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**Team
Up!**

MIL'Athon Guidelines

How to organise a MIL'Athon

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Table of contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 4 |
| The MIL'Athon | 4 |
| Staff and mentors | 9 |
| How to prepare: the Infopack | 11 |
| Some Key Points to take into account for your MIL'Athon | 12 |
| Annex | 14 |

Introduction

These guidelines intend to share the lessons learned during the organisation and the course of the MIL'Athon, a transnational competition that took place in Lisbon from June 13th to 16th, 2023. The event was planned within the Team Up! - Media for Adult Education project, a cross-European initiative aimed at fostering adults' digital and Media and Information Literacy (MIL) and producing media and digital tools in Southern Europe, funded by the Erasmus+ program of the European Union. The project includes work with educators, teachers and librarians and is a continuation of the Speak Up! project, that targeted young, newly arrived migrants. The following guidelines are therefore inspired by the Lisbon experience, but the contents presented here as an example can be adapted as needed considering the specific MIL'Athon one wishes to arrange.

The MIL'Athon

What | The MIL'Athon is a competition among teams that are assigned a specific challenge related to MIL, and they have to use their creativity to produce a final output. The MIL'Athon is based on the Hackathon format, a competing event, usually powered by an ICT company, that aims to gather experts from different fields (especially ICT) to develop coding outputs that will innovate the company's products.

In the context of Team Up!, the MIL'Athon asked the participants to put into practice the knowledge and skills they acquired during previous trainings (MIL Labs) held in their countries. The groups worked in international teams and produced a short video, addressing the topic of Women's rights.

Where | Find and book with enough advance (1 to 2 months) a suitable venue for the event, making sure that it is accessible in terms of infrastructure, public transport and architectural barriers. We recommend that you consider the following elements when choosing your venue:

- the presence of large and comfortable spaces with enough tables and chairs where the teams and mentors can work;
- an area for presentations and award ceremony;
- extra equipment, for example a room with projector;

- fast and reliable Internet connection that can support all participants and staff;
- place for food and beverages;
- clean sanitary facilities.

The Lisbon MIL’Athon, for example, took place at the [Impact House](#).

Note: if you plan to work or exhibit outdoors, make sure there is shade, either from the natural environment or through appropriate equipment (eg. sun umbrellas, gazebo, etc.). In case of rain, provide for shelter as well or think of an alternative location.

When | The program of the Lisbon event developed over the course of four days according to the following structure:

- 1st day:
 - preparation of participants (presentation of the next days, organization in groups, introduction of the mentors, etc.);
 - assignment of the challenge.
- 2nd and 3rd day:
 - group work.
- 4th day:
 - presentation of the outputs;
 - deliberation of the jury;
 - designation of the winner.

The amount of days and duration of the activities can vary depending on different factors, such as the complexity of the challenge or the target involved. For example, if the teams consist of school students, the organisation will likely choose a weekend so that the school agenda is not disturbed.

Once the group work starts, each team is responsible for their own work and time management. Time constraints can be scheduled for meals or plenary activities.

Who | One of the main steps of organising this event is selecting the participants that will work in teams and compete during the MIL’Athon. For a successful outcome of this phase, having a clear picture of the potential candidates’ level of knowledge and skills in relation to the topic of the challenge is key. Therefore, recruitment can either start during prior training sessions (if provided), where there is the chance to personally get to know the possible participants, or through an assessment form to be shared beforehand. Make sure the participants have the necessary skills to successfully take part to the teamwork and the MIL’Athon talks, study visits and the like. If you intend to include participants from various

countries, ensure that their proficiency in English (assuming it is the event's language) is adequate to facilitate their active participation and collaboration within the group. In addition, and in cases where proficiency in English may be a challenge, ensure additional support in the act of translation from peers, mentors and staff.

The topic | Choose a main topic that will guide the development of the challenge and be at the core of the final output (e.g. online hate speech, gender equality, fake news, etc.). The Lisbon MIL'Athon, for example, addressed the theme of **Women's and Girls' Rights**, and their relation to Human Rights.

During the event, a study visit to a local organisation/association that is actively engaged in the chosen topic for the challenge could be planned. This will support the participants to go deeper in the theme and develop their own point of view. The teams in Lisbon visited [Mulheres sem Fronteiras](#), a grassroots organisation working with vulnerable women at local level, in Bairro Alfredo Bensaúde, Lisbon.

The challenge | Invite the participants to choose one specific aspect/ issue/ angle of the main topic and develop an output. The Lisbon MIL'Athon required the teams to produce a short video (2 to 3 minutes) to be posted on social media, but the possibilities in terms of output can be numerous: photography project, podcast, social media campaign, outline of a MIL training curriculum, etc. The challenge must align with the allotted time for participants and the level of support provided by mentors.

The assignment | Consider a first plenary session that will serve the purpose of describing the challenge in detail and answering to questions and doubts. Provide clear instructions to the teams for developing their concept also according to the type of chosen output: format and quality; length/duration; public that the output targets; social platform; presentation mode; etc.

Also make sure that you give well-defined guidelines on which tools are requested and/or suggested in order to reach the expected result (e.g. apps for video and/or photo editing, recording tools, framework of reference, etc.). A prior training on the tools that are expected to be implemented could be advisable; in general, check if the participants possess the necessary skills to complete the challenge, including an adequate English level in case of international teams. Lastly, communicate

with enough advance if the teams are required to bring any equipment, such as laptop, tablet, camera, etc., otherwise provide it.

The evaluation criteria | The evaluation criteria that the jury will consider while evaluating the outputs should be in line with the expected result, achievable and transparent, as well as the participation rules. For example, the jury involved in the Lisbon MIL'Athon had a grid, where they assigned a mark from 1 to 5 for each of the following criteria:

- **Content**
 - Clarity of the message and coherence between concept and video
 - Coherence of the video with the topic assigned
 - Innovation of the video as compared with existing videos
- **Aesthetics, Style and Design**
 - Efficacy of the filming technique adopted
 - Efficacy of the succession of scenes
 - Appropriate length
 - Quality of the final product
- **Impact**
 - Coherence of the video structure and language with the target group addressed
 - Coherence of the video with the social media platform It will distributed on

The prize | Clearly define beforehand what prize is to be offered, so that the necessary resources can be allocated accordingly and this opportunity can be communicated properly during the event promotion phase. Awards can include in-kind prizes such as tech equipment, tickets for events and festivals, subscriptions and the like. For instance, the participants of the Lisbon winning team were awarded with 6 months free access to the [Media Suitcase](#) - an online learning platform developed by Karpos, where they can improve their skills on cinema, photography and filming, on a theoretical and practical level.

The program | When developing the program, make sure to assign the available trainers and staff to the different activities according to their skills, expertise and strengths. Here a possible planning outcome:

| Day | Time | MIL'Athon activity | Partners' activity ¹ |
|------------|---------------|--|---------------------------------|
| First day | All day | Arrival ² | |
| Second day | 9.00-13.00 | Free time | |
| | 14.00-16.00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get-to-know each other activity ● Presentation of the activity and the challenge ● Presentation of tool(s) to be used for the challenge ● Creation of the teams³ ● Team-building activity | |
| Third day | 9.00-13.00 | Study visit | |
| | 14.00-18.00 | Teams work on the challenge | |
| | 19.00-20.00 | Networking aperitivo | |
| Fourth day | 9.00-13.00 | Teams work on the challenge | |
| | 14.00-18.00 | Teams work on the challenge | |
| | 19.00 - --- | Teams work on the challenge (optional) | |
| Fifth day | 9.00-13.00 | Teams finalize their outputs and submit them to the jury | |
| | 13.45-14.00 | MIL Event - Reception of guest and Welcome Coffee | |
| | 14.00 - 18.30 | MIL Event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation of project/event/etc. ● Talk(s) related to MIL and the main topic of the challenge ● MIL'Athon results presentation ● Awarding ceremony | |
| | 18.30 | Talks around a snack and aperitivo | |
| Sixth day | All day | Departure | |

The jury | The members of the jury should be chosen with the aim of building a balanced and competent panel, composed by professionals with expertise in the areas relevant to the challenge. The components should be announced together with the MIL'Athon itself. The jury can work also remotely on a shared document to be provided in due time (Google Sheets was the platform chosen for the Lisbon event) and they will have to assess the outputs according to the previously defined criteria. If an audience is present at the event, they may also express their vote, which can contribute to the final score for a small share. The public in Lisbon, for example, was provided with a piece of paper and pen, where they chose the title of their favourite video anonymously. The most voted video benefited from a 10% increase of the total points assigned by the jury.

¹ This column is optional and can be used to highlight some specific staff members'/ project partners' involvement in a given activity.

² The arrival and departure time frame can be reduced in case of a national/local meeting.

³ Can be done during the MIL'Athon or beforehand, depending on the recruitment phase.

Staff and mentors

Staff and mentors work closely together to ensure that the activities of the MIL'Athon run smoothly. The staff takes care of logistics and general coordination aspects, plus conducting and moderating plenary moments such as presentations, ice-breaking activities, networking events and awarding ceremony. The mentors play a very important role for supporting the working teams in defining their product and achieving effective results having in mind the evaluation criteria.

It might be useful to include in your Infopack (see next section, p. 10, "How to prepare: the Infopack") a part introducing both staff and mentors, with photos and some information on the person's background, so that the participants can familiarize with them beforehand.

Why mentors? | The mentors provide their support not only for the technical aspects, but also to help teams develop an idea for their output that is feasible, has a clear target audience and is appropriate for the chosen media.

It is crucial that the mentors' competences and skills are in line with the topic, the challenge and the main aim of the MIL'Athon, so a careful selection is advised. Also make sure that the number of mentors available is appropriate to that of the working groups, considering 1-2 mentors per group.

Mentors can either be assigned to one team for the whole event or rotate and support all teams equally, as it happened for the Lisbon MIL'Athon.

Rotation brings its pros and cons: having a permanent mentor for each group can ensure continuity to the workflow; on the other hand, rotating mentors can bring different perspectives, skill sets and approaches, fostering a lively working climate and exchange of ideas. Therefore, consider these aspects as well while planning a MIL'Athon, keeping in mind the mentors available and their competences. In general, it is useful to provide a clear schedule of the availabilities of mentors for both the participants and the mentors themselves, in order to grant a clear picture of the course of the activities and of the figures, to whom the participants can turn. See the Annex to find an example of the mentors' rotation adopted in Lisbon.

To sum up, mentors:

- **act as facilitators throughout the process** - by empowering participants to work well as a team and to give value to their knowledge and ideas, providing an external point of view;
- **help the teams to assess their internal competences** - each person in a group carries not only an opinion, but also particular skills and abilities. Supporting the teams to identify who can do what and encouraging everyone to take on tasks and learn from others is key;
- **prevent conflict** - if the exchange of ideas should become a bit too animated, mentors can peacefully intervene by providing a different perspective on the discussion, or by making positive suggestions or even methodological approaches/solutions to re-centre the work group focus. A mentor can also seek the help of team members who are not involved in the conflict, and work together to overcome the impasse;
- **ensure focus on the final aim** - the freedom of time management may lead the teams to lose track of time. Mentors make sure they stay consistent with the objective of the challenge and that they use time wisely, for example inviting them to define all the actions needed to produce the output and encouraging them to assign tasks within the group, also by the means of appropriate management tools;
- **provide help for the final presentation** - mentors also support the teams to identify the right person to present the work, and make sure that their teammates are helping them to prepare for the presentation in front of the audience. The final pitch should be prepared considering both public speaking skills and the specific content to be presented.

Prior to the MIL'Athon, it may be useful to share with the mentors a detailed work schedule that highlights their involvement in the activities. Below an example of a possible schedule; see the Annex for the mentors' program planned for the Lisbon MIL'Athon.

| Day | Time | MIL'Athon activity | Your role as a mentor |
|-------|------------|--------------------|--|
| Day 2 | 9.00-13.00 | Study Visit | Make the most of the study visit and learn together with the participants - your facilitation may be important to help the teams |

| | | | |
|--|-------------|-----------------------------|---|
| | | | define the specific object of their output |
| | 14.00-18.00 | Teams work on the challenge | Support the teams in: - defining the idea to be developed; - work on the output. N.B. probably at this stage they will only need an external perspective to develop their idea, and make sure that it is actually feasible in the timeframe and for the tools they have at their disposal. |
| | 19.00-20.00 | Networking aperitivo | Free participation |

How to prepare: the Infopack

Another important aspect in organising a MIL’Athon is also ensuring that participants, partners and mentors are ready to make the most out of their experience. Therefore, the provision of an Infopack with enough advance (at least three weeks before the event starts) is highly recommended. While planning the contents of the document you want to share, think carefully at what kind of information is essential for the successful partaking of everyone involved. In preparation of the Lisbon event, for example, two different Infopacks were shared, one for partners and mentors and one for the participants. While the overall structure was identical, some sections were different considering the role of the addressee. The Infopack for partners and mentors had an extra part with guidelines for mentors; the one designed for the participants included the presentation of partners and mentors plus some tips on how to prepare for the challenge.

Generally speaking, a list of suitable information for the Infopack can be the following:

- thorough description of the MIL’Athon (context of the project, event, topic, challenge and assignment, program, rules of participation, criteria of evaluation, jury, prize);
- presentation of staff and mentors, as mentioned above. A section where the participants present themselves and their motivation to take part in the MIL’Athon can be included. The participants can be presented individually or already divided into teams;
- how to prepare for the challenge, including practical tips and extra resources if needed;
- logistic information on the venue and how to reach it. In case of a transnational event, provide touristic and cultural information as well, such as local transport, places to visit and interesting events/festivals taking place at the same time of the MIL’Athon. Include photos, links, maps, screenshots and QR codes;
- tips on how to pack and what to bring (specific documents, equipment for the challenge, clothes and accessories according to the weather conditions or the facilities available at the venue, etc.);
- tips on how to travel sustainably, if possible;
- small phrasebook with everyday expressions to communicate in the local language, in case of a transnational meeting;
- emergency numbers and/or contact persons (a group chat can be created beforehand).

All of the above can be adapted keeping in mind the MIL’Athon one wishes to organise and the participants involved. Use an eye-catching design and friendly, informal, yet clear and precise language so that all the people taking part are on the same page.

Some Key Points to take into account for your MIL’Athon

After the organization of your event, we recommend you to prepare a feedback questionnaire for your participants. It will help you gather information on the impact of the MIL’Athon and provide insights on how to improve your next events. So far, here are some relevant points you should pay attention to when designing your event:

- for transnational events, make sure that all participants have an adequate English level, so that the communication with staff and mentors and within the team flows smoothly;
- the tools selected for the challenge should be user-friendly and appropriate for the participants' competences. The same can be said about the required equipment (laptop, tablet, smartphone, etc.);
- while forming the teams, keep in mind the abilities and competences of the participants: when possible, create balanced groups;
- the role played by the mentors can be highly valued: make sure that they have an extensive knowledge of the chosen topic and tools, so that they can support the teams at their best;
- the tight deadline for the finalization of the output can be perceived by some as stressful or overwhelming. This aspect can be mitigated by providing sample outputs, sources of inspiration and ready-to-use resources (e.g. copyright free images/sounds libraries) that can allow the groups to focus on some more creative aspects of the work;
- lastly, plan enough ice-breaking and socialization activities over the course of the MIL'Athon, so that the participants can get to know other people besides the members of the team they were assigned to.

Annex

Program – Team Up! MIL’Athon, Lisbon 13th-16th June 2023

| Day | Time | MIL’Athon activity | Partners' activity |
|-----------------------|---------------|--|--------------------|
| Mon. 12 th | All day | Arrival (international participants Erim + Formazione) | |
| Tue. 13 th | 9.00-13.00 | Free time | TPM - ERIM |
| | 14.00-16.00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get-to-know each other activity - ERIM & F.Aziona ● Presentation of the activity and the challenge - F.Aziona ● Narratives on gender - 4Change ● Presentation of Kinemaster - Karpos ● Creation of the teams - F.Aziona ● Team-building through video making - Karpos | |
| Wed. 14 th | 9.00-13.00 | Study visit | |
| | 14.00-18.00 | Teams work on the challenge | |
| | 19.00-20.00 | Networking aperitivo - ERIM & F.Aziona | |
| Thu. 15 th | 9.00-13.00 | Teams work on the challenge | |
| | 14.00-18.00 | Teams work on the challenge | |
| | 19.00 - --- | Teams work on the challenge (optional) | |
| Fri. 16 th | 9.00-13.00 | Teams finalise their video and submit them to the jury | |
| | 13.45-14.00 | MIL Event - Reception of guest and Welcome Coffee | |
| | 14.00 - 18.30 | MIL Event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation of Team Up! Results and Publications ● Team Up! Tool dynamic experimentation ● Ideas to think our media: gender on media ● MIL’Athon results presentation ● Awarding ceremony | |
| | 18.30 | Talks around a snack and aperitivo | |
| Sat. 17 th | All day | Departure | |

Guidelines for the jury and evaluation grid – Team Up! MIL’Athon

| |
|---|
| Guidelines |
| You can view the submitted videos in this folder: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders... |
| Each jury member is asked to evaluate each video according to the grid provided |
| On each page you see the grid for each of the 4 groups, so the 4 videos |
| There are three criteria for evaluating the videos, and each criteria is made of descriptor (see the table) |
| Each descriptor can be assigned a minimum of 1 point and a maximum of 5 points |
| You have the possibility to leave a comment for each criteria |

| Evaluation Grid for the MIL’Athon | | | | |
|--|--|-----------------|----------|-------------|
| Group 1 ⁴ | | | | |
| Criteria | Descriptor | Points assigned | Comments | Calculation |
| Content max 15 points | Clarity of the message and coherence between concept and video | /5 | | /15 |
| | Coherence of the video with the topic assigned | /5 | | |
| | Innovation of the video as compared with existing videos | /5 | | |
| Aesthetics, Style and Design max 20 points | Efficacy of the filming technique adopted | /5 | | /20 |
| | Efficacy of the succession of scenes | /5 | | |
| | Appropriate length | /5 | | |

⁴ Provide the jury a grid for each competing team.

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|----|--------------------|-----|
| | Quality of the final product | /5 | | |
| Impact max 15 points | Efficacy of the message | /5 | | /15 |
| | Coherence of the video structure and language with the target group addressed | /5 | | |
| | Coherence of the video with the social media platform it will be distributed on | /5 | | |
| | | | Total | /50 |
| | | | Bonus point | |
| | | | Bonus total | |

Audience voting form⁵ - Team Up! MIL'Athon

Vote your favourite video!

- Together we can make the change. Women... free to fly
KARMAS
- Losing Game
Hypatia
- Powerful Words
Rainbow
- Is everything about men?
ESPERANZA

⁵ A4 or A5 format are both suitable for the purpose.

Mentors' tasks step by step - Team Up! MIL'Athon

| Day | Time | MIL'Athon activity | Your role |
|-----------------------|---------------|--|--|
| Tue. 13 th | 14.00-15.30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation of the activity and the challenge - F.Azione ▪ Creation of the teams - F.Azione | Participate and get to know the teams |
| | 15.30 - 18.00 | Workshop on producing a one-shot video - Karpos | Participate and support the learning process of MIL'Athon participants |
| | 19.00-20.00 | Ice-breaking and teambuilding - F.Azione | Free participation |
| Wed. 14 th | 9.00-13.00 | Study Visit | Make the most of the study visit and learn together with the participants - your facilitation may be important to help the teams define the specific object of their video |
| | 14.00-18.00 | Teams work on the challenge | Support the teams in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - defining the idea to be developed; - work on the video. N.B. probably at this stage they will only need an external perspective to develop their idea for the video, and make sure that it is actually feasible in the timeframe and for the tools they have at their disposal. |
| | 19.00-20.00 | Networking aperitivo - ERIM & F.Azione | Free participation |
| Thu. 15 th | 9.00-13.00 | Teams work on the challenge | Support the teams in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - defining the idea to be developed (if still necessary); - work on the video. |
| | 14.00-18.00 | Teams work on the challenge | Support the teams working on the video. |
| | 19.00 - --- | Teams work on the challenge (optional) | Free time/ Support the teams working on the video (only if needed). |
| Fri. 16 th | 9.00-13.00 | Teams prepare to present their product | Support the teams in finalising their video and preparing a presentation. |
| | 14.00-18.00 | MIL Event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction and presentation of TEAM UP! Project Results - 4Change ▪ Teams present their products - facilitated by F.Azione ▪ Activity for participants - 4Change Jury evaluates the products - F.Azione ▪ Awarding ceremony | Be supportive and available in case they need further last minute clarifications. Celebrate winners and non-winners :-) |
| | 19.00 - --- | Celebration | Have fun :-) |

Example of the mentors' rotation scheme - Team Up! MIL'Athon

Rotation of the mentors

| | Wednesday - 14.00 - 18.00 | Thursday 9.00 - 13.00 | Thursday 14.00 - 18.00 | Friday 9.00 - 13.00 |
|---------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Group 1 | Sandra & Viorica | Avra | Maria Leonida | Free Rotation |
| Group 2 | Maria Leonida | Yuliya & Jovana | Avra | |
| Group 3 | Yuliya & Avra | Sandra | Jovana & Viorica | |
| Group 4 | Jovana | Maria Leonida & Viorica | Yuliya & Sandra | |

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