



June 2024

DigiEduHack Webinar #3: A Comprehensive Guide to DigiEduHack Implementation (04/06/2024)



The DigiEduHack 2024 Webinar #3 “A Comprehensive Guide to DigiEduHack Implementation” focused on sharing strategies and best practices for implementing successful educational hackathons. Experts Jelena Nakić, Alessandro Tomasi, Eamon Costello, and Camila Fernanda discussed key topics such as participant recruitment, mentorship, diversity, jury selection, and ethical considerations. They also explored the dynamics of hybrid hackathons and emphasized the importance of post-hackathon impact and knowledge transfer to stakeholders. The webinar concluded with a Q&A session, encouraging continued engagement and preparation for upcoming DigiEduHack events.

- Onsite Invited Speakers: **Jelena Nakić**, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Sciences, Croatia; and **Alessandro Tomasi**, Co-founder of Kimmitt, focused on educational experiences centered on entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Online Invited Speakers: **Eamon Costello**, Associate Professor of Digital Learning at Dublin City University; and **Camila Fernanda Comas Ocampo**, Lifelong Learning and Outreach Coordinator at E-Cube UDI.
- Webinar Host: **Janika Leoste**, Tallin University
- Ask-Me-Anything Host: **Kristof Fenyvesi**, Tallin University



Highlights of the interview

The webinar was hosted by Janika Leoste, who welcomed viewers and introduced the expert panel. The webinar aimed to share knowledge from experienced hackathon implementers across Europe. The following key questions and ideas were discussed.

How to Get Participants?

Jelena Nakić suggested ensuring good prizes to motivate participants. She emphasized the importance of finding sponsors for the main prizes to attract participants.

Alessandro Tomasi highlighted that having relevant and interesting challenges naturally attracts participants. He mentioned leveraging the DigiEduHack website for recruitment and maintaining communication with potential participants to build a relationship.

How to Conduct the Registration Process and Gather Attention on Social Media?

Jelena Nakić used university networks and student associations to spread the word. She also utilized social media platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn to inform students.

Alessandro Tomasi added the importance of timely communication with potential applicants to answer their questions and ensure they feel connected to the event.

When Should the Registration Process Start?

Jelena Nakić recommended starting at the beginning of the academic year when students are back from vacation and ready to engage.

Alessandro Tomasi suggested planning the event three months in advance to prepare the web page and communicate with potential sponsors.

How to Get Mentors and What Motivates Them?

Jelena Nakić preferred a combination of mentors from academia and industry. She mentioned that mentors are often motivated by personal desire to work with students and the potential to recruit them as future employees.

Alessandro Tomasi stressed the importance of having intrinsically motivated and expert mentors. He mentioned maintaining good relationships with networks that could provide suitable mentors.

How to Ensure Diverse Representation among Participants?

Jelena Nakić focused on attracting students from various academic backgrounds and forming heterogenic groups. She mentioned that students did not need to have pre-arranged teams, which contributed to diversity.

Alessandro Tomasi emphasized the importance of having diverse age groups and ensuring gender representation. He suggested establishing common grounds and communication between generations.

How to Select and Train the Jury?

Camila Fernanda emphasized selecting jury members with relevant expertise and the ability to provide constructive feedback. She mentioned involving jury members in the process from the start and ensuring they understand the criteria for evaluation.

Eamon Costello shared the use of digital tools like Google forms for efficient evaluation. He highlighted the importance of training jury members on the evaluation criteria and preparing them for the complexity of the hackathon.

Ethical Considerations:

Jelena Nakić did not see ethical issues with involving sponsors as jury members, as long as they are professional and unbiased.

Alessandro Tomasi discussed the acceptance of sponsorship in a neoliberal context and raised the question of allowing pre-formed teams with professional hackathon participants.

Eamon Costello discussed the potential ethical challenges related to sponsorship and the importance of maintaining transparency. He emphasized the freedom to discuss and address ethical issues within the hackathon.

How to Ensure Equality in Hybrid Hackathons?

Eamon Costello acknowledged the complexity of hybrid hackathons and the need for additional IT support and clear communication. He suggested having separate online and face-to-face elements.

Jelena Nakić found the concept of hybrid hackathons technically demanding and emphasized the importance of a pragmatic schedule and strict pitch duration.

Camila Fernanda suggested ensuring that all participants have the necessary technological tools and connectivity. She emphasized the importance of interaction and engagement in both online and in-person settings.

What Should Be the Next Steps After the Hackathon to Ensure Impact?

Eamon Costello emphasized the importance of follow-up surveys to measure the impact on participants' skills and communicating results to stakeholders. He mentioned integrating hackathon outcomes into broader projects.

Jelena Nakić motivated students to develop their hackathon projects into master's theses.

Alessandro Tomasi highlighted the need for creativity and self-awareness in education and suggested further discussions with stakeholders to ensure impact.

Camila Fernanda recommended collecting feedback from all participants to improve future hackathons and ensure impactful knowledge transfer. She emphasized the importance of international collaboration and different perspectives.

Conclusion:

The webinar concluded with a Q&A session where attendees asked questions and received detailed answers from the panel. Janika Leoste encouraged continued engagement through Slido and reminded participants of the upcoming DigiEduHack events. For further information and updates on upcoming webinars, please visit the DigiEduHack website and join the community discussions on social media.

