



**APPLY LEARNING RESOURCE PACK –  
ONE DAY HACKATHON**

**To be used with Through Enterprise course curriculum**



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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

As trainers and educators, you have access to our Through Enterprise nine module classroom course, an entrepreneurship curriculum and course designed specifically for women from immigrant and ethnic minority backgrounds that builds on a reach and teach foundation.



In the context that to acquire knowledge one of the best ways to learn is by doing, the curriculum and lesson plans will require learners to put their skills to practice in the development of a real-life sustainable enterprise, be it commercial or social enterprise in purpose.

For the best impact, such a project should be identified early on in the course, enabling the project work to run parallel to the classroom components. This will not only increase learning outcomes for each participant but will consolidate the ability of VET educators to boost the integration of women immigrants in their community with wider social cohesion.

Defining a project can be innovatively achieved through adopted an Applied Learning Hackathon format to be used by educators in tandem with the Through Enterprise Curriculum and Learning Framework. The aim of this Applied Learning Resource Pack is to allow you to integrate practical project work in which participants develop sustainable business ideas that have a positive social impact in the region in an enjoyable and dynamic format.

### About the Applied Learning Hackathon

We have chosen an Applied Learning Hackathon format which is inspired by the global hackathon movement and is loosely



based on its principles.

***A hackathon can be any event of any duration where people come together to solve problems (Tauberer, 2014). Hackathons are 24 or 48 hours long events, where people come together to experiment and work on ideas that have the potential to spring into something valuable for the community in a specific area.***

In this context of Through Enterprise, the hackathon format is very relevant. Hackathons are a great project-based, collaborative/peer teaching tool for teaching entrepreneurship. The word "hackathon" comes from both "hack" and "marathon." If you think of a "hack" as a creative solution and "marathon" as a continuous, often competitive event, you're at the heart of what a hackathon is about.

Nothing encourages learners to brainstorm enterprise ideas that solve problems and need a need, form teams, plan projects and develop prototypes like a hackathon. The creativity, teamwork and problem solving unleashed in a short period of time through collaborative projects at hackathons often stimulates participants to engage more deeply in their business development process. While hackathons have gained popularity outside of classroom learning environments, they can also add rich layers of interactions to existing class activities.

Here are some reasons why hackathons are a useful tool for female migrant entrepreneurship education:

- Hackathons are a fun way to foster entrepreneurial spirit - skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, risk-taking, flexibility, creativity and innovation and spotting opportunities, are needed and further developed at hackathons
- Hackathons offer an environment where participants can feel free to experiment and share ideas, a situation that sparks creativity and gets their creative juices flowing. Creative spaces like hackathons help boost "out of the box" thinking.
- Working in groups at the hackathon, individuals are continually sharing their ideas and trying to persuade others to see their reasoning. This is a great experience for business positioning and presenting your business case, which can be vital to unlocking funding and finance. Emerging entrepreneurs must learn the skill of delivering simple yet unforgettable business propositions. Hackathons can help them to practice this.
- During hackathons, participants from various backgrounds gather and form diverse teams. As we are aware, different perspectives enrich the understanding of problems and increase the richness of business ideas. Diverse teams tend to be more resourceful and innovative.
- As hackathon coaches and participants evaluate the business ideas generated, the teams receive a considerable amount of constructive feedback that significantly improves their initial idea. The feedback allows the participants to clarify the scope of their business ideas and improve them. They are thus enhancing the possibility of delivering realistic business ideas.
- Inviting local councils, business chambers or citizens' groups to the hackathons can be a win-win for all parties. These stakeholder groups get access to innovative business ideas and solutions, and while the Through Enterprise participants have the opportunity to work on real problems, get immediate feedback for their ideas and potentially tap into a ready-made target market for their new product/service



## SECTION 2: ONE DAY THROUGH ENTERPRISE HACKATHON FORMAT

### ***What is the Through Enterprise Hackathon?***

The Through Enterprise One Day Hackathon is a day-long additional training event which can augment the delivery of the Through Enterprise classroom curriculum and act as the project development part of the Curriculum. We present a community social challenge of importance to our Through Enterprise women and provide them with a chance to brainstorm innovative solutions.

### ***Types of Hackathon: Community/Social Hackathons***

Hackathons are becoming an increasingly popular tool for enterprise learning participants and community development stakeholders to turn to the community itself for a solution. Here are some sample community problems and some hacked social enterprise solutions:

| Examples of Community Problems:                   | Social Enterprise Solutions:               |
|---|--|
| We need to conserve water                         | Smart water sprinkler system               |
| I can't find our lost pets                        | Online pet portal                          |
| Our homeless shelter doesn't get enough donations | Donation mobile app                        |
| I can't ride my bike safely in my area            | Interactive bike lane app                  |
| The bees are dying                                | Community beehives and hive monitoring app |

In the context of Through Enterprise, you can choose a number of approaches for your hackathon:

- 1. Community/Social Hackathon for Through Enterprise Participants only** – this would involve your Through Enterprise Participants working together in teams to hack a solution to a community problem of their choosing
- 2. Community/Social Hackathon for Through Enterprise Participants, Local Business and wider Community Group Representatives** - this would involve your Through Enterprise Participants working together with Local Business Representatives in teams to hack a solution to a community problem. We favour this approach as it allows the Through Enterprise Participants to engage with new contacts in their wider community, showcase their entrepreneurial and problem-solving skills and also the valuable contribution they can make in their new communities. Having a diverse group of voices in the room brings a natural diversity of thought and ensures all perspectives are viewed and shared, which can lead to a solution that is richer and more meaningful.

For this hackathon, be mindful of the attendees you invite. Be sure to welcome participants from your community that see the value in assisting a new generation of women entrepreneurs from immigrant and ethnic minority backgrounds.

### ***Types of Hackathon: Online Hackathon***

An online challenge is an excellent way of encouraging your learning participants and representatives from the wider community to join in and form multidisciplinary teams. By moving your hackathon to an online platform, you can create a welcoming environment that encourages a greater diversity of profiles with experience from many different fields. The benefits of running an online hackathon may include:

- A bigger audience - online hackathons can help grow awareness beyond your locale



- More time – due to its low/no cost it may be feasible to run your online hackathon for a number of days or sessions
- More polished challenge solutions - If you want participants to create meaningful solutions with a realistic chance of success, or at least seeing significant adoption, then you may need to give enough of time and incentive to do so on nights, weekends, or whenever schedules allow. This will be particularly important when working with a wider cohort of the community and our Through Enterprise participants who may have care commitments.

**TOP TIP: Set up a digital group communication workspace for your online hackathon**



Set up a way for your participants to communicate digitally and stay in during and indeed after the event. Some options are:

- A chat room, like [Slack](#) or a closed a Facebook group
- A shared document space, like Google Docs or [Dropbox Paper](#)
- An email list, like a Google Group

***Deciding on your hackathon format – online or in-person?***

Partaking in an online hackathon may be more difficult for your Through Enterprise prospective entrepreneurs. Educators should be mindful of skills levels before undertaking applied learning hackathons.

Should skills levels be lower, an in-person hackathon may be more appropriate as the participants need to have direct access to a challenge leader/facilitator to assist them and support them as they apply their learning from the Through Enterprise course. The same level of support will be harder to cultivate online. Online hackathons may be more suited to participants who are comfortable with self-teaching, learning independently and working collaboratively with others online.

**SECTION 3: PREPARING FOR THE HACKATHON**

A well-run hackathon involves a series of easily replicated steps, yet each one is a unique experience based on the contributions of participants. The steps which follow are designed to help you to plan and deliver your first hackathon as part of your classroom delivery of the Through Enterprise curriculum.

**Pre-event Step 1: Identifying the Challenge Owners**

Community/Social Hackathon Challenge Owners are usually representatives from local councils, business chambers or citizens' groups. Their work as the challenge owner includes the identification of the challenge problem and a mentorship role to assist with the development and judging of the hacked solutions for the issue currently facing the locality.

The first step when designing and developing a community/social hackathon is to identify and contact these groups. You can use the table below to list your potential challenge owners:

| Person | Contact Details | What their Organisation does? | Possible Challenge |
|--------|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
|        |                 |                               |                    |
|        |                 |                               |                    |
|        |                 |                               |                    |
|        |                 |                               |                    |



Once you have identified your potential challenge owners, kick off your challenge development by holding a "big-think" meeting with these key stakeholders. This isn't necessarily to develop the challenges themselves but to identify areas of interest for critical topics.



**TOP TIP:** When choosing challenge owners to ensure they have the capacity and staff/volunteer numbers to assist with the delivery of the hackathon. Each hackathon team will need to have a challenge owner on it who will help with solution development and provide key problem/challenge insights as required.

## Pre-event Step 2: Defining the Challenge/Hackathon Problem Statement

When it comes to hackathons, a compelling challenge statement is a key to success. A problem statement defines a particular challenge or issue of importance both to the community representative writing it and the participants attending the hackathon. In the context of Through Enterprise, the best challenge statements will be the ones which meet a real need, compel our learners to take action, and inspire a creative solution that could not otherwise be developed. Here are a few best practices on how to write an excellent problem statement:

**Clarity:** The better the challenge statement, the better the experience and the product you will likely end up with at the hackathon. The challenge statement should be clear, actionable and linked to impact.

**Concise communication:** It's helpful to write a one-sentence description (or a short paragraph) for your challenge. Clarity is critical, and this will help you strike a chord with participants who are viewing a lot of different opportunities.

**Context and background:** Every great challenge provides some context to what it is, why it is essential and why the solution matters. Is it a real need? Will the solution be used? Who is involved? Etc.

**Detailed challenge description:** This is where you describe the opportunity in detail.

**One-minute summary video:** Consider working with the challenge owners to use media, such as a short video to showcase the problem and help your Through Enterprise participants/hackathon attendees to understand and connect with it. It should not be too long but still provide something beyond text to describe why the challenge is important and what you are asking for their help.

**Be descriptive, but not prescriptive.** Often times, people write challenge statements with a solution in mind. These are far less inspiring than challenge statements that provide room for the individuals to not only meet the basic requirements, but also innovate beyond what you/the challenge owners had imagined.

## Pre-event Step 3: Find a great facilitator

You need someone who knows your participants, their unique challenges as emerging women entrepreneurs from immigrant and ethnic minority background and can manage a high energy event to achieve the desired outcomes. This facilitator may be the teacher/trainer who delivered the Through Enterprise OER's or someone else in your organization who has good facilitation skills. Here are some of the benefits of a strong hackathon facilitator. They will:



- encourage a collaborative spirit even and help overcome any siloed thinking that may exist among a diverse set of participants.
- encourage and recognize the power of working as one toward the best possible solution.
- have excellent time management skills. In a hackathon you're working on a timed challenge, so you don't have time to linger over issues for very long.
- provide structure and problem-solving solutions for when hackathon teams are arguing over something or are just plain stuck
- keep focus on always be on moving forward and making progress, even if that means only taking small steps forward at times



**TOP TIP:** When choosing a facilitator consider choosing a role model your Through Enterprise participants can identify with. Is there a female entrepreneur or community development champion from a refugee or migrant background who could perform the facilitation role?

## Pre-event Checklist/Planning Template

| Answer these questions to assess your readiness to host your Through Enterprise Hackathon   | Yes/No/Maybe | Action Required |
|---|--------------|-----------------|
| Do you know what is the problem you/the Hackathon participants will be trying to solve? What is the scope of the challenge? How will success be defined?                          |              |                 |
| Do you/the challenge owners have the technology, time, funds, space, facilitators, expertise, physical and/or virtual space, and other partners to host successfully?             |              |                 |
| Will the outcome/solution generate new business or somehow benefit the wider community? Will the event further the entrepreneurial skills of the Through Enterprise participants? |              |                 |
| Whom are you solving a problem for and who will it benefit in the wider community?  |              |                 |
| Do you need to pull in any other sponsors, partners, or community stakeholders to help?   |              |                 |



## SECTION 4: RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL ONE DAY HACKATHON

### *Sample Agenda for Through Enterprise Hackathon*

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>9.00</b>  | <b>Welcome and Registration</b>  |
| <b>9.15</b>  | <b>Hackathon Kick Off</b> – Presentation of the challenge, Introductions to the Challenge Owners/Mentors<br>Formation of Hackathon Teams |
| <b>9.30</b>  | <b>Ideation Phase Begins</b> (applied learning of Through Enterprise Modules 1 and 3)<br>Facilitator introduces the Challenge Canvas     |
| <b>12.00</b> | <b>Lunch</b>   |
| <b>13.00</b> | <b>Development Phase Begins</b> (applied learning of Through Enterprise Modules 5 and 7)<br>Completion of the Challenge Canvas           |
| <b>16.00</b> | <b>Pitch Preparation</b> (applied learning of Through Enterprise Modules 8 and 9)  |

## Key considerations for Successful Hackathon Kick-Off

### *Introducing the Challenge Owners and the Hackathon Problem*

Through Enterprise participants will benefit from keynote talks and mentorship from the Challenge Owners throughout the day. It's key to establish clear judging criteria to influence the process and the outcomes.

Start with a purpose, design the judging criteria to keep everyone on track, and determine—up front—how teams will present their findings at the end. With those three ingredients determined, you'll create an environment where a diverse team can thrive.

### *Forming Hackathon Groups and Breaking the Ice!*

Teams of two to six participants are suggested to work together over the day (or number of days if using online hackathon format) to develop a product, put their entrepreneurial skills to practice and learning how to apply their learning to real life problems and community pain points.

A short team building/icebreaking exercise is a great way to start off your hackathon in a fun, informal way. Here are some great icebreakers you can use in person or online:

| Icebreaker Activity | Would You Rather   |
|---------------------|--|
| Method:             | Group  |
| Materials Needed:   | None   |
| Duration:           | 20 mins  |
| How to do it?       | "Would You Rather" is an excellent, quick, creative thinking ice breaker for the hackathons or event in the workplace. Each person takes a turn to ask and answer a "Would You Rather" question. Here are a few "Would You Rather" questions to get started:<br>Would you rather only have summer or winter for the rest of your life? |



|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>Would you rather go on a hike or see a movie?</p> <p>Would you rather never use social media sites and apps again, or never watch another movie or TV show?</p> <p>Would you rather have a horrible short term memory or a horrible long term memory?</p> |
|--|--|

| Icebreaker Activity | Liar Liar   |
|---------------------|---|
| Method:             | Group   |
| Materials Needed:   | None  |
| Duration:           | 20 mins   |
| How to do it?       | <p>Each person in the room is asked to take turns in telling the group 3 facts about themselves.</p> <p>Two of these facts must be true while one is false.</p> <p>The other participants will have to guess which fact is the lie.</p> |



**TOP TIP:** The short-term nature of a hackathon provides ample opportunity to change course or teams without serious consequences. However, once formed, teams must develop a strategy of what they think they can accomplish and then set about completing as much of their proposal as possible project within the time allotted.

### Cultivation of Ideas

Once the hackathon participants are broken into groups, it is now time to get started on the Ideation Phase. In this phase the hackathon participants get to work on generating innovative solutions to the posed challenge(s). After lunch, they continue to work together with a concrete methodology to transform their exciting proposals into more developed pragmatic solutions.



**TOP TIP:** Business Brainstorm Activities from Through Enterprise Module 1 are very relevant here to help cultivate ideas. Encourage the Through Enterprise participant to select their favourite exercise and implement it with their team (Pain Points Exercise, Business Recycle Activity, What If Activity, Mix and Match Brainstorming Activity, Starburst Activity, Idea Validation Group Exercise –The Six Thinking Hats). You can access this module and the other Through Enterprise Training Resources here: <http://throughenterprise.eu/online-courses/>

BUSINESS PLANNING ACTIVITY

**STARBURST ACTIVITY**  
*Business Idea Brainstorm and qualifying your idea*

**WHO** Who might use it?

**WHAT** What might it be used for or with?

**WHY** Why would people use this product or service?

**WHERE** Where might it be of use?

**WHEN** When might it be used?

**HOW** How might it be supplied?

Allocated Activity Time – 30 mins

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### Facilitating the completion of The Challenge Canvas

The canvas is best when printed on an A3 sheet of paper (at least, or copied onto a bigger board of your choice). During the early stages of challenge definition, the hackathon teams can fold it in half (or just prepare the board with one half of it to be worked on) so that they can focus on the development of their challenge in parts.



# Challenge Canvas

|      |      |           |
|------|------|-----------|
| Team | Date | Iteration |
|------|------|-----------|

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
|  <b>POINT OF VIEW</b>  | <b>IMPACT</b>          |  |  |
|  <b>PROBLEMS</b>   | <b>SOLUTION IDEAS</b>  |  |  |
|  <b>TO EXPLORE</b>   | <b>KEY PLAYERS</b>     |  |  |
|  <b>BARRIERS</b>   | <b>AMPLIFIERS</b>    |  |  |
| <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">  <b>HOW MIGHT WE...</b> <br/><br/>                 _____<br/> <i>verb</i> <br/><br/>                 _____<br/> <i>object</i> <br/><br/>                 _____<br/> <i>context</i> <br/><br/>                 _____<br/> <i>restriction</i> <br/><br/>                 ...?             </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <b>NARRATIVE</b>  </td> </tr> </table> |   |  <b>HOW MIGHT WE...</b><br><br>_____<br><i>verb</i><br><br>_____<br><i>object</i><br><br>_____<br><i>context</i><br><br>_____<br><i>restriction</i><br><br>...? | <b>NARRATIVE</b>  |
|  <b>HOW MIGHT WE...</b><br><br>_____<br><i>verb</i><br><br>_____<br><i>object</i><br><br>_____<br><i>context</i><br><br>_____<br><i>restriction</i><br><br>...?  | <b>NARRATIVE</b>     |  |  |





Here are some key trigger questions for the facilitator to pose with regard to the Challenge Canvas:

### ***Knowledge of the problem – the first 6 blocks***

The first part relates to the knowledge of the problem and early ideas

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>1 Point of View</b>  | Who holds the insights of the problem? (this is the Why).<br>Who is the customer or who in the community does this problem affect? (this is the Who).<br>What does the hackathon team need to resolve? (this is the What).               |
| <b>2 Impact</b>         | What is the hackathon teams' achievable goal?<br>Which metrics will show their progress today or in the near future?   |
| <b>3 Problems</b>       | Which are the unmet needs of the customers or community?<br>How big is this market/how many people does this problem affect?   |
| <b>4 Solution ideas</b> | Could any current solutions be of use? Are their solutions already in place that just need improvement?<br><br>What are the hackathon teams first ideas for new solutions? (Remember: they shouldn't jump to conclusions at this point!) |
| <b>5 To Explore:</b>    | What does the hackathon team need to learn in order to move forward?<br><br>Who do they need talk to? Can the challenge owner assist? What about other members of the community?   |
| <b>6 Key Players</b>    | Who are the key stakeholders that need to be involved?   |

### ***Context and explanation – the last 4 blocks***

The second part is related to the context and explanation of the challenge:

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>7 Barriers</b>              | What is working against the team and their solution?<br>How can it be overcome?   |
| <b>8 Amplifiers</b>            | What is working for them?<br>What are the synergies? And how can their progress be amplified?   |
| <b>9 How-Might-We question</b> | This is the synthesis of the challenge. How we might + verb + object + context + restriction(s)   |
| <b>10 Narrative</b>            | What is the pitch for this challenge? Synthesize why the problem exists, why it is important to solve, who will benefit from it, why now, and the next steps. |



Here is a useful example of the "How might we" question in practice:



Source: <https://vimeo.com/102964749>

**KEY RESOURCE:** Download the Challenge Canvas

[Download it in PDF, PNG, or Google Slides format here](#)



**TOP TIP:** When choosing a facilitator consider choosing a role model your Through Enterprise participants can identify with. Is there a female entrepreneur or community development champion from a refugee or migrant background who could perform the facilitation role?

## Key considerations for The Presenting/Pitching Ideas Phase

The project "wrap-up" phase amps up the motivation and emotions while at the same time turns the focus towards presenting a finished project to the other attendees and judges. Each team takes a few minutes to describe the problem they have addressed, their plan of action and the results of their project.

Once each team has made their short presentation, the judges typically confer in private in order to sort out their top picks. While a one-day hackathon might result in hand drawn sketches of concepts, targets, processes and resource requirements, an online hackathon over the course of the week might feature a working prototype or a mini- trial of the solution in practice.

### ***Key Points to Note on the Hackathon Solutions***

Some hackathons end with a fully viable solution. Others might not, and that's okay! The collective ideas and concepts that you're left with can still be used to build great things after the hackathon.

### ***Choosing the Winning Solution***

At the end of the project phase, choose a leading figure or a panel of 4-7 'celebrity' judges (e.g. prominent entrepreneurs, journalists, local funders or investors and other industry thought or community leaders) to judge the hackathon teams and their solutions.



### Sample judging criteria:

| Criteria               | Weight | Value        |
|------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Value to the community | 40%    | From 0 to 10 |
| Innovation             | 40%    | From 0 to 10 |
| Sustainability         | 20%    | From 0 to 10 |



**TOP TIP:** Be sure to invite judges with a broad range of backgrounds. This is key to building an inclusive and welcoming event and learning experience for all.

### Winners and Awards

Best hackathon practice would be to have a wide variety of prizes. Consider creating prizes for best design, most useful, funniest, or other categories that do not require great technical experience.



**TOP TIP:** Awards Presentations

Once winners have been determined, it's important to treat the non-winners with as much gratitude as the winners. At minimum, all non-winning participants should get a personalized response thanking them for their contribution to your community and their work to solve the problem. Winners should be congratulated on their accomplishment and made aware of the next steps to making their solution a reality if possible. The main aim is for everyone to feel good about their experience, whether or not they won.

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