



# Creative Change Hackathon Guide

**01** Introduction

---

**02** Benefits of Organising a Hackathon

---

**03** Organising a Hackathon – step-by-step guidance

---

**04** Assessment of Learning

---

**05** Virtual/Digital Hackathons

---

# CONTENTS

**Copyright note:**

This material is presented to ensure timely dissemination of scholarly and technical work. Copyright and all rights therein are retained by authors or by other copyright holders. All person copying this information are expected to adhere to the terms and constraints invoked by each author's copyright. In most cases, these works may not be reposted without the explicit permission of the copyright holder.

**Intellectual output holders:**

**Revision of the document:**

Version	By	Changes
0.1		



# 01 – Introduction





# The Why and How of the Guide

## ***The Creative Change Project***

The pace of change in our society and in the world of work is accelerating and posing new challenges. The speed at which working conditions can change – especially in education and educational projects – has been dramatically demonstrated during the past years of the Covid19 pandemic

## ***But how can we react on these new challenges?***

We all must further develop our skills to embrace the use of creative project methodologies, digital tools and collaborative strategies. This is the aim of the Creative Change project. Through this project, we wish to bring awareness to an approach to project management

that is more people-centred and impact-orientated, most particularly within EU projects, such as Erasmus+. This guide is for anyone involved in the creation management or monitoring of a project that is EU-funded, creative, artistic and that benefits adult education.







# Introduction

## ***What is a Hackathon?***

“Hackathon” combines the terms “hacking” and “marathon”, and, in its original terms, it implies an intense, uninterrupted, period of programming. More specifically, a hackathon is a highly engaging, continuous event in which people in small groups produce a working software prototype in a limited amount of time. Hackathons vary wildly in their purpose and execution but generally have a common structure and characteristics. These continuous events are made to engage people in small groups to solve a problem in a limited amount of time, typically in the 1 to 3 days range. Hackathons became popular in the 2000s when technology companies started using them as a means of promoting exploratory coding, new idea generation and, overall, low-risk prototyping.

## ***Why are hackathons so popular?***

The success of the hackathon format stems from creative freedom. Instead of using a specific methodology or following company rules, tech experts are free from typical development constraints.

While there is a time limit, hackathon organizers usually don't impose a strict framework. Such an environment is highly productive.

In addition to problem-solving, hackathon participants get an opportunity to learn, share their ideas, do effective networking, and enjoy a relaxing and welcoming atmosphere. Meanwhile, organizers gain access to top talent and a chance to find an innovative solution to their problems.



# Who is the Creative Change Hackathon for?

The resource is aimed at project managers and staff involved in transnational education projects, most of whom are educators themselves. It responds to the need to update and innovate in learning strategies so creativity and innovation are reinforced through contact with real life, and not remain as theoretical elements. At a broader level, it responds to the need to open the design of education projects to a wider group of people.

The Creative Change Hackathon stands out as an innovative element because despite being a widely used strategy in the creative and technology sector and in civil society, it is still little known in adult education. It is also innovative because hackathons are typically used to solve technical problems; in this new version we will be pioneers of how to adapt the format to generate solutions that are based on inclusion and creativity.

# Creative Change and Design Thinking Hackathon

*The importance of incorporating  
Human Centred Design ...*

“Human Centred Design” is a creative approach to problem solving in which the human being with his or her wishes, ideas, doubts, etc. stands at the beginning and new solutions emerge at the end that are tailor-made to meet the needs of a specific target group.

One of the reasons for adopting a human centred design thinking approach in a hackathon is that while hackathons can generate ideas fast, most teams find it difficult to uncover the true, usually human, problem. Design thinking prioritises this human aspect in any solution – during its empathy and observation stages – it thus focuses teams on identifying the real human centred problems that are most important to solve.

To learn more about this approach, we strongly recommend downloading our Creative Change HUMAN CENTRED DESIGN FOR ADULT EDUCATORS [here](#) (insert link to web page)





## 02 – Benefits of Organising Hackathons







# Why do we do Hackathons?

Hackathons have become widespread in recent years and they are present in various fields. Renowned academic Dr. Fowler studied the potential of these activities in fields related to research and teaching and found these tools to provide "a strong venue/method for learning, especially regarding the whole process rather than special skills." Traditionally, hackathons have been used as a pedagogical tool to deepen important concepts in the area of Software Engineering, encouraging the student to practice the concepts learned in the classroom. However, hackathons have become popular in a variety of areas, including healthcare, business and social work.

Hackathons enable bottom-up and externally collaborative ideation in a company or NGO by facilitating anyone to produce extraordinary ideas that are then prototyped. This fosters a start-up or intrapreneurial spirit toward new business or social innovation opportunities. Furthermore, it's a way to **stop smart**: in just a few days of development, participants can decide whether it's worth continuing with the idea. So, hackathons can complement routine development, addressing the need to explore alternatives to existing product roadmaps and backlogs.



## ***Why do we do Hackathons?***

Hackathons are a novel approach to teaching and learning, they are a very successful tool to use for a variety of reasons, including:

- A hackathon can be utilised as a promising teaching method in a setting that resembles real-world situations, with students tackling real-world problems. Students learn without even realising they are doing so!
- When students allow themselves to participate once, they notice the benefits of this competition, such as the opportunity to work with friends and improve technical skills in a more relaxed setting while still focusing on teaching.
- Working in groups allows students to learn from their peers, and individuals with diverse backgrounds can often complement one another. Even though a hackathon is an informal learning event in this context, it provides diverse avenues for information diffusion as well as the opportunity for students to test what they have learnt in a formal teaching environment.
- Hackathons provides a safe learning environment, resources, and teaching materials for teams to organise themselves, as well as a support team that can answer questions about the competition. Accompanying professors/experts and industry professionals can assist with learning, and the opportunity to exchange information with students from other teams is very valuable.
- A Hackathon does not solve the learning or teaching challenges that exist in an institution on its own, but it does assist both educators and learners in viewing the issues from a fresh perspective, in which the learner confronts reality to test their knowledge.
- A hackathon allows learners and students to assess themselves throughout the learning process, allowing them to become true owners of their education by identifying their strengths and limitations while working on a real project. Furthermore, educators can recognise their students' issues and provide activities to help overcome them.



## ***What skills do Hackathons help develop?***

Hackathons are great for developing new skills, and studies, such as Rennings', found that "learners find the events to be highly creative, and fun/engaging. Further, students are highly motivated to participate in them stating that the events allowed them to integrate knowledge from their courses." Similar findings are reported in Steglich;

- Learners consider that the most developed skills during hackathons were: Communication Skills, Initiative/Motivation to Work, Creativity and Innovation, Interpersonal Relationships, Teamwork, Autonomy.
- The students considered that the skills they had least developed during this hackathon were: Self-Esteem, Stress Tolerance, Flexibility, Attention to Details / Organised.
- The synergy of the teams, the organisation strategies during the event, and the establishment of simple protocols among teammates supported the collaboration, improving the teams' performance.



# Benefits to the Organiser of a Hackathon

- **Find different solutions for a problem:** Sometimes the day-to-day consumes us - the resources you invest in solving small problems and putting out fires can be draining. A hackathon allows you to focus on a problem, identifying the true need and develop multiple solutions that can be implemented in a short time. Furthermore, the diversity of the teams allows you to approach the problem from a different angle and perspective.
- **Inspire and motivate:** We tend to do the same tasks every day and it's easy to become unmotivated. Use a hackathon to break the routine and get out of your comfort zone. You can challenge participants to solve problems in a range of areas. In addition, participants will be able to strengthen their network of contacts (internal and/or external networking), add new achievements to their CV, take part in a new innovative experience and experience a shift in mindset.
- **Test your skills:** Hackathons allow you and your participants to strengthen your soft skills such as communication, leadership, and teamwork, among others. Depending on the problem being solved, it also offers an opportunity to sharpen technical skills such as new work methodologies, project management, and courses. Hackathons create enriching experiences where learning is the key factor.



*Hackathons are where your crazy idea  
becomes reality*  
– Alex Kern, Hacker



# What are the Benefits for Learners in participating in a Hackathon?

## ***Networking***

At a hackathon event, you will usually meet people who have the same interests and problems as you! This creates the perfect environment for networking. All you need to do is network and exchange contact information with your fellow participants. Who knows, you may end up collaborating in the future.

## ***Add value to your resume or CV***

Hackathon participation looks very good on your resume or CV. It signals to people that you have transferable skills such as communication, initiative, team work, as well as experience working in intense environments. Plus you know how to win! People know that participating in a hackathon instantly increases your knowledge and skill level.

## ***Create new concepts and ideas***

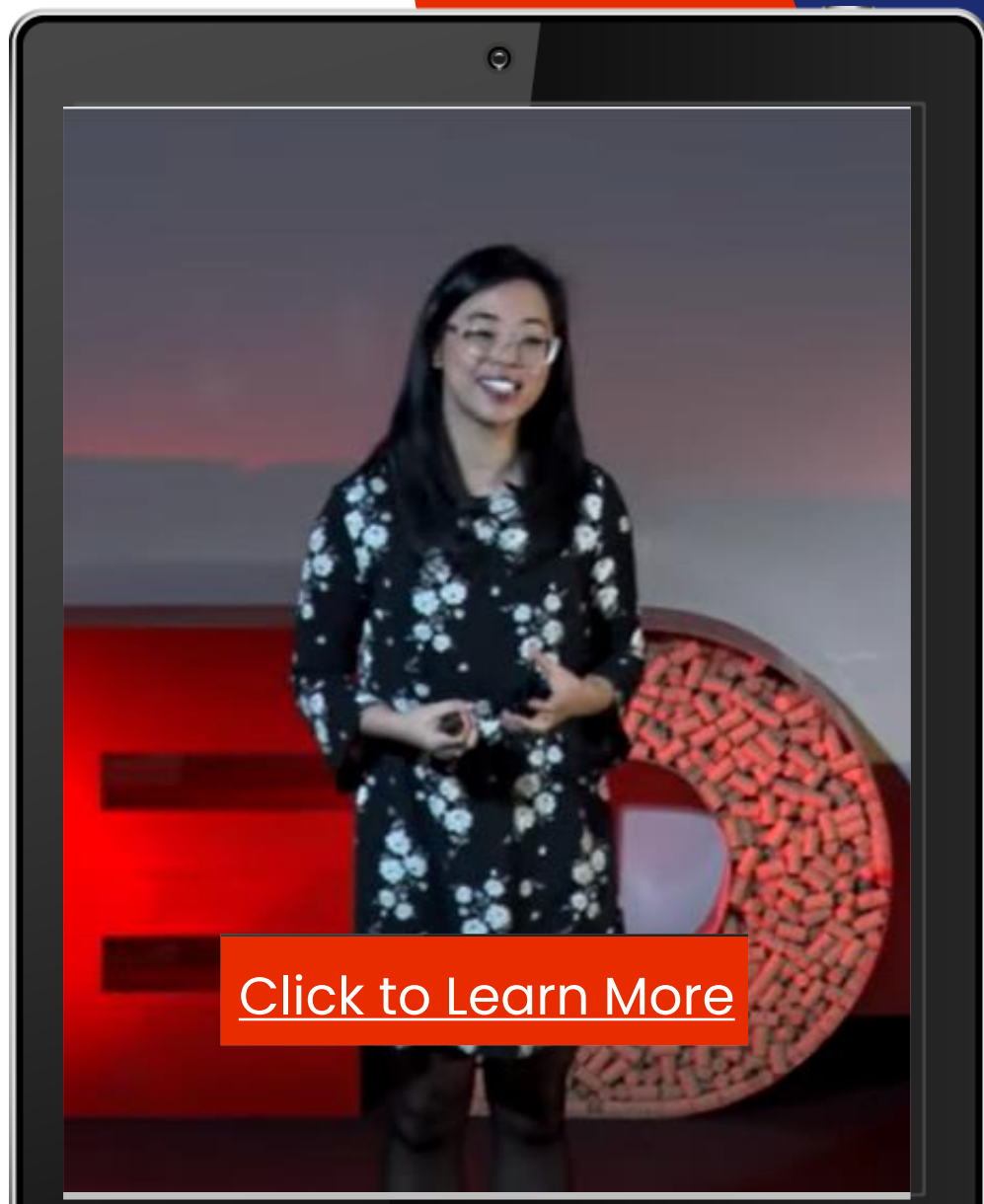
Intense problem-solving environments like hackathons facilitate the creation of innovative ideas and concepts. You work with people from various fields, with multiple interests and skills, all collaborating to solve the same problem. The fact that there are time constraints make the task more exciting and brings out the best in people.

# Hacking Hackathons

## ***How everyone can contribute to innovation***

Fail to learn. How can you make the most out of a hackathon? Angela Bee Chan is passionate about activating innovation amongst all individuals and bringing people together to create meaningful change. Angela is the Head of Innovation and Growth at Schneider Electric Pacific and the Founder and CEO of Hackathons. Some call her "Australia's Innovation Hacker". This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community.

**Top Tip: If trying to encourage learners to participate, have them watch this short video**



[Click to Learn More](#)



# 03 – Organising a Hackathon

Step-by-Step Guide





# Organising a Hackathon 101

*In this section of the guide, we highlight the 7 crucial steps for the organisers to follow to successfully kick off a hackathon.*

Organizing a hackathon is not an easy endeavour by any means. The concept of bringing people together for a few days to work together may seem enticing, but it requires meticulous organisation and a variety of tools to be successful and productive. Last-minute complications are inevitable, so as an organiser, you should be prepared. Even though the hackathon may just last a few days, it will take a lot of time to organise. Before the hackathon begins, one must consider concepts, teams, and everything else that will be required throughout the event. Technical assistance, preparation of the premises, and other resources (hardware, food, beverages, supplies, etc.) are also on the list. After the event, the winning ideas or solutions should go for further development; the outputs, of course, vary depending on the hackathon final objective.






***Before we begin, take a few minutes to watch this short video on a real-life example of running a hackathon***

## **How to run a Hackathon**

Innovation Agency provide a guide from their in-house experts on how to run a hackathon. Their team were trained by the world leaders in health hackathons – MIT Hacking Medicine. This real-life example highlights the intricacies and effort that goes into organising a hackathon.

**[Click here to watch](#)**





## Step One – Deciding your theme and target audience

A clear, focused subject is non-negotiable for a solution that stands out in terms of quality and relevance. If it's a themed hackathon, you'll need to have well defined goals in place before you get too excited about it, whether it's online or offline. Themed hackathons, as opposed to open-ended hackathons, force participants to work on certain projects, such as those that require you to use a company's technology or those that are for the greater good. Although the diversity of inventive ideas may be lacking, it may be more appealing to a first-time hacker and easier to secure sponsors.

A well-defined problem statement will define your hackathon strategy. Focusing on the challenge during the event will require mentors in the form of managers, experts, or speakers to provide real-time feedback to guarantee solutions are designed keeping in mind the end user. Themes can be anything from boosting the visibility of a brand to creating a new startup to developing a new app for disaster management to designing a launch campaign.



## Audience & Themes for the Creative Change Hackathon

***The audience of our hackathon includes project managers and staff involved in transnational education projects, most of whom are educators themselves. Based on this, we need to figure out our theme...***





## Step 2 – Format, timing, date, venue & sponsors

Once you have your objectives, themes and target audience sorted, it is time to decide on your format, timing, date and venue.

**Format** – Is your hackathon a physical or a virtual one? Will it be private or public? Will registration be free? How many stages will there be?

**Timing** – How long is your hackathon going to be? (1-3 days)

**Date** – Does your proposed date fall on public holidays or in the holiday season? Check websites like Meetup or Tweet to find out if it clashes with niche conferences or other similar hackathons. Your target audience will tell you what days are most likely to work. Weekends are most popular. Ensure you factor in extra minutes to prepare the venue and clean up after the event. Hackathons are more frequent between January and April and September and November in Europe and the U.S.



## Step 2 – Format, timing, date, venue & sponsors

**Venue** – Deciding where you are going to hold your hackathon needs some work.

- You need to zero in on the right location once you know how many participants are likely to be there. You'll need enough space to seat your participants, others, and place the equipment. So, arrange for chairs, banquet-style, circular, or rectangle tables depending on what you want it for—hacking, workshop, eating, etc.
- The venue must be easily accessible via public transport and with provisions for the differently abled, elevators, spaces to relax and sleep, and gender-neutral restrooms.
- The venue must be secure for the people and the equipment; there should ideally be insurance in case of fire or theft.
- Perhaps the most important of all, fast, secure, and reliable wi-fi for connecting all devices is the primary point on the venue checklist. Also, check for ethernet cables, ports, and servers that you need to host a successful hackathon.
- You will need power strips or extension cords for every table, and projector, microphone, etc. for presentations.
- If your participants are under 18, you will need to satisfy any related legalities and have staff for supervision in case of overnight stay.
- Check if the venue has restrictions on advertising, photography, catering, and delivery.
- Remember to book as early as you can and check for all kinds of fees and regulations!

## Step 2 – Format, timing, date, venue & sponsors

Firstly, create a budget, know everything you need to know about revenue, costs, how much you intend to spend per attendee, including food, drinks, travel, security, facilities, hardware, staff, branding, and swag packs. Set aside an emergency fund.

As a result, you'll know when to approach sponsors and how much money you'll need. To raise donations from "important" participants in the field, network well in advance of the event. Ask for introductions from key stakeholders in your network, keep an eye out for fundraising announcements, and use services like [crunchbase.com](https://crunchbase.com) or [rapportive.com](https://rapportive.com) to locate beneficial contacts. Approach potential sponsors during the financial quarters when large corporations are more likely to have budgeted for similar activities. After deciding on the amount of sponsorship you require (i.e., cost), send emails or make phone calls to potential sponsors. To get tiered sponsorships to buy in, you should create value.

It's also critical to provide value to your sponsors and offer them a reason to participate. If you can, offer customised packages and negotiate. Sponsors can assist you by providing judges or mentors in addition to financial support. Make sure your sponsors are satisfied so they will support more events in the future. Regular professional communication is essential in persuading them that they received their money's worth and more. When the event is over, remember to publicly thank your sponsors on your website and through social media, if they permit it.



***Hackathon Tip: INVOLVE AT LEAST 1 KEYNOTE SPEAKER***

***Participants need a keynote speaker both to feel motivated towards what they are doing, and to know the common thread, objectives and final expected result of the hackathon. One or more keynote speakers is who you need to keep them motivated and give them a “vision”.***

# Step 3 – Judges, Mentors, Prizes & Promotion

## Code of Conduct

A step towards more inclusivity & fairness is the drafting of a code of conduct, an example is shown below. A code of conduct is not just about enforcing rules. It sets community norms & sends a signal to would-be participants that you are trying to create a welcoming environment. If there is a problem at your event having a code of conduct ahead of time will help you resolve the issue. To maintain a welcoming environment, formulate policies to deal with all kinds of harassment and lack of respect for others’ opinions, & remind all attendees that it is up to them to make the experience amazing.

Recommendations	
<b>Sharing</b> <b>Share the code of conduct beforehand</b>	Share the code of conduct via the website, posters, and any other published material sent to sponsors, participants, speakers, hosting team members, and make people acknowledge their agreement to the terms and conditions.
<b>Communication</b> <b>Communicate expectations</b>	All attendees need to understand what behaviour is expected of them.
<b>Reporting policy or channel</b> <b>Create a reporting mechanism for participants and mentors</b>	Have a proper reporting policy or channel by mentioning in the document whom to contact and how. Train your team before the event and designate some people specifically to deal with any kind of crisis and escalation.
<b>Violations</b> <b>Deal with violations</b>	All violations should be kept private, if possible, and handled impartially by following a clearly defined chain of custody.
<b>Penalties</b> <b>Establish penalties for the violations</b>	Decide what the outcome of the breach of conduct will entail for the person.
<b>Victims</b> <b>Support the victims without judgement</b>	Most important tip of all: Do not judge the victim. Once the details have been noted, offer support, arrange escort, or contact law enforcement if required.





## Step 3 – Judges, Mentors, Prizes & Promotion

***Naturally it is important that your judges, mentors and other helpers be knowledgeable about the topic of your hackathon***

**Mentors** – These experts in the field (preferably related to the chosen topic and requirement) will become consultants to the participant groups, acting as “shared” resources. You need to find these people in advance and make sure they are available on the chosen date, but you also need to provide them with some training on the methodology and dynamic of the event. Mentors will listen to each group’s discussion or concerns and provide invaluable feedback to them, to make sure they are headed in an appropriate direction. They can also be the judges at the end of the hackathon.

**Judges** – High profile stakeholders, university deans, celebrated subject matter experts, and local management of top organisations can be excellent choices. Tell them about the relevant criteria, **emphasize the relevance of the learning above winning** and, above all, remind them of the importance of fair and constructive judging.

**Speakers** – These can also double as mentors or judges. The difference of this role is that speakers should be relevant voices that can inspire participants and their solutions, while also providing some extra learning to them.

**Helpers** – These volunteers will be present at the registration table or at the venue’s doors, will take care of the photography and social media of the event, will help with participants accommodation and can also act as moderators in online events – especially if attendance is high. In “classroom” sized hackathons, helpers might not be needed, but if all students from the institution are invited, they will be critical.

# Step 3 – Judges, Mentors, Prizes & Promotion

**Incentives and prizes** should not be, in this case, the main objective or motivator, but they can help as a recognition for work well done. These should be awarded regardless of whether the hackathon is delivered online, onsite, or in a hybrid setting. Think about giving all participants something (rather than awarding only the winner). Incentives can range from a simple credit recognition for participating to gifts from the sponsors. Look for popular gifts (gift cards, technology) or opportunities (e.g., internship opportunities or mentoring by experts), but try to avoid advertising them too much: you want your hackathon to be focused on offering superb opportunities to learn and network with peers.

Recommendations	
Target group Award prizes to all participants	Everyone should be awarded with a prize, even if symbolic, as an incentive of their work.
Prizes Define the prizes beforehand	Think about different prizes. Not only material prizes can be used, opportunities within your organisation are also valuable.
Networking Enable networking	Do not focus on the prizes as the reason to participate. The end goal is to incentivize participants to network. If not chosen carefully, prizes can drive participants away from networking and push a toxic environment for collaboration.

## Hackathon Tip: PRIZE

*It is worth specifying in the open call what the prize will be for the winning team. The prize should be sufficiently innovative, best if it helps the participants in their career, but any other useful prize may be appropriate.*



## Step 3 – Judges, Mentors, Prizes & Promotion

*Promotion: You can say that letting the world know about it is perhaps the best way to get the right mix of attendees. You need to be very clear about what skillsets you are looking for.*

- Promote your event using low-cost channels—blogs, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google Groups, Map, Mailing lists, websites, and ask attendees, your employees, and community honchos to spread the word.
- Use PR measures, such as a press release, to let the media know about your event, including all the relevant details (theme, vision, timeline, prizes, and sponsors).
- Contact university admins and campus ambassadors to get your foot into the academic sphere.
- For internal hackathons, institutions and companies can use emails, posters, social media, and intranet to get the employees interested; involve the management, asking them to become mentors or judges to show that everyone is working toward the same goal.
- Your community managers can maximize participation using email campaigns, radio ads, and other media channels.



## Step 4 – Participants Processes

Once the topic is established, and the basic elements of the hackathon have been organised, for the participants to thrive, it is necessary to outline processes for them to follow when they start their group work. This is a fundamental step in the organisation of the hackathon, as it enables participants' critical and creative thinking, whilst providing them with a step-by-step framework on how to approach and concretise their ideas.

To this end, the Creative Change Hackathon guide proposes that participants use the Design Thinking Model.

### **Hackathon Tip: PREPARATORY EVENT**

**It is important to have a preparatory event before the hackathon, where participants can learn the exact rules and each other, and ask questions. This event can also be online, even if the hackathon takes place offline.**





## Step 4 – Participants Process

### *Design Thinking*

Design Thinking is a process for solving an issue that focus on the end-user's needs. The process relies on "observing, with empathy, how people interact with their environments, and employs an iterative, hands-on approach to creating innovative solutions". Design Thinking uses a human-centred approach, as it starts from the end-users' problem and/or experienced issues to then build on a product or service. Participants should approach Design Thinking as an iterative process that consists of five steps:

- **Empathise:** in this step, participants need to generate an understanding of how the target group of their idea is affected by the misuse of AI. It is crucial for the hackathons participants to observe with empathy, withholding judgement and avoiding preconceived notions of what users need.
- **Define:** in the second step, participants, based on the notions that are gathered in the "empathise step" you define the problem. In doing so, think about the problems that the end users struggle with every day, how they are affected by the issue.
- **Ideate:** in this phase, participants brainstorm as group on possible solutions to the problem that has been identified in the previous stage. The idea is to put forward as many solutions as possible, to then select the best ones to proceed forward.
- **Prototype:** during this stage of Design Thinking, participants are invited to come forward with a concrete version of their idea and to understand how this could be possibly accepted by its end users.
- **Test:** once participants produced an idea, they need to test their idea with the end users, understanding how these are going to interact with it and collect feedback for improvement.

Design Thinking is not a linear approach. Once participants reached the last phase of the Design Thinking process, they are likely to go back to one or more of the steps and to adjust your solution.

## Step 5 – Getting Ready for the Event

Many hackathon organisers we talked to recommended a training or induction event as important in running a successful Hackathon. Many participants will be unfamiliar with both the approach and idea of Creative Change style Hackathon; providing training workshops is a fantastic way to get people more comfortable with the concept. These workshops could include:

- Run ahead of time for any participants who will need it before the event.
- Included as part of the event – ideally at the beginning and with a speaker.
- Run concurrently with the main event to allow groups to switch activities and have a more dynamic experience.

Workshops should educate participants to the hackathon's topic as well as technical skills that will be useful during the hackathon (e.g. organisation, management, collaboration tools, etc.). Workshops can also be used to explore the wider issues that are relevant to the theme of the hackathon. Workshops, like the rest of the event, should be as engaging as possible.

The Creative Change project's resources could be useful in running these sessions. Consider using the CC Guide to Human Centred Design of Adult Education Programmes as a general introduction and requirement (they might, for example, be provided to attendees to read before the event), and the Creative Change webinar on gamification as a supplement to help people grasp the project. **Insert link here**



**Hackathon Tip: BUILD A TEAM AND INFORM THEM  
THOROUGHLY ABOUT THE SCHEDULE**

***An event cannot work without a team, and a team, to work, needs to know what to do, who does what, etc. Also, snags are behind the corner all the time: it is important to have a person to count on in case of unforeseen events.***



# Step 5 – Getting Ready for the Event

## ***Creating your Teams***

When hosting a hackathon, it is important to create harmonious and successful teams. It is important to consider the personalities of the participants and start to think about which participants might work well together and which participants might not.

Before you start to group your participants together, it is a good practice to read about the 4 working types (that tie closely to personality types), which roughly translate into the process, action, people, and idea-oriented workers. Each type has its own strengths and weaknesses, for example:

- An action-oriented worker may proactively get all their tasks done on time but may not be as good at communicating with other team members.
- An idea-oriented worker may produce great ideas for the team but may not have a clear plan on how to go about doing them.
- A people-oriented worker may be great at fostering a positive team dynamic but may need an extra nudge to get their tasks done on time.
- A process-oriented worker may be great at structuring projects and documentation but may get stressed out if they need to improvise on the spot.

Read <https://medium.com/nwplusubc/hacking-the-hackathon-organizing-team-part-2-the-team-part-of-team-management-d60f84bcc96c> for an example of creating an effective Hackathon Team.





# Myers Briggs Personality Test

***An activity that organisers can use at their preparatory events to better understand their participants***

In personality typology, the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is an introspective self-report questionnaire indicating differing psychological preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions. The test attempts to assign four categories: introversion or extraversion, sensing or intuition, thinking or feeling, judging or perceiving.

## **Activity**

Before putting participants into teams, it is helpful if organisers can get a “sense” of the participants and consider how they might work together. One approach worth considering is to ask each hackathon participant to complete a Myers Briggs type personality test (5 mins) to gain a better sense of who they are. Organisers should then be in a better position to create diverse teams with the complementary abilities and ones that are likely to “gel”.

**[Click here](#)** for our Creative Change Registration form with links to our recommended online Personality Test.



## Step 5 – Getting ready for the Event

### **Checklist**

- Depending on the scope, a pre-event could help participants to get to know each other in a relaxing setting. A post-event after the hackathon wraps up gives participants a chance to socialize now that they know each other. Consider these possibilities depending on the participants and size of your Creative Change Hackathon.
- To stay on top, try using organizing tools to track all aspects— technical, logistics, participation, etc.
- Start sending reminders to attendees 7 to 10 days before the event.
- Finalize your speakers.
- Get the travel itinerary of attendees and arrange for cost-effective and efficient transportation. In case of travel reimbursements, tell the participants how they can claim it and when. For participants who live in other countries, send an official invitation which makes applying for the visa easier.
- Get the final headcount. Confirm attendance a day prior to the event. Sometimes, half the people won't turn up. Although you may be happy with the number of registrations, close to 30% do not submit a hack.
- A day before the hackathon, go through the event with your organizing team, like a dress rehearsal.
- Ensure any last-minute changes in the schedule are communicated to the attendees via social media or in-person.
- Set up a tool for group communication (e.g., Slack, Discord or similar), social media accounts (Twitter, LinkedIn or Facebook), shared document space (Google Docs, Dropbox). Also acquire any needed supplies (paper, markers, tape, post signs, tag stickers, utensils, food catering orders, camera to take pictures, etc.).
- Have registration forms printed and ready for the participants. A sample one can be found [here](#).



# Step 5 – Getting Ready for the Event

*You also need to prepare a timeline.  
For instance, for a 36h onsite  
Creative Change Hackathon, a  
suggestion can be found below:*

Day	Time	Description
<b>Day 1. The first day is all about laying the groundwork for a successful event; get everyone excited and on the same page.</b>	15:00	Registration and snacks. Informal pre-event.
	16:00	Opening session
	16:30	Problem definition
	17:00	Speaker 1 – Problem related
	18:00	Team Formation.
	19:00	Idea’s pitch and wrap-up for the day
	21:00	(Optional) Group dinner
<b>Day 2. Morning. Work starts, and groups would need to think about Creative Change and start developing an appropriate solution. Experts will check on groups.</b>	09:00	Group Activity – Warm up game
	10:00	Group work on the solution
	11:00	Troubleshooting session with mentors
	12:00	Expert check on groups
	13:00	Lunch
<b>Day 2. Afternoon. Presentations and closing.</b>	14:00	Speaker 2 – Creative Change in real-life cases
	15:00	Group work
	16:00	Final mentor feedback
	17:00	Presentations
	19:00	Winners announced
	19:30	Closure and final words. Post-event follow-up





## Step 6 – The day of the Event

*The time has come, the day of the Creative Change Hackathon!*

### Get the venue ready

- Set up the chairs, beanbags, and tables.
- Get the premises, including the dedicated hacking, sleeping, snacking, and recreational areas and restrooms, clean and ready.
- Place proper signs to guide attendees.
- Check for possible power and hardware issues
- Make sure the hardware toolkit is good to go—enough power bars, extension cords, and network cables; uninterrupted secure wi-fi; a projector; a couple of extra laptops; audio/PA equipment etc. (Tip: You can outsource networking requirements as well!).
- Let attendees know they are responsible for the security of their devices.

### Kicking off the hackathon

- Get your registration/help desk ready to check participants' IDs, liability waivers, and forms for minors.
- Give the participants any promotional pamphlets you need to, name tags, and login credentials

# Step 6 – The day of the Event

## *Overall Directions for the event*

### **A) Welcoming session**

- Introduce the organisers
- Thank the venue and sponsors
- Explain the history and purpose of the event
- Mention the code of conduct
- Explain logistics: the schedule of workshops, lunch, end time...
- Share the agenda of the event with the previous timings
- Encourage people to take and share session notes and to record progress on projects
- Introduce the task at hand, the real case, and the related Creative Change requirement.
- Introduce the process participants will follow

After groups are formed and they have the chance to draft a first idea, they should pitch their project to either the expert or to everyone, so they can get early feedback before the real work begins.



### ***Hackathon Tip: INCLUDE ICEBREAKERS & ENERGIZERS***

***As you may know, when participants don't know each other well, it is good to provide some icebreaker games such as the "Human Bingo", at least at the very beginning, so the participants can get to know each other better and are more likely to cooperate for common objectives.***



## Step 6 – The day of the Event

### *Overall Directions for the event*

#### **B) During the day:**

Have someone managing the room. Go around to check that every project is going smoothly. See if anyone needs anything or cannot find something to work on. Keep people on the overall schedule. Alert everyone when it is time for lunch and one hour before the presentation session. Leading up to wrap-up, make sure each project is prepared to explain what they did.

Have someone managing workshops. Make sure workshops stay on schedule, that participants are understanding the leader, can hear the leader from the back of the room, etc. Be around to ensure that the workshop leader doesn't have any technology problems. An organiser should be always available to help.

#### **C) Final pitching session:**

A pitching session gives everyone a chance to hear what their peers have worked on during the day. Ask learners and students to report what they accomplished or what they learned (especially for workshop participants). Give folks rounds of applause.

In large groups, have each project report on its accomplishments. If possible, let them show their work on the projector. But keep things quick. By this point projects may have a lot to say. Keep each project to 1 or 2 minutes, and if they are going to show something on the projector make sure it is ready before the wrap-up session begins.





# Step 6 – The day of the Event

A Recommendation Table for the Day of the Event

Recommendations	
<b>Venue</b> <i>Prepare the venue</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set up the chairs, beanbags, and tables.</li><li>• Get the premises, including the dedicated hacking, snacking, and recreational areas and restrooms, clean and ready.</li><li>• Place proper signs to guide attendees.</li></ul>
<b>Hardware issues</b> <i>Check possible power and hardware issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set up the chairs, beanbags, and tables.</li><li>• Get the premises, including the dedicated hacking, snacking, and recreational areas and restrooms, clean and ready.</li><li>• Place proper signs to guide attendees.</li></ul>
<b>Registration desk</b> <i>Prepare your registration desk to check in participants</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Request IDs, liability waivers, and parents' consent form for minors</li><li>• Provide promotional material (pamphlets, name tags, and login credentials)</li></ul>
<b>Welcome speech(es)</b> <i>Welcome you attendees</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present the hackathon objectives, the schedule/timeline (like the one above), and the rules.</li><li>• Introduce the organisers volunteers, speakers, and hackers.</li><li>• Address all participants' potential questions, doubts, or concerns.</li></ul>
<b>Supervision</b> <i>Ensure supervision throughout the session</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep a constant supervision on the main room and on the workshops.</li></ul>
<b>Social media</b> <i>Update social media</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Constantly update social media to help maintain an exciting atmosphere.</li></ul>



## Step 7 – Post-event follow up

### *Keeping Promises and post-event follow up*

- Thank your participants, sponsors, hosts, speakers, judges, mentors, data providers, press, and volunteers.
- In your concluding talk, talk about the community, the website, mailing lists, and mention any upcoming events.
- Get nice videos and photos of the event for dissemination purposes.
- Do a thorough analysis of the participant data and any other relevant statistics, channels used for outreach, quality of the hackers and their submissions, and get “like-dislike” 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 too, communicating details about the events, hacks, and winners plays a big part in boosting a company’s image, be it in terms of employee satisfaction, collaboration, or innovation; companies can recruit the best talent or roll out feasible projects after the hackathon or fund/incubate the winning idea



## What to Keep in Mind when Organising a Hackathon

*Hackathons have evolved a lot, and nowadays, organizing a hackathon is a challenging process and requires careful planning, networking, and management. But don't worry - this video is a practical guide for organisation that do it for the first time, which includes the most important things to keep in mind while organizing a hackathon.*

Watch this short video for advice when organising a  
hackathon

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQvPdG6MWgE>



## What are the main things to AVOID?

***Below are a list of tips on what not to do when organising your hackathons***

- Putting people in teams they don't like – it reduces productivity and creates an unwelcoming environment.
- Unclear timing – it creates confusion for both organisers and participants, leading to a badly run event.
- Unclear voting system – it is important to make it clear how the voting is carried out and ensure that participants understand to avoid crating issues.
- A lack of preparatory event – a pre-event allows the participants to get to know each other and the organisers.
- Too many teams – it is not worth working with too many teams, as it slows down the event enormously



## 04 – Assessment of Learning



# Assessment of Learning

## *Assess Learners' Attainment*

To assess learners' attainment of learning outcomes, educators may use a pre and post-assessment of how confident learners feel about the knowledge and competences. The template provided with the current guide, should be used both before and after participating in the Creative Change Hackathon. You will compare the results from before and after participation to see if there has been an improvement.

[Click here for the template](#)





# 05 – Virtual/Digital Hackathon



# Virtual Hackathons

*Although most activities involved in the organization of offline and online hackathons are similar, certain tasks such as registration, rules, and promotion will include a few different subtasks as well. Handholding participants can also be easier than in in-person events.*

**The table below outlines some overall advantages and disadvantages of online (or hybrid) format.**

Advantages	Disadvantages
Less overhead costs (venue, transportation, staff).	Participants could feel less involved.
Larger and more diverse audience (no geographical constraints).	Group collaboration can suffer.
Challenges can run for a longer duration – and even be asynchronous.	Digital literacy is important to obtain high quality deliverables (e.g., collaboration tools).
Improved chances of success via social media (sharing, reach).	It is harder to monitor what participants are doing.
Community creation.	If synchronous, feedback becomes more complex. This can be solved in asynchronous settings, giving time to the mentor or expert to assess the partial deliverables before coming back to the group.



*As a quick route to innovation, hackathons  
are intensely focused, creative and  
collaborative*  
– Nikitas Magel BrightIdea





# Hybrid/Online Hackathon

***Consider a different approach to traditional hackathons to maximise value? How?***

Think about three phases:

- First, an idea submission phase (online) where participants submit their draft ideas after the presentation of the problem.
- The development/prototyping phase (online or offline), where groups can work together asynchronously to build their solution. Experts can be consulted via email or forums, and feedback can be provided over a few days or weeks.
- The presentation and final phase (online or offline), where groups present their ideas to the jury.

Note how these can be combined, for instance with an all-online event or with the first phases online and the presentations offline in a final face-to-face event that will double as a celebratory event.



# Virtual Hackathons

## Tools, 'Venue' & Date

When organising an online (or hybrid) hackathon, it is relevant to choose online tools to support the delivery of your event. In the case of an online hackathon, the success of your hackathon will entirely depend on the effectiveness of the tools chosen. Differently, when organising a hybrid event, its success depends both on the venue and tool choice.

In this section we propose three tools that will help the organisation of your online and hybrid hackathon, serving as your 'virtual venue.' Dedicated platforms to conduct hackathons are available in the market. These customised tools publish your hackathons, and they manage them. They ensure optimum integration with internal social networks, IT systems, and other existing tools. From an organiser's perspective, the platforms give easy access to participant data and submissions, allow external voting, offer a forum for discussion, let mentors easily help the hackers online, offer customisation of platform design, allow export of projects, and offer real-time stats dashboard. Some examples include Devpost, Kreativdistrikt, TaiKai and Mercer – Mettl.

However, these platforms have a major disadvantage: the cost, being them commercial platforms. Additionally, they require external people to have access and login credentials, which might not always be supported by your institution.

When it comes to choosing the date of your online (or hybrid) hackathon, no major differences are identified here. Organisers should however keep in mind that if they expand the geographical scope of their hackathon outside their institution and/or national borders, different national holidays and exam session periods will apply.

In the following table, you can find several tools, divided by six categories – project management, registration, communication, briefing session, interactive engagement, team submission and voting:

Category	Tools
<b>Project management</b>  <b>ensuring that the event runs smoothly and that tasks are delegated to the right people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Monday</u>: very easy and visual tool where you can set up tables to get yourself organised with a to-go list and delegate tasks.</li> <li>• <u>Trello</u>: These boards are simple so you can keep track on what needs to get done and what has not been done yet.</li> </ul>
<b>Registration</b>  <b>ensuring participants register to the event so you have their contact details and keep in contact with them</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Humantix</u>: Aussie startup where a percentage of each ticket sale will go to a social cause.</li> <li>• <u>Eventbrite</u>: event management system that has large reach and can help with marketing your event.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>  <b>give updates to participants so they know what is happening and how to get the most out of their hacker experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Slack</u>: fantastic tool where you can create channels for different purposes so that participants can be notified with what is coming up on the agenda</li> <li>• <u>Discord</u>: awesome for sessions with hundreds of people, keep them informed, can do online chats, pinging mentors</li> <li>• Email: sounds old school, but sending important information to an inbox can be beneficial</li> <li>• Forums in the online platform or LMS available in your institution.</li> </ul>



## ***Tools to use for a Virtual Hackathon***



<p><b>Briefing Sessions</b></p> <p>Hackathons hold a session to inform the participants what is happening, and at the start of the event do a ‘kick off’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Google Hangouts:</u></b> Easy link to spin up if you use the Google Suite</li> <li>• <b><u>Zoom:</u></b> Allow participants to enter your Zoom room, you can share screen and record the session</li> <li>• <b>Other platforms (e.g., BlackBoard, Moodle, etc.) in your institution can be used for this purpose.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Interactive Engagement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Menti:</u></b> easy, visual and compelling. Lots of features including ranking, quizzes, polls, word clouds, etc</li> <li>• <b><u>Slido:</u></b> Use this if you want people to ask questions and vote on the questions/comments. The more votes it gets, the higher up the ranking it will go</li> </ul>
<p><b>Team Submissions and Voting</b></p> <p>groups can put in their submissions for the hack – whether it be a video via YouTube, GitHub depository, or link to the working prototype.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>DevPost:</u></b> You can see all the submissions that come through and judges can go in and vote based on customised criteria</li> <li>• <b><u>Google Forms:</u></b> Put in your team’s group name, participants, and a link to what you have created over the period of time. Judges can go in and click on the links to either rank or score them</li> <li>• Activities in your online platform or LMS, where students can send their deliverables.</li> </ul>




## ***Deciding your rules, judges, sponsors, prizes, swag packs, website***

- Online hackathons come with a unique set of rules. You will have to clearly address issues related to submissions and judging.
- Here is an example of an [FAQ](#) section and a [Rules](#) section that can give you an idea about the kinds of queries participants of an online hackathon may have.
- Decide what kind of deliverable you want from each stage of the hackathon, say, some sort of a presentation, template, or video in the ideation stage and a storyboard or an app and supporting documents (GitHub links, code execution instructions) in the prototyping/demo stage.
- The demo or presentation the participants will pitch can happen in person for a hackathon that also has an offline round.
- Be clear about the Creative Commons License and the IP rights on your website.
- Pick your jury members and mentors (who will add a credible sparkle to your event) as you would for offline hackathons mentioned earlier.
- You can either let your judges pick winners or you can have a voting system where others (public, sponsors, consumers, etc.) can also help select the best projects



## ***Virtual Hackathons***



## ***Deciding your rules, judges, sponsors, prizes, swag packs, website***

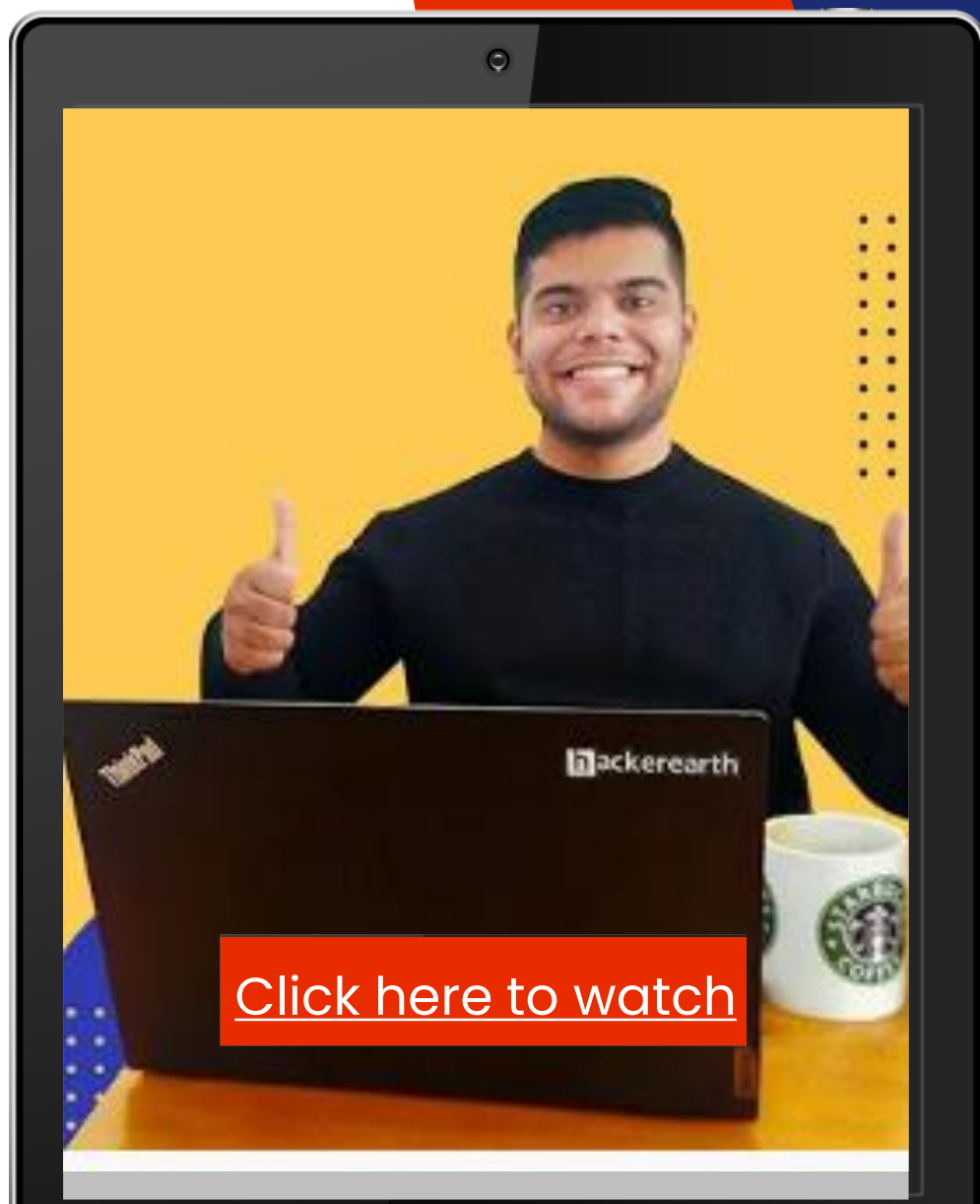
- Don't have too many finalists because your judges most likely won't have the bandwidth to test and evaluate so many submissions.
- If your sponsors are popular brands, exploit the fact by displaying logos.
- Offer attractive prizes and giveaways depending on your budget and participants. It is more about the experience than prizes for many, but make sure everyone gets at least a T-shirt.
- Congratulate the winners and thank all attendees at the event (in case it is a hybrid one) or via social media and emails.
- Ensure your website has all details pertinent to the hackathons—registration, eligibility, requirements, timelines, learning resources, judges, winning criteria, prizes, swags, referral programs, etc.

# How to Run a Virtual Hackathon

***Watch this short video by HackerEarth on how to run the perfect virtual hackathon***

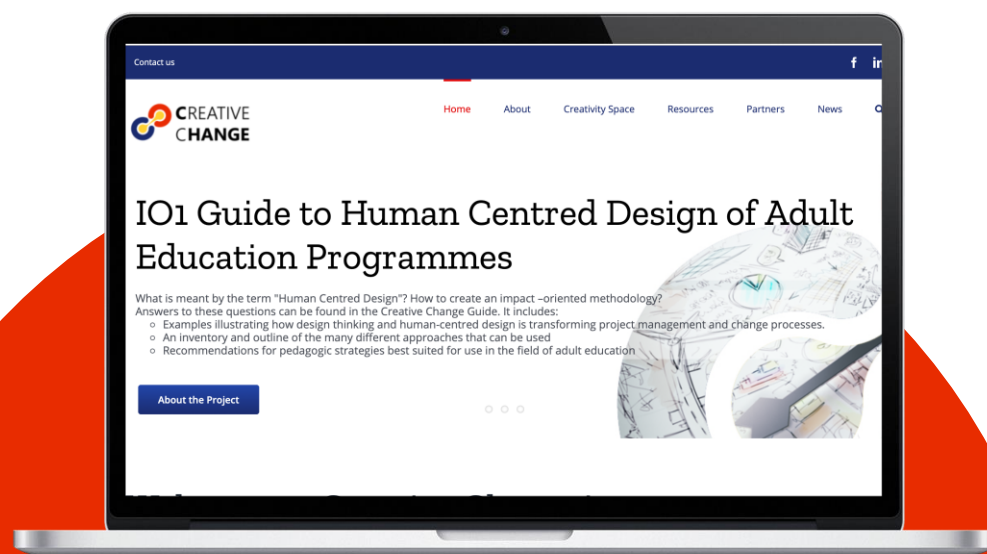
In this video, Wayne Brewer gives us his 3 tips to conduct the perfect virtual hackathon. Read the full blog here: <https://p.hck.re/ANR5>

These tips can help project managers and adult educators conduct hackathons that help them achieve their educations and innovation goals.



[Click here to watch](https://p.hck.re/ANR5)

**BY FOSTERING THIS  
EXCHANGE BETWEEN  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT,  
ARTS AND CULTURE, CREATIVE  
CHANGE** *creates an  
approach  
of **sustainable and  
impact-oriented**  
project management*



[www.creative-change.eu](http://www.creative-change.eu)



Follow our journey

