working towards the same goal and that the judging process is fair and unbiased. Additionally, it can help to ensure that the most innovative and impactful ideas are identified and recognised. Ask yourself, what types of ideas are you looking for? What characteristics would make an idea stand out? Make sure that your event is well aligned with your objectives.

The SLIDE consortium formulated these criteria used by the judges to evaluate the final pitches given by the different student groups.

Because the social hackathon is a competition, you should also consider the prizes or awards you will give participants or winners. Giving all participants something rather than awarding only the winner can be more motivating. However, it's crucial to ensure that the prize structure aligns with the goals and values of the social hackathon. Prizes should be equitable, transparent, and inclusive, considering the projects' diversity, impact, scalability, and sustainability. Additionally, non-monetary rewards such as mentorship, networking opportunities, and resource access can be valuable incentives for participants. Ultimately, while prizes can enhance the overall experience and outcomes of a social hackathon, they should complement the broader mission of the event, which is to address social challenges and create positive change in communities.

Prizes in social hackathons can vary widely depending on the event's goals, the resources available, and the organisers' preferences. Here are some examples of prizes commonly offered in social hackathons:



- Winning teams may receive recognition through awards ceremonies, press coverage, and public announcements. This recognition can help validate participants' efforts and increase project visibility.
- Monetary awards or cash prizes are a common incentive in hackathons, including social hackathons.
- In-kind support such as services, software licenses, office space, access to resources like data sets, APIs, hardware, internships, and trips...
- Winning teams may receive mentorship and guidance from experts in relevant fields to help further develop and implement their projects. This could include access to industry mentors, business advisors, legal experts, or technical consultants.
- Some social hackathons offer opportunities for winning teams to participate in incubation or acceleration programs.
- Prizes can also involve engaging the broader community in evaluating and selecting through online voting, peer review, or expert panels.

TIP: Decide between having one large prize and several smaller ones.

Competitive hackathons also choose between having one prize for the winning spot and several awards for different achievements. Multiple competition fields usually attract more competitors, especially when the event is external. That being said, it's important to remember that the overall value of one prize for everything would be higher than each of the lesser prizes separately.

### 3.1.6. Find partners and sponsors for the event

Social hackathon partners or sponsors have the added value of building networks with different sectors of society through the social hackathon and spreading the word about the activities you are implementing in collaboration with community partners and students. Know everything you need about the revenues, costs, and how much you intend to spend on each attendee. It would be best if you appeared credible to your investors/sponsors. Your budget estimates include food, drinks, travel, security, facilities, hardware, staff, branding, and swag packs. When communicating with sponsors, think about what you want from them and what you offer them. In our experience, people and companies prefer to contribute specific products rather than money. Once the event is done, thank your sponsors publicly on your website and via social media.

### 3.1.7. Find the spaces and set up the online platform

For the event venue, you always have two options or three....

- 1) To prepare a virtual event to enable participation from across the whole world with no physical limits;
- 2) To prepare a physical event where everyone interacts and networking is real, but the geographical coverage will be the limit;
- 3) Go hybrid... yes, it doubles your efforts, but it's worth it!



In the SLIDE project, we organised a hybrid social hackathon where the student teams worked with local instructors in local spaces and connected online with community partners, mentors, and other participants.

To decide on the venue of the event for local team students, there were the following recommendations:

- ✓ Make sure you can reserve a space with appropriate capacity to accommodate student teams;
- ✓ Working area for teams with enough comfortable chairs, good size tables, electricity plugs;
- ✓ WIFI connection can serve PC, mobile phone and other device to each attendee (at least three socket per person). This requires a strong and secured WIFI- check it twice. Each participant should come with their PC (camera and microphone) with installed communication software required by the organiser;
- ✓ Backstage - a room for staff and office supplies (printer, copy machine, stationery, etc)
- ✓ A parking lot
- ✓ Catering zone or cafeteria where snacks are being served
- ✓ Accessibility in the whole building
- ✓ Friendly environment, chillout& relaxational zones, creative area and tools, sufficient number of restrooms
- ✓ Functional and easy-to-be-used AV equipment for presentations
- ✓ Secure place to store expensive equipment and personal belongings
- ✓ Check the insurance of the venue
- ✓ Share information about the online connection a few weeks before the event.

There are several ways to support your hybrid/online social hackathon. To support a one-day event, save energy, and avoid mistakes, Brightidea may work: <https://www.brightidea.com/product/hackathon/>.

But you can also organise everything on your own:

- ✓ Set up communication tools such as Asana, Slack, Zoom, MS Teams, etc. and do not disperse into too many communication tools
- ✓ Select the right registration platform: JunctionApp, Eventbrite, Ti.to, etc.
- ✓ Make sure the participants have access to different web pages and SharePoint (Google Drive, Basecamp, Monday, Dropbox, Quora, Miro, Medium)

### 3.1.8. Prepare the Code of Conduct for the social hackathon

#### **Inclusion**

Create a pleasant, safe, and non-discriminatory event for diverse participants. Attendees of all gender identities, sexual orientations, races, ethnicities, cultures, national origins, social and economic classes, educational levels, colour, immigration statuses, sexes, ages, sizes, family statuses, political beliefs, religions, and mental and physical ability are warmly welcomed to the social hackathon. Everyone deserves respect and is an asset to the team.

A well-defined set of rules helps if any issues arise during the event. Communicate the code of conduct via the website, posters, and any other published material sent to sponsors, participants, speakers, and hosting team members, and make people acknowledge their agreement to the terms and conditions. All attendees need to understand what behaviour is expected of them.

Providing inclusive events, personal visits to relevant organisations for people with disabilities and user groups, dealing with transportation and personal assistance issues, and organising continuous support before, during, and after the event are recommended.

The rules should include policies to deal with harassment and lack of respect for others' opinions and remind all attendees that it is up to them to make the experience unique. It would be best if

you also had a proper reporting policy or channel by mentioning who to contact and how in the document.

### Ownership rights

No copying of the work of others is allowed. The participants own the intellectual property rights of the original idea and work they developed while participating in the hackathon. The organiser or any of its partners will not own the rights or the ideas developed, regardless of the concept being awarded. The organiser and its partners, independently of the type of involvement in and contribution to the development of the idea, will not own any part of the idea or design unless a written agreement or transfer of rights is implemented by the participants and all parties, including those of the organiser.

Authors of the winning ideas for solutions keep the intellectual property rights and subsequent liabilities about the developed products, including the liability to observe international and national copyright laws.

The organisers may publish the results after the participants agree during the event.

### Personal data protection

Protection of Participants' data has to be secured. Participant's data, such as first names, surnames and birth names, educational establishment, email address, nationality, postal address, telephone number, identity card or passport, and any sound and video recordings, are collected at the time of registration and during the event to organise the Hackathon, setting up the teams and monitoring the participants during the work sessions, and for the exclusive use of the organisers. Participant's data are collected and kept for the period necessary for the management and organisation of the social hackathon, and for its running.

According to the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), the use of Google Analytics, Facebook Pixel, and Facebook Business should be documented on the event registration landing page, in the terms and conditions, or on the privacy policy page.



### 3.1.9. Create a communication and promotion plan

*„A social hackathon event works only if you create encounters between people who do not usually meet and work together.“ (Bugarzski et al., 2021)*

- Discover the story of your Hackathon and make it public- why is it unique?
- Be visible!!! Positive and playful.
- Launch a Social Media campaign (prepare a TikTok, Facebook Page, Twitter, Instagram, Reddit & LinkedIn account, and prepare short videos on YouTube)



- Define your target audience (not only participants but also partners, communities, sponsors, general public) through social media, email, and other channels to increase excitement for the hackathon – think about targeted Facebook, Google, or Instagram Ads., etc.
- Engage the right people: social hackathon is not about technology or coding (solely); it is about creative solutions for the community and together with the community- it's all about people
- Communicate regularly before the event at an appropriate time (start at least half a year before) – tempt others to join. Highlight social hackathon benefits and importance of participation: located in the nearby area, it's free of cost, transportation will be provided, special needs will be fulfilled, an interesting prize as incentive, etc.
- Select appropriate means of communication according to your target audience: when addressing young people (University students, youth, etc.) include videos, memes, emojis, animation, cartoons, comics, etc. Gamification sounds right, too 😊
- Ask all participants (not only the organisational team but also registered students, partners, sponsors, and community members to share in advance what they are working on; ask them to use hashtags # when posting on social media)
- Share videos from the preparation stage before the event and document the day D – make sure you have signed confirmation of participants (GDPR& privacy policy)
- Data, data, data... data-driven marketing will rocket up your event; Google Analytics and others may be helpful.



Local instructors should appoint a communication officer at their local group to report (images, quotes, text) on the progress of each student team during the social hackathon event.

Watch [video](#) from our SLIDE event.

### 3.1.10. Prepare the webpage about the social hackathon

Include:

- Title, objectives, topic and brief description of the social hackathon
- Who can apply/ what teams is it for
- Code of conduct
- Information about organisers
- Information about community partners
- Information about teams
- Date and schedule of the event

- Mentors, judges, other partners and sponsors
- Prizes
- Registration

[You can get inspiration from the SLIDE social hackathon website.](#)

## 3.2. DAY D – SOCIAL HACKATHON EVENT

Even though we offer you some steps to a proven social hackathon process, as an organiser, you'll know that every time you conduct a hackathon, you'll encounter new challenges that you put on your checklist for the future.

We want to offer you a starting point by pointing out principles that will help both the goal and the flow of the social hackathon:

### **PRINCIPLE 1: Make it fun**

Even if your social hackathon's brand is strong, you need to make your hackathon appealing to the desired audience. A social hackathon should be, first and foremost, a celebration of creativity.

### **PRINCIPLE 2: A friendly and inclusive environment**

Creating a friendly environment can reduce the tension from competition at a hackathon. Participants must be reassured that mistakes are learning opportunities and that there are no wrong questions. Strive for a partnership between participants, mentors, moderators, and others.

### **PRINCIPLE 3: A lovely venue**

It's possible to find venues that don't require you to pay. College campuses are an excellent example of this. However, make sure you find a nice-looking venue. The venue adds to the overall atmosphere. Some like to sit in a chair while creating, some on a couch, and some in a Tuli bag. Some want to eat while doing it, and some like having space to write.

### **PRINCIPLE 4: Quality catering**

To help people produce something quickly, they shouldn't need to leave the premises to get food. Sandwiches or pizza make good mealtime options, and it is recommended to supply a good mix of healthy snacks and drinks. You want to make sure you provide quality catering as well. If the hackathon takes care of attendees, this is important for giving off the impression that you take good care of them.

### **PRINCIPLE 5: Fun activities during the hackathon**

During breaks, sometimes participants will want to hang out with each other. Giving participants access to other fun activities like billiards, table tennis, board games, or video games can be an excellent way to keep them entertained. After rest, creativity often kicks in on its own.

### **PRINCIPLE 6: WI-FI**

Without Wi-Fi, hackers can't build their projects; hackers' devices will die without power. They need it not only for creating but also for communicating with mentors and community partners.

### **PRINCIPLE 7: Come equipped**

Spending half a day on setting up tooling can be disheartening. Ensure attendees know what they need to download and install before they arrive.



### Principle 8: Document the event

Share photos and videos of the event on social media, the social hackathon site, and your university website. You may want to interview participants and judges about their experiences, such as the most memorable aspect of the social hackathon or what they are most proud of. After you announce the winning team(s), capture the moment with team pictures and the award hand-off.

SLIDE  
EXAMPLE

### Schedule of the hybrid social hackathon

Time	Offline	Online
7:00 – 8:00	Preparation of the premises and breakfast	
8:00 – 9:00	Welcome the Participants & Breakfast (offline in each country)	Preparation of the online platform
9:00 – 9:30		Kick-off session
9:30 – 12:00	Teamwork	Connecting with the community partners and mentors
12:00 – 12:15		Middle session Check-in
12:15 – 13:15	Lunch & Chillpoint	
13:15 – 16:00	Teamwork & Preparation Final Pitch	Meeting with mentors and community partners
16:00 – 17:00		Final Pitch /Solution presentations
17:00 – 17:30	Linner "Dunch" Evaluation with students	Decision time – Jury Evaluation
17:30 – 18:00		Announcing the Winners & concluding talk or Closing Stage
18:00	After-Party & Dinner	

### STAGE ONE: MANAGE THE EVENT LOGISTICS

Before the attendees arrive, you must prepare the offline and online space for your D-Day. Here are a few tips:

- check for power and stream or hardware issues;
- prepare breakfast and food court
- publish the detailed day-of event schedule
- ensure room layout is set (free time zone, work zone, zone with tools for writing, creating...)

### STAGE TWO: STARTING AND KICK OFF

#### 1) Welcome the Participants & Breakfast

Local instructors must be in the room before the social hackathon participants arrive. Smiles are the most important thing at this point. Prepare a welcome atmosphere, which you will complete with e.g. name tags, team registration with a team photo, etc. Set up a section for socialising and relaxing: set specific time slots for socialising, e.g. an extended breakfast where attendees can loosely talk. That way, people can ask their teammates how they've been doing.

## 2) Kick-off Session

Welcome attendees with a formal/informal presentation going over the social hackathon objectives, the schedule (like the one above), and the rules; present the staff, mentors, and panel of judges; and guide everyone through the agenda. The host should be prepared to answer any questions the participants might have quickly. Teams are eager to start! Introduce the Code of Conduct. Communicate the schedule of the event and the deadline for project submission.

### STAGE THREE: KEEPING TEAMWORK GOING

The first hours of a hackathon are crucial; start with an exciting keynote and make everyone feel valued for being there. Don't forget to have fun in the process!

Help individuals make their pitches, form teams, and pick corners. Communicate timelines and rules for every step of the hacking process-brainstorming, pitching, formulation, and presenting, including meal times.

Make sure mentors/advisors and community partners are available to the participants.

### STAGE FOUR: FINAL PITCH

Yes, this is the critical moment. Teams will present their ideas and demos. The ideal time to give each team is 3-6 minutes. Allow time for the judges to ask questions. Set clear expectations and provide guardrails to prepare your participants for their final presentations.



**In the SLIDE social hackathon, we agreed on the following criteria for the final pitches and presentation of the solution:**

- The length of the pitch is 4 minutes.
- The final pitch should answer the following 3 questions:
  - o What is the challenge?
  - o What is the solution?
  - o Why is this a good solution?
- Students can choose a delivery method (ex., PowerPoint, video, prototype demo, etc.)
- Next to the presentation, students will provide an 'Annex document' including a more extended version of their solution. This document will be delivered to the community partners (which will be more beneficial for them than a presentation). The jury can consult this document to support their final decision.
- [Students fill out a template about their solution](#) to be published on the SLIDE website.
- The pitches will be recorded.

See the instructions for the students in the attachment.

#### TIP: Qualifying Round

If you have more than 10 teams in your hackathon, a wise strategy is to have a qualifying round for the top 10. Otherwise, your session will be too long, and the judges won't be able to pay careful attention to each team. To choose the top 10 teams, you ask all of them for a two-minute pitch while the judges listen and ask questions. The judges then pick the 10 finalists. After that, everyone will need about 15 minutes to breathe before the final pitches start.



## STAGE FIVE: FINAL SESSION

### Decision Time

Judges can take up to 30 minutes to make their decisions. It's a good idea to offer food, drinks, a fun activity or even a presentation to keep the participants occupied while they wait.

### Announcing the Winners

Finally, you have winners. As you share the thrilling news, remember to thank everyone. Having your prizes close to the stage are helpful, too.

The promise of awards and recognition will be a big motivator to participate, and you may give all participants something small to show gratitude for their contribution. If the prizes aren't available on the social hackathon day, provide the teams with instructions for collecting them later. Don't forget to capture the moment with team pictures at the award hand-off.

## STAGE SIX: CLOSING SESSION

### Concluding Talk or Closing Stage

The closing stage requires the participation of finalists, judges, and the sponsoring department. In this stage, you award the winner(s), update the site, inform all relevant stakeholders of the following steps, such as any implementation plans with the winning idea or solution, and conduct an event retrospective to refine your process for the next hackathon.

### After-Party!

After the prizes are given out, a nice touch is to have a social hour or after-party where participants can converse and relax after such intense work. After the event, you should celebrate with the participants and stakeholders for a job well-done. This is another opportunity to take videos and photos to share on your social and internal communication channels.

### Final Clean-Up

Once the participants leave, it's time to clean up. If you haven't hired a company to help 😊

## 3.3. AFTER THE SOCIAL HACKATHON

Keeping promises and post-event follow-up:

- Thank your participants, sponsors, hosts, speakers, judges, mentors, data providers, press, and volunteers.
- Get excellent videos and photos of the event for future marketing purposes.
- Thoroughly analyse the participant data and any other relevant statistics, channels used for outreach, and the quality of the hackers and their submissions, and get feedback from the attendees.
- Follow-up blogs, tweets, emails, and demo videos or presentations are great after-event tools to maintain the “connect.”
- For internal hackathons, communicating details about the events, hacks, and winners also boost a company's image.



## SLIDE EXAMPLE

During the SLIDE social hackathon, we evaluated the event with different stakeholders involved; we used various tools for each group.

- The evaluation with students was organised during the social hackathon event with the local instructors. They evaluated different aspects of the hackathon and the benefits for themselves. You can find the [instructions for the evaluation](#) in the guide for the social hackathon in the attachment.
- We organised a focus group with the local instructors. [See the scenario in the attachment](#).
- We also asked [mentors, jury members](#) and [community partners](#) to complete the evaluation form.

We also prepared [separate feedback](#) from the jury and community partners for each student team and [certificates for the students and community partners](#). You can see examples in the attachment.

**Based on the evaluation, we formulated these recommendations for future events:**

### Logistics

- 📄 Standardize Distribution: Ensure equal preparation time by providing consistent case details.
- 💻 Optimize Technology: Resolve Zoom issues and enhance acoustic setups.
- ⚡ Essentials Availability: Ensure access to WiFi, charging stations, and other key resources.

### Schedule

- 🕒 Shorten Intro: Focus on essential points to keep the audience engaged.
- 📅 Extend Duration: Expand the event to two days for better preparation and delivery.

### Content

- 🌐 Translation Required: Eliminate language barriers by translating all materials.
- 📖 Real-World Alignment: Collaborate with partners to create contextually accurate challenges.

### Support

- 👥 Role Clarity: Define and communicate the responsibilities of mentors and instructors.
- 💬 Feedback Loops: Schedule structured feedback sessions to support participants.

### Community Engagement

- 👥 Align Expectations: Hold pre-event meetings to harmonise goals with community partners.



## REFERENCES AND USEFUL INFORMATION

Bugarszki, Z., Lepik, K.-L., Kangro, K., Medar, M., Amor, K., Medar, M., & Saia, K. (2021). *Guideline for social hackathon events*. Tallinn University: School of Governance, Law and Society.

Hanni, M. R. (2024). The role of mentors at a hackathon. *Eventornado*. Retrieved from <https://eventornado.com/blog/the-role-of-mentors-in-a-hackathon>

Swan, S. (2024). 9 key strategies to make sure your hackathon doesn't flop. *Eventornado*. Retrieved from <https://eventornado.com/blog/key-strategies-to-make-sure-your-hackathon-doesnt-flop>

Swan, S. (2024). 7 reasons why every university should host a student hackathon. *Eventornado*. Retrieved from <https://eventornado.com/blog/7-reasons-why-every-university-should-host-a-student-hackathon>

[www.hackathon.com](http://www.hackathon.com)

<https://www.brightidea.com/product/hackathon/>.



## LIST OF THE ATTACHMENTS

Social Hackathon Consent and Registration Form and Registration for Participating Students

Social Hackathon Consent Form for Participating Jury Members, Mentors, Local Instructors and Community Partners Representatives

Social Hackathon Registration Form for Participating Jury Members, Mentors and Local Instructors

Registration of community partners and their challenges for the social hackathon

Guide for the SLIDE partners

Guide for the local instructors

Guide for the mentors

Guide for the jury members

Instructions for the students what they should deliver

Template for information on the website prepared by student teams

Scenario for the evaluation focus group with the local instructors

Social hackathon feedback for community partners

Social hackathon feedback for mentors and jury members

Feedback for student teams

Certificates for students and community partners



## Social Hackathon Consent and Registration Form and Registration for Participating Students

This Social Hackathon ‘Digital Bridges and Gaps in Society’ is organized in the context of the Erasmus+ project ‘Service-Learning as a pedagogy for promoting Inclusion, Diversity and Digital Empowerment’ or SLIDE (2021-1-BE02-KA220-HED-000032235). This project aims to intertwine the Service-Learning (SL) pedagogy with Digital Empowerment (DE) to promote Inclusion (I) and diversity. The project brings together students and academics from a wide range of European HEI’s to draw on existing practices, share knowledge and develop best practices in and with the community where all become teaching resources, problem solvers, and partners.

The SLIDE Social Hackathon aims to equip students with skills and knowledge to fully participate in digital higher education, and with pedagogical skills to make connections with local communities. The social hackathon will provide an opportunity for all participating students to work closely on selecting real social challenges and plan their transnational cross curricular e-service-learning projects in sustainable and ecologically responsible ways, addressing inclusion and diversity, and gradually moving from pilots to full-fledged e-service-learning projects.

### **Privacy**

During this social hackathon event we will ask you to provide personal data. Personal data is information that can directly (name, e-mail address, recording) or indirectly identify (gender, job/function, place of work, stakeholder group membership) you as an individual. All data will solely be used for the, implementing, managing and monitoring within the SLIDE project. Direct Personal identifiers may only be seen/used by members of the project consortium.

During the social hackathon, we collect the following categories of your personal data per purpose:

- Name – for attendance registration purposes
- Email address – for attendance registration purposes
- Institution – to gather information about involvement in the Social Hackathon
- Educational program – to gather information about involvement in the Social Hackathon
- Personal address – to pay out the cash prize
- Bank account number – to pay out the cash prize

### **Your Privacy Rights & Retaining your Data**

You have the right to request access to your personal data and to change these if they are not right or to erase your data. If you want to invoke your rights or if you have a question concerning privacy about this study, you can contact .....

All data we collect during our project, published or unpublished, are managed and securely stored until 01/03/2028.

### **Who to Contact**

If you have follow-up questions after the termination of the event, you may contact: .....





## **Certificate of consent**

I have read this Consent Form and I understand what the purpose of the social hackathon is and what data will be collected from me. The project has been explained to me clearly and I have been able to ask questions.

### **Consent of personal data**

I give my consent to the collection, processing, use and storage of my personal data for the purposes of this Erasmus+ project including data related to name, contact details, bank information, personal background, institutional ties

☐

### **Pictures**

I hereby consent to my pictures being published on the SLIDE project website.

☐

**Date:**

**Name of the participant:**

**Signature:**



## Social Hackathon Consent Form for Participating Jury Members, Mentors, Local instructors and Community Partners Representatives

This Social Hackathon ‘Digital Bridges and Gaps in Society’ is organized in the context of the Erasmus+ project ‘Service-Learning as a pedagogy for promoting Inclusion, Diversity and Digital Empowerment’ or SLIDE (2021-1-BE02-KA220-HED-000032235). This project aims to intertwine the Service-Learning (SL) pedagogy with Digital Empowerment (DE) to promote Inclusion (I) and diversity. The project brings together students and academics from a wide range of European HEI’s to draw on existing practices, share knowledge and develop best practices in and with the community where all become teaching resources, problem solvers, and partners.

The SLIDE Social Hackathon aims to equip students with skills and knowledge to fully participate in digital higher education, and with pedagogical skills to make connections with local communities. The social hackathon will provide an opportunity for all participating students to work closely on selecting real social challenges and plan their transnational cross curricular e-service-learning projects in sustainable and ecologically responsible ways, addressing inclusion and diversity, and gradually moving from pilots to full-fledged e-service-learning projects.

### **Privacy**

During this social hackathon event we will ask you to provide personal data. Personal data is information that can directly (name, e-mail address, recording) or indirectly identify (gender, job/function, place of work, stakeholder group membership) you as an individual. All data will solely be used for the, implementing, managing and monitoring within the SLIDE project. Direct Personal identifiers may only be seen/used by members of the project consortium.

During the social hackathon, we collect the following categories of your personal data per purpose:

- Name – for attendance registration purposes
- Email address – for attendance registration purposes
- Institution/Organization – to gather information about involvement in the Social Hackathon

### **Your Privacy Rights & Retaining your Data**

You have the right to request access to your personal data and to change these if they are not right or to erase your data. If you want to invoke your rights or if you have a question concerning privacy about this study, you can contact .....

All data we collect during our project, published or unpublished, are managed and securely stored until 01/03/2028.

### **Who to Contact**

If you have follow-up questions after the termination of the event, you may contact:  
.....



## **Certificate of consent**

I have read this Consent Form and I understand what the purpose of the social hackathon is and what data will be collected from me. The project has been explained to me clearly and I have been able to ask questions.

### **Consent of personal data**

I give my consent to the collection, processing, use and storage of my personal data for the purposes of this Erasmus+ project including data related to name, contact details, bank information, personal background, institutional ties

☐

### **Pictures**

I hereby consent to my pictures being published on the SLIDE project website.

☐

**Date:**

**Name of the participant:**

**Signature:**



## Social Hackathon Registration Form for Participating Jury Members, Mentors and Local Instructors

Your name and surname:

Affiliation (organisation/institution):

Country:

Short bio (maximum 180 words):

Your profile photo (good resolution):



## Registration of community partners and their challenges for the social hackathon

**Name of the organisation:**

**Address of the organisation:**

**Link to the organization's web page:**

**Social media:**

**Name of the contact person submitting the proposal and his/her role in the organisation (it should be the person responsible for being part of the social hackathon during the event).**

- First and last name
- Position in the institution
- Email and contact telephone number

**ORGANISATION:** What does the institution do? Brief description of the mission, activities and presentation of the beneficiaries.

**CHALLENGE:** What problem/challenge will the students address, or what needs should they work on during the social hackathon? Please be as specific as possible.

**CRITERIA FOR PROPOSAL:** Please try to describe essential criteria that the proposal of solution should involve.

**PREPARATION:** What background information (reports, websites, books, articles, etc.) can students consult to prepare their proposal before the hackathon? Where can they find background information about the challenge?

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.** Any additional information that you consider we or students should know, for example, organisational requirements, special characteristics of the student profile required, etc.

## Guide for the SLIDE partners to prepare for the social hackathon

Dear partners, to help you with the event preparation, I prepared guidelines and some materials you can easily copy-paste and use. I created the links in this document to make it easier for you to find what you need. Still, I recommend also reading the complete guide 😊

**The SLIDE Social Hackathon will be a full-day event on Wednesday, November 13, 2024. Please put this in your calendar.**

### Digital bridges and gaps in society - Hybrid social hackathon with university students in international settings

It will be a full-day event. Student teams will work with local instructors in local spaces on challenges proposed by community partners from another country. They will also connect online with community partners, mentors, and other event participants.

We want to bring together people from different backgrounds and expertise, to collaborate on solving social issues or creating projects that positively impact society.

The objectives of our social hackathon are:

- to equip students with skills to participate in digital education fully, but also with skills to make connections with local communities and sensitise students towards digital inclusion and digital empowerment of community members;
- to develop intercultural understanding and international collaboration;
- to address specific challenges or problems faced by community organisations or communities connected with digitalisation and develop innovative solutions within a defined time frame which will be transferable to other organisations or communities.

Each student in the winning team will receive a €50 cash prize. A parallel cash prize will be given to the community partner that provided the winning challenge.

### Your steps and your responsibilities before the event

To be sure you understand how the event should look, please **read one more time the short description of our event** and then follow these steps:

1. **Find at least two community partners.** Please give them a short explanation about the event, time, its responsibilities and prizes. You can use the information prepared in this document here. Please complete the form with the community partners and send it to Betka **by 31.8.2024.**

Responsible: universities and networks can also join.

2. **Assign the role of the local instructor to (one of your) team members.** This person is a teacher from your university, or more than one person can fill this role. His/her role is not only to reach out to the students and prepare them for the event itself but also to accompany them during the event and provide them with the necessary support. This person also monitors the time during the event to ensure that the team of students is connected with other students at the event, mentors, and community partners. Complete the form about the local instructor and send it to Betka **by 31.8.2024.**

Responsible: universities and networks can also join if they are planning to have a student team

3. **Find at least one mentor.** This person is someone with an expertise in the topic of service-learning and/or digital empowerment of communities. It can be someone from your own team



or an external expert. Please give them a short explanation about the event, time, its responsibilities. You can use the information prepared in this document here. Complete the form about the mentor and **send it to Betka by 15.9.2024.**

Responsible: universities and networks

4. **Find at least one judge.** Please give them a short explanation about the event, time, its responsibilities. Judge can be an expert from academic sector, business sector, community partner with expertise on digital empowerment in excluded communities.., You can use the information prepared in this document here. Complete the form about the judge and **send it to Betka by 15.9.2024.**

Responsible: networks + USCIA

5. **Find and register a team of students.** SLIDE partners can delegate **three student groups to the Social Hackathon.** Each student team has a maximum of six participants. Please give them a short explanation about the event, time, its responsibilities and prizes. Complete the form for each student team and **send it to Betka by 15.10.2024.**

Responsible: universities and networks if you have student teams

6. **Secure the location for the event. There is no deadline for this**

Responsible: universities and networks if you have student teams

7. **Prepare the students for the event.** You can use the structure of the preparation here.


Responsible: universities and networks if you have student teams

8. **Be prepared for the event.**

Responsible: universities and networks

## Our timeline

	June	July	August	September	October	November
Reaching students and forming teams						
Registering teams for the social hackathon						
Preparing students for the event						
Reaching out to community partners, establishing cooperation and defining challenges						
Creating a list of partners and challenges						
Reaching out to mentors, judges, sponsors						
Creating lists of mentors, judges, and sponsors						
Decide about the coordinator of the mentors and judges.						
Find the moderator and technician.						
Find the local spaces and decide online platform.						
Prepare the code of conduct for the event.						



Set up the evaluation criteria and decide on prices.						
Prepare a communication plan.						
Prepare the website and registration.						
Introducing challenges from community partners to students						
Selection of challenges to address by students						
Prepare the schedule for the social hackathon day.						
Social hackathon event						

### Information about the event for community partners

In the SLIDE project, when selecting community partners, the following considerations were taken into account:

- The community partner is (reasonably) fluent in English. If not, a translator should be present.
- The community partner is committed to being present at (at least in part of) the social hackathon event, allowing student teams to discuss the problem (we expect 1 hour in the morning, during the starting session, 1 to 2 hours during the day for consulting with the student team, and 1h for the closing ceremony).
- The community partner proposes a problem linked to ‘digital gaps/bridges in society’, which is transferable to different countries (linked to a broader global issue).

When reaching out to community partners, introduce the theme and goals of the social hackathon and clarify the benefits for the partners and their roles in preparing, implementing and evaluating the event (They are introduced above). After the introduction, send the partners a form to register and describe the social challenge.

You can also enter into a cooperation agreement with the partner to implement the social hackathon. It would be best if you built a mutually reciprocal partnership with the partner, so make sure, on the one hand, that the solution to the challenge will have a real impact and relevance for the partner and, on the other hand, that the partner understands that his/her role in implementing the social hackathon is also to provide the necessary information and guidance to the students.



### Use can use this text:

We invite you to join our social hackathon as a community partner. Community partners are the 'challenge owners'. They are directly related to the challenge question and are vested in any solutions. Ideally, solutions from the social hackathon can be tested or used by the community partner to have a real impact. Community partners also serve as experts on the theme and challenges of the social hackathon and can explain the challenge in more detail. They are also involved in the creation of the evaluation criteria.

### What are your responsibilities as a community partner on our social hackathon:

- set the challenge (case), identify the problem/need, the objectives, the requirements you expect to meet, provide information on what data you have and explain in detail what you expect from the output,
- actively communicate with the organisers
- collaborate in the definition of the project evaluation criteria (there will be a joint meeting with the jury members about it)
- during the implementation of the social hackathon, you actively speak out, communicate with the students and provide relevant information
- provide feedback to students and event organisers
- after the activity, you are responsible for the follow-up of the solution

### What can you gain from participating in the social hackathon?

- International visibility of your organisation and its mission
- Opportunity to link your local challenge to global issues
- Inspiring discussions with students and experts on digital inclusion and exclusion of communities at risk
- Creative, transdisciplinary ideas and solutions to tackle your challenge
- Contribute to the education and social responsibility of higher education students from various disciplines

Each student in the winning team will receive a €50 cash prize. A parallel cash prize will be given to the community partner that provided the winning challenge.

Application forms for the community partner should be completed **by August 31, 2024**, in digital format.

### Information about the event for mentors

Mentors in social hackathons provide professional or technical support in designing solutions.

- they communicate with students during the event, they can motivate them, give them tips on how they can improve their results, how they can move forward
- During the hackathon event, mentors rotate all the time.

Before the event, we will have an online meeting to briefly discuss the day's schedule with you and your roles.

**Tips for local instructors and online mentors** (based on the tips prepared by Marie Rosalie Hanni from Eventornado):

- **Check in on teams regularly**, at least twice a day. Participants feel more connected and noticed when they receive social communications. But don't disturb them too much. It's okay not to be needed, too. Instead of forcing feedback on a team, ask if they want to meet at a specified time.

- **Encourage the teams**, encourage teams and their enthusiasm without dismissing their ideas, no matter how unusual. Avoid imposing your ideas and help lift their spirits when they're stuck. Celebrate all victories, big and small. Criticising ideas can hinder their creativity, so instead, ask how they developed the concept and praise what you like. As a mentor, provide hope and fresh insights amidst confusion and uncertainty, assuring teams they are doing well. This boosts their confidence and keeps progress smooth.
- **Help the teams stay focused**. Mentors need to make sure they know where the teams need to get—what goal they want to achieve during the social hackathon, whether they are planning a working prototype of the product or a wireframe to showcase the idea, how they will present their ideas at the end, or if they need to prepare slides, etc. Mentors should keep the team focused on the end goal and get them back on the right track if they drift away.
- **Make sure everyone works together**. Sometimes, teams might need help dividing roles. Team members come from various backgrounds, each with their own skills, expertise, and goals. A hackathon mentor can help people find the right roles for themselves and make sure everyone is on the same page. For example, who will pitch the idea in the end?
- **Teach them to fish**. Even if a mentor is an expert at what they do, they can only see the world through a specific lens. But, regarding mentoring, the most crucial talent they can have is asking the right questions. Because the mentor is the expert, many teams want mentors to provide them with ready-made answers. Avoid offering them rigid answers at all costs; instead, assist them in developing their solutions. The mentor's ultimate purpose is to help the team in making their judgments.

### Information about the event for judges

Since one crucial element of hackathons is competition, an international jury should be selected to evaluate the student teams' solutions, and a prize should be awarded to the winning team.

Your responsibilities as a jury are:

- work together to determine the criteria for evaluating the projects,
- evaluate individual projects and choose the winner during the event.

The SLIDE consortium formulated these criteria, which the judges used to evaluate the final pitches given by the different student groups.

- Creativity – Is the proposal helpful and new?
- Feasibility – Is implementation possible with the available resources?
- Adaptability – Can the proposal be implemented in a different context? Are they thinking internationally?
- Impact – What is the impact in number, days, quality, etc.?
- Pitch – Quality of the pitch presentation: design of the slides, enthusiasm & clarity, etc.

Before the event, we will have an online meeting to briefly discuss the day's schedule with you and your roles.



## Information about the event for students

A student team consists of 4 to 6 students. The students can be from different disciplines and should be fluent in English. Only some people in the student team need to be fluent in English, as roles on the team can be determined and adapted according to the student's preferences and abilities. If English language proficiency would be a significant barrier to participation, a translator may be considered.

Once the teams are formed, all members must register as hackathon participants and prepare a presentation of their team for the website.

Students are competing participants in the event, coming up with ideas and solutions.

- after signing up for the social hackathon, they form teams (4-6 participants each)
- the student teams chose one problem for which they will try to find a solution during the hackathon event
- the teams chose the topic in advance to allow them to prepare for the event (ex., preliminary research, preparing questions for the community partner, etc.), helping them to be more efficient during the hackathon event
- during this day, students work together, coached by a local instructor and mentors
- are present at the event physically and connect online with their community partners, with international experts on their topic, etc., to discuss the problem they are trying to solve
- give feedback to the organisers on the event

When introducing the idea of a social hackathon and why students should get involved, discuss the benefits they can gain. More and more universities and higher education institutions have organised hackathons for their students, producing thousands of ambitious ideas and creating an innovative student culture. Whether your theme is science, technology, math or engineering, social hackathons are a fantastic way to unite students, inspire innovation and teamwork, and solve real-world problems that students care about.

Sabreen Swan from [Eventornado](#) shares some of the benefits of organising a hackathon for university students:

- Hackathons help cultivate students' networking skills
- Hackathons inspire healthy competition
- Hackathons inspire students to take risks
- Hackathons help students boost their resumes/portfolio
- Hackathons get students in front of potential employers
- Hackathons help students develop public speaking skills
- Hackathons help students develop superior problem-solving skills
- Contribute to solutions to real-life challenges, faced by actual people
- Strengthen your skills in transdisciplinary and international collaboration
- Link local challenges to global issues and create international impact
- Each student in the winning team will receive a €50 cash prize. A parallel cash prize will be given to the community partner that provided the winning challenge

At some universities, students can be awarded ECTS credits for participating in the social hackathon.



## Guide for the local instructors to prepare for the social hackathon

A hybrid social hackathon with university students in international settings, “Digital bridges and gaps in society”, will take place on Wednesday, 13 November 2024.

It will be a full-day event. Student teams will work with local instructors in local spaces on challenges proposed by community partners from another country. They will also connect online with community partners, mentors, and other event participants.

We want to bring together people from different backgrounds and expertise, to collaborate on solving social issues or creating projects that positively impact society.

The objectives of our social hackathon are:

- to equip students with skills to participate in digital education fully, but also with skills to make connections with local communities and sensitise students towards digital inclusion and digital empowerment of community members;
- to develop intercultural understanding and international collaboration;
- to address specific challenges or problems faced by community organisations or communities connected with digitalisation and develop innovative solutions within a defined time frame which will be transferable to other organisations or communities.

Each student in the winning team will receive a €50 cash prize. A parallel cash prize will be given to the community partner that provided the winning challenge.

### Role of the local instructor before the event

- reach out to the students
- send registration form
- prepare students for the event itself

When introducing the idea of a social hackathon and why students should get involved, discuss the benefits they can gain. More and more universities and higher education institutions have organised hackathons for their students, producing thousands of ambitious ideas and creating an innovative student culture. Whether your theme is science, technology, math or engineering, social hackathons are a fantastic way to unite students, inspire innovation and teamwork, and solve real-world problems that students care about.

Sabreen Swan from [Eventornado](#) shares some of the benefits of organising a hackathon for university students:

- Hackathons help cultivate students’ networking skills
- Hackathons inspire healthy competition
- Hackathons inspire students to take risks
- Hackathons help students boost their resumes/portfolio
- Hackathons get students in front of potential employers
- Hackathons help students develop public speaking skills
- Hackathons help students develop superior problem-solving skills
- Contribute to solutions to real-life challenges, faced by actual people
- Strengthen your skills in transdisciplinary and international collaboration



- Link local challenges to global issues and create international impact
- Each student in the winning team will receive a €50 cash prize. A parallel cash prize will be given to the community partner that provided the winning challenge

#### *Preparation meeting for students with the local instructor*

The local instructor will conduct face-to-face or online preparation meetings with the student teams to better prepare them for the event itself.

After registration, competition teams meet at least one month before the social hackathon. This meeting introduces and selects the challenges proposed by the community partners. Students will receive more specific information on the challenges, procedures, and criteria for evaluating the deliverables at the brainstorming session. The team meeting before the social hackathon is aimed at a good understanding of the hackathon and its challenges.

The student teams chose one problem for which they will try to find a solution during the social hackathon event. At the beginning they will choose three priorities. The teams chose this topic in advance to allow them to prepare for the event (ex., preliminary research, preparing questions for the community partner, etc.), helping them to be more efficient during the social hackathon event.

**Draft content for the local instructor's kick-off meeting with the student team** (duration approx. 2 hours)

- Introduction
- Clarification of the basic idea of the social hackathon process and the roles and responsibilities of the student team
- Team activity, e.g. drawing a standard coat of arms , getting to know each other
- Definition of students' expectations and concerns
- Planning students' personal goals concerning their personal and professional development
- Creating rules for functioning in a team
- Agreeing on a communication platform within the team and with the local instructor
- Conclusion and next steps
- Introducing the Code of Conduct

The SLIDE consortium prepares a first proposal for the Code of Conduct that will be upheld during the event. The local instructors should discuss This Code of Conduct at the beginning of the event.

1. Embrace diversity
2. Be open and empathic
3. Respect different perspectives
4. Consider contextualized realities
5. Reflect and share
6. Celebrate the process

#### **Role of the local instructor during the event**

- accompany students during the event
- provide students with the necessary support.
- monitor the time during the event to ensure that the team of students is connected with other students at the event, mentors, and community partners
- document and promote event

- post at least one post
- send pictures from event to: [alzbeta.gregorova@umb.sk](mailto:alzbeta.gregorova@umb.sk)
- evaluate event

#### Overview of the program

Time	Offline	Online
8:00 – 9:00	Welcome the participants & breakfast	
9:00 – 9:30		Connecting to the online platform and welcoming different participants individually Kick-off session
9:30 – 12:00	Teamwork	Connecting with community partners
		Meetings with mentors
12:00 – 12:15		Middle session
12:15 – 13:15	Lunch & Chill out	
13:15 – 16:00	Teamwork Preparation Final Pitch	Meeting with mentors and community partners
16:00 – 17:00		Final Pitch /Solution presentations
17:00 – 17:30	Linner “Dunch” Evaluation and feedback with students	Decision time for judges
17:30 – 18:00		Announcing the winners & concluding marks
18:00 – ...	After-Party & Dinner	

During the first online timeslot, the community partner and student team will have to make clear agreements on the follow-up communication during the rest of the day. **The local instructor has to make sure that they make at least the following agreements:**

- Agree on a channel for fast communication (WhatsApp, email, messenger, etc.)
- Agree on a timeslot for a new face-to-face/online meeting in the afternoon.

#### Final pitches and presentation of solution

Final product that students should deliver and that will be evaluated by the judges:

- Max. length of the pitch is 4 minutes.
- The final pitch should answer the following 3 questions:
  - What is the challenge?
  - What is the solution?
  - Why is this a good solution?
- Students are free to use a delivery method of choice (ex. powerpoint, video, prototype demo, etc.)

- Next to the presentation, students will provide an 'Annex document' including a more extended version of their solution. This document will be delivered to the community partners (which will be more useful for them than a presentation). The jury can consult this document to support their final decision.
- Students fill out a template about their solution to be published on the SLIDE website.
- The pitches will be recorded.

#### *Feedback and evaluation from students*

After the final pitch (but before the winners are announced), students participate in a 10 minute group discussion under the lead of the local instructor. The 'hand'-method will be used to structure this discussion:

- Students will fill-out for each finger evaluation + and – about logistic, schedule, content, support, and take aways...

After the group discussion, students are also asked to complete two sentences individually:

- 1) The thing I liked most about the social hackathon is...
- 2) From the social hackathon, I learned...



#### *GDPR issues*

We prepared certificates of consent to be signed by all participants in the social hackathon event. **This consent forms only allow for personal information to be collected and stored by the SLIDE project coordinator UCSIA.** Registration forms, pictures, etc. will therefore be centralized on the SLIDE website. SLIDE project partners can refer to the SLIDE website for communication about the event. If any partner wishes to share pictures, testimonials, etc. from their own students on their own website or social media, they should make sure that they also collect the consent of the participants.

#### **Role of the local instructor after the event**

- prepare short report from the feedback and evaluation
- be present and active on the focus group with local instructors



## Guide for the mentors to prepare for the social hackathon

A hybrid social hackathon with university students in international settings, “Digital bridges and gaps in society”, will occur on Wednesday, 13 November 2024.

It will be a full-day event. Student teams will work with local instructors in local spaces on challenges proposed by community partners from another country. They will also connect online with community partners, mentors, and other event participants.

We want to bring together people from different backgrounds and expertise, to collaborate on solving social issues or creating projects that positively impact society.

The objectives of our social hackathon are:

- to equip students with skills to participate in digital education fully, but also with skills to make connections with local communities and sensitise students towards digital inclusion and digital empowerment of community members;
- to develop intercultural understanding and international collaboration;
- to address specific challenges or problems faced by community organisations or communities connected with digitalisation and develop innovative solutions within a defined time frame which will be transferable to other organisations or communities.

Each student in the winning team will receive a €50 cash prize. A parallel cash prize will be given to the community partner that provided the winning challenge.

### Role of the mentors during the event

Mentors in social hackathons provide professional or technical support in designing solutions.

- they communicate with students during the event, they can motivate them, give them tips on how they can improve their results, how they can move forward
- During the hackathon event, mentors rotate all the time.

**Tips for online mentors** (based on the tips prepared by Marie Rosalie Hanni from Eventornado):

- **Check in on teams regularly**, at least twice a day. Participants feel more connected and noticed when they receive social communications. But don't disturb them too much. It's okay not to be needed, too. Instead of forcing feedback on a team, ask if they want to meet at a specified time.
- **Encourage the teams**, encourage teams and their enthusiasm without dismissing their ideas, no matter how unusual. Avoid imposing your ideas and help lift their spirits when they're stuck. Celebrate all victories, big and small. Criticising ideas can hinder their creativity, so instead, ask how they developed the concept and praise what you like. As a mentor, provide hope and fresh insights amidst confusion and uncertainty, assuring teams they are doing well. This boosts their confidence and keeps progress smooth.
- **Help the teams stay focused**. Mentors need to make sure they know where the teams need to get—what goal they want to achieve during the social hackathon, whether they are planning a working prototype of the product or a wireframe to showcase the idea, how they will present their ideas at the end, or if they need to prepare slides, etc. Mentors should keep the team focused on the end goal and get them back on the right track if they drift away.
- **Make sure everyone works together**. Sometimes, teams might need help dividing roles. Team members come from a variety of backgrounds, each with their own set of skills,

expertise, and goals. A hackathon mentor can help people find the right roles for themselves and make sure everyone is on the same page. For example, who will pitch the idea in the end?

- **Teach them to fish.** Even if a mentor is an expert at what they do, they can only see the world through a specific lens. But, regarding mentoring, the most crucial talent they can have is asking the right questions. Because the mentor is the expert, many teams want mentors to provide them with ready-made answers. Avoid offering them rigid answers at all costs; instead, assist them in developing their solutions. The mentor's ultimate purpose is to help the team in making their judgments.

### Overview of the program

Time	Offline	Online
8:00 – 9:00	Welcome the participants & breakfast	
9:00 – 9:30		Connecting to the online platform and welcoming different participants individually Kick-off session
9:30 – 12:00	Teamwork	Connecting with community partners Meetings with mentors
12:00 – 12:15		Middle session
12:15 – 13:15	Lunch & Chill out	
13:15 – 16:00	Teamwork Preparation Final Pitch	Meeting with mentors and community partners
16:00 – 17:00		Final Pitch /Solution presentations
17:00 – 17:30	Linner “Dunch” Evaluation and feedback with students	Decision time for judges
17:30 – 18:00		Announcing the winners & concluding marks
18:00 – ...	After-Party & Dinner	



## Guide for the judges to prepare for the social hackathon

A hybrid social hackathon with university students in international settings, “Digital bridges and gaps in society”, will occur on Wednesday, 13 November 2024.

It will be a full-day event. Student teams will work with local instructors in local spaces on challenges proposed by community partners from another country. They will also connect online with community partners, mentors, and other event participants.

We want to bring together people from different backgrounds and expertise, to collaborate on solving social issues or creating projects that positively impact society.

The objectives of our social hackathon are:

- to equip students with skills to participate in digital education fully, but also with skills to make connections with local communities and sensitise students towards digital inclusion and digital empowerment of community members;
- to develop intercultural understanding and international collaboration;
- to address specific challenges or problems faced by community organisations or communities connected with digitalisation and develop innovative solutions within a defined time frame which will be transferable to other organisations or communities.

Each student in the winning team will receive a €50 cash prize. A parallel cash prize will be given to the community partner that provided the winning challenge.

### Role of the judges during the event

Since one crucial element of hackathons is competition, an international jury should be selected to evaluate the student teams' solutions, and a prize should be awarded to the winning team.

Your responsibilities as a jury are:

- work together to determine the criteria for evaluating the projects,
- evaluate individual projects and choose the winner during the event.

The SLIDE consortium formulated these criteria, which the judges used to evaluate the final pitches given by the different student groups.


- Creativity – Is the proposal helpful and new?
- Feasibility – Is implementation possible with the available resources?
- Adaptability – Can the proposal be implemented in a different context? Are they thinking internationally?
- Impact – What is the impact in number, days, quality, etc.?
- Pitch – Quality of the pitch presentation: design of the slides, enthusiasm & clarity, etc.

### Final pitches and presentation of solution

The final product that students should deliver and that will be evaluated by the judges:

- Max. length of the pitch is 4 minutes.
- The final pitch should answer the following 3 questions:
  - What is the challenge?



- 
- What is the solution?
    - Why is this a good solution?
  - Students are free to use a delivery method of choice (ex. powerpoint, video, prototype demo, etc.)
  - Next to the presentation, students will provide an 'Annex document' including a more extended version of their solution. This document will be delivered to the community partners (which will be more useful for them than a presentation). The jury can consult this document to support their final decision.
  - Students fill out a template about their solution to be published on the SLIDE website.
  - The pitches will be recorded.



## Instructions for the students what they should deliver

### What should you deliver at the end of the Social Hackathon?

At 4pm, your time for preparing a solution to the challenge of your community partner is finished. At this time, you should have prepared the following outputs:

1. **FINAL PITCH:** Prepare a pitch of maximum 4 minutes in which you answer 3 main questions:
  - What is your challenge?
  - What is your solution?
  - Why is this a good solution?

You are free to use any method or tool that you like to deliver the pitch (ex. PowerPoint, video, prototype demo, etc.). Your student team will present this pitch during the ‘final pitch’-session between 4pm and 5 pm.

2. **OVERVIEW DOCUMENT:** During the day, you will have probably gathered many ideas, recommendations, links, resources, etc. that can be relevant for your community organization. Gather all these information in one clear overview document. For the community partners, this overview document will be very useful, since it will contain more extensive information, providing extra information next to the pitch presentation.

3. **TEMPLATE FOR WEBSITE INFORMATION:** At the end of the Social Hackathon, we will share your work on our SLIDE project website. For this, we ask you to fill out the Template for website info. In this template you give a short description of the challenge, and the solution that you propose.

Add all materials that you’ve created in your student team folder in the DriveGoogle . When preparing these outputs, take into consideration the evaluation criteria that will be used by the jury to assess your solution. The jury will take into account all the materials that you’ve created when selecting the winning team.



## Template for information on the website prepared by student teams

Fill out the information in the template below and upload it together with your presentation and the annex document on the Social Hackathon Google Drive.

The information in this template will be used to publicly share on the [SLIDE project website](#). So, make sure the language you use is attractive and engaging, and focus on the successes of your team!

Name student team	
From what discipline(s) are the students in your team?	
Describe the challenge that your team tried to solve	
Describe the solution that your team proposes and why	
What are your main take-aways from the social hackathon event?	
Add a group picture of your team!	



## Scenario for the evaluation focus group with the local instructors

**A focus group will be organised with all local instructors (±1,5h). The goals of this focus group are:**

- To make necessary changes in the manual
- To document the benefits for different stakeholders
- To collect failure and success stories

The following questions will guide the discussion:

- General evaluation of the event
- Time management
  - o Was the timetable provided efficient?
  - o Was it easy for the students to stick to the time limits?
  - o How did you manage the student group concerning this aspect?
- Active role of the local instructor:
  - o What approach did you take in helping the students throughout the day?
  - o Which kind of help did the students ask for? Were you able to provide the help they were asking for?
  - o Were the students able to work independently or did they need encouragement?
- Technical issues:
  - o How do you assess the digital skills of the student group?
  - o Were there any tools involved in the social hackathon that were too difficult to use for the students? Do you think they need some training with these tools prior to the event?
- Input from mentors and community partners:
  - o How did you facilitate the connection between the mentors and community partner?
  - o Were the students able to formulate the significant questions that could lead them to solving the challenge?
  - o Was their input sufficient to help the students further along?
- Students' experience
  - o Which aspects were key to group dynamic?
  - o Motivation change: Did students maintain the same engagement towards the project throughout the day? If not, what were the influencing factors?
- What were the benefits for you as a local instructor?



## Social hackathon feedback for community partners

Please rate following aspects of the social hackathon (1 – disagree, 5 - agree)

- The objectives of the hackathon were clear
- The materials distributed before the meeting were explicit and helpful
- Sufficient time was allocated for the social hackathon
- The social hackathon met my expectations
- I am satisfied with the overall quality of the social hackathon
- Previous communication about the event details was sufficient and adequate
- The facilitation of the event was very good
- It was a meaningful event for the students
- It was a meaningful event for our organization
- We will develop the solution proposed by students
- We are interested to cooperate with the student team on the development of the solution in the future

Please indicate any comments and suggestions you may have! What other recommendations would you make to improve the event?



## Social hackathon feedback for mentors and jury members

What was your role in the social hackathon?

mentor

jury member

Please rate the following aspects of the social hackathon (1 – disagree, 5 - agree)

- The objectives of the hackathon were clear
- The materials distributed before the meeting were explicit and helpful
- Sufficient time was allocated for the social hackathon
- The social hackathon met my expectations
- I am satisfied with the overall quality of the social hackathon
- Previous communication about the event details was sufficient and adequate
- The facilitation of the event was excellent
- It was a meaningful event for the students
- It was a meaningful event for myself

Please indicate any comments and suggestions you may have! What other recommendations would you make to improve the event?



### Feedback from the jury

The solution included a broad set of activities, including streaming, zoom, and multilanguage with AI. All of this clearly focused on the feasibility of implementation for the community partner, and showed that a lot of effort was done by the students during the time of the event.

The student team gave an attractive pitch with a creative promotional video.

### Feedback from the community partner

The students were highly motivated, and prepared a thoughtful solution for our challenge. They could, however integrated the feedback more to make the solution more feasible for our organization.





**This is to certify that**

**Volunteer Center Banska Bystrica**

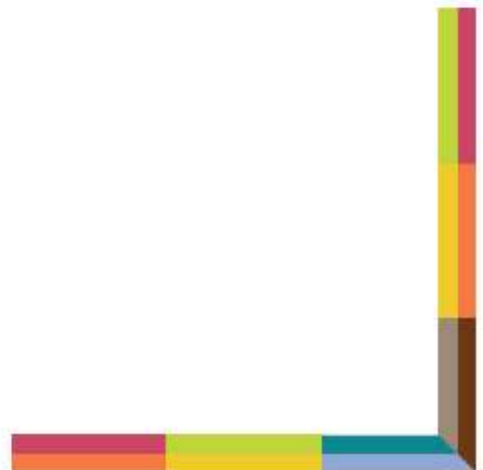
**participated on the SOCIAL HACKATHON  
Digital bridges and gaps in society  
as a community partner**


organized by the SLIDE consortium 13th  
November 2024 as a hybrid international event

Organization proposed for the social hackathon specific challenge related to  
digitalization.



Kaat Somers  
SLIDE project coordinator





Title: Hybrid social hackathon with university students in international settings.  
Guide for organising the event.

Authors: Alžbeta Brozmanová Gregorová  
ORCID 0000-0001-8559-8512  
Zuzana Heinzová  
ORCID 0000-0002-2274-2772  
Radka Marčeková  
ORCID 0000-0002-1392-0944  
Ľubica Saktorová  
ORCID 0000-0001-9204-9909  
Ivana Šimočková  
ORCID 0000-0003-2769-3022  
Jana Šolcová  
ORCID 0000-0002-1124-7784

Reviewers: We want to thank all members of the SLIDE consortium for their feedback  
and suggestions on the final version of the guide.

Publisher: BELIANUM. Publishing house of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica.

Year of publishing: 2024

Scope: 3,05 authors sheets

ISBN 978-80-557-2221-4  
EAN 9788055722214  
DOI 10.24040/2024.9788055722214  
<https://doi.org/10.24040/2024.9788055722214>