

Champion Specification

What is a CoderDojo Champion?

A [champion] (LINK) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wu8Y1473A4>) is volunteer who takes charge of setting up, running and maintaining a Dojo and following the CoderDojo Ethos (please see our CoderDojo Ethos document for more information.)

Champions do not have to be technical, but should possess the skills required to bring together mentors and supporters and to arrange a space to run the Dojo. To register as a Champion and get in touch with us about the first steps of the process please see [here](<https://docs.google.com/a/hwf.io/forms/d/1feHIF22k9pjjPSiYVTubWFWNkdMIVTW4Z7OKBUIhhFs/viewform>).

What are the main steps to setting up a Dojo?

Step 1: Become a Champion! Please [register your interest here](<http://coderdojo.com/start>) and a member of the Foundation team will get back to you with information on the next steps of the process.

Step 2: Gather your team

Step 3: Find a venue

Step 4: Plan and promote your Dojo

Step 5: Register on Zen and create a listing for your Dojo

For more information please see: <http://www.coderdojo.com/start/>

Gathering a Team

Why do I need a team?

For a CoderDojo to succeed, it's a team effort! You are the Champion and if you try to do it all yourself **you will burn out.** For the first few sessions it is useful to get some regular Mentors with basic technical knowledge, who can assist in simple tasks like installing a text editor.

You do not need to have a big team but it is always better to have support from a core team when organising a Dojo. Find interested local technical volunteers to mentor, find parents who can help out and volunteer when they bring their children etc. You can then have planning meetings with your team in advance of setting up your Dojo.

Mentors

A mentor is a technically skilled individual who guides Dojo attendees and facilitates their learning. Mentors are usually professional computer programmers who want to give back to their communities and share their skills. Mentors usually have a preferred area or expertise within which they like to work (eg. HTML, Python etc.).

What is taught at your Dojo will depend greatly on the skills of the mentors who attend.

You can see our Mentor Guide

[here](https://speakerdeck.com/helloworldfoundation/coderdojo-mentor-guide), it could be a great tool for helping you gather some local mentors. You can find some advice on gathering a team of mentors and volunteers

[here.](http://kata.coderdojo.com/wiki/Mentors_and_Volunteers)

Volunteers

Not all of those who help out at your Dojo need to be professional programmers. If people are interested in helping out there is lots that they can do ranging from administrative tasks like registration to helping to keep a watchful eye on young people to making tea for mentors on the day. Volunteers can even be shown the basics, such as an intro to Scratch, and then can even graduate to being a mentor based on what they've learned.

Parents

As CoderDojo founder Bill Liao often says, "CoderDojo is free, but it's not a free ride!"

Parents/Guardians are usually asked to stay for the duration of the Dojo with the young people and while there they are encouraged to help out in anyway they can. If they don't have any programming or technical skills parents are encouraged to help out doing other tasks such as managing the registration system, check in, social media or even local outreach.

Venue

Types of Venue

Dojo's cannot be hosted in private residences, they **must be in a public space** such as a library, business, canteen, school or community centres. We recommend that the young people attending bring their own laptops so the venue should have, at least, plug sockets for laptops, internet access and tables and chairs for the attendees.

Insurance

Occasionally it has come about that Dojos have to arrange insurance for their venues to cover the sessions, please consult the venues legal department for advice on ages and insurance requirements for children as they vary. As CoderDojo must remain free to all attendees and their parents there are a number of suggestions for raising funds for your Dojo if it is needed for expenses such as insurance costs. If you wish for more information on this please see our Fundraising Guidelines and Suggestions.

How much is insurance?

Insurance varies depending on locations. In Ireland an annual insurance policy is in the region of €250 per annum.

What facilities/equipment do I need to start a Dojo?

On a basic level for a Dojo to run there should be:

- Wireless Internet
- Power strips
- Projector (not necessary but useful!)
- It is recommended that attendees bring their own laptops, or borrow one from a family member.

Planning

Dojo Dates, Regularity and Registration

Most Dojos run once a week/twice a month while closing for school holiday periods.

Some Dojos only run quarterly or are even once off events.

We recommend deciding on a regular time and date for your Dojo to ensure consistency.

Most Dojos set up and use Eventbrite for their Dojo to manage registration and date planning. You can see Eventbrite [here.] (<http://www.eventbrite.com/>)

Social Media and Website

We recommend setting up an email address and Twitter account specifically for your Dojo to deal with queries and promote your Dojo. If it possible we also recommend setting up a website for your Dojo where you can deal with your own registration, mentor recruitment etc. It is possible as well to use a simple free blog tool such as

[Wordpress](<http://wordpress.com/>) which will host your content and provide you with a domain.

Dojo Team Planning Meeting

It is advisable, once you have gathered a team, to arrange a meeting where you discuss and plan the future dates for your Dojo, the content you are going to cover and generally get prepared for your first session. It is advisable to have an agenda for the meeting so that all relevant points get covered.

Resources

Please see Kata, the CoderDojo community wiki, for advice on, and examples of, what topics to cover in Dojos and learning resources and tutorials. You can see Kata at <http://kata.coderdojo.com/>.

Zen

What is Zen?

Zen is the global Dojo database. Here you can see the map of Global Dojos and their Zen, listings, search for nearby Dojos and create a listing for your new Dojo.

Registering on Zen

Before registering on Zen you must register your interest as a CoderDojo Champion. Please see [here](<http://coderdojo.com/start/>) to register.

Once you have registered your interest as a new Champion, found a team and a venue and are in planning stages then please register and create a listing for your Dojo on Zen.

To do so:

1. Register an account on Zen at <http://zen.coderdojo.com/>
2. Login to Zen.
3. Click the “Create a Dojo” tab on the navigation bar.

Once you submit your listing it will be reviewed by a member of the CoderDojo Foundation team

before being verified. Please be patient if there is a delay in verification as we have a large number of new Dojos everyday and a small team to deal with your requests.

Child protection/background checks

Do Champions, mentors and volunteers need to get background checks?

As the CoderDojo network is so broad and covers many jurisdictions (46 countries and counting!) there is currently no universal Child Protection guidelines that we can offer. We will be releasing a Child Protection 101 document which aims to be of value in advising on best practice for child protection as a part of Recommended Practice.

It is advised for Dojo Champions to be aware of child protection and background checking legislation in their local area. It is best practice for all Dojos to be aware of, and adhere to their regional Child Protection legislation. It is also suggested that children should be joined by a parent. Parents are encouraged to get involved and help out at Dojos as volunteers.

Is there a child protection policy I can use?

We are currently developing a child protection policy that will be applicable across the entire global network of Dojos.

Stay connected:

Newsletter

We have a mailing list and recommend you sign up to it in order to keep up to date with all the Coderdojo news. To sign-up please visit the [Newsletter](#) page on our website.

Twitter

You can connect to us on Twitter here: <https://twitter.com/CoderDojo> If you have a upcoming Dojo you can use #DojoDate or if you have pictures of your Dojo in action please share with #DojoPics and we will RT!

Facebook

You can also like us on Facebook for CoderDojo news: <https://www.facebook.com/CoderDojo>

Funding and sponsorship:

Can a Dojo raise money?

Yes, Dojos are able to fundraise on the condition that it is made explicit that you do so for your Dojo or as a group of Dojos under a group name (EG Dojos of California). No individuals can personally profit from the CoderDojo, any inappropriate fundraising is a breach of the CoderDojo Charter.

How do most Dojos raise money to cover costs?

We recommend that Dojos try to operate from in-kind donations of space, equipment to eliminate costs from local businesses and organisations. Some Dojos, seek out or are offered sponsorship from companies and organisations.

In many cases a Dojo will need to have charitable status/501c3 to accept donations from corporates. For this reason we recommend you ask the corporate to pay for the directly incurred cost i.e insurance premium

Can we charge for classes?

No. A Dojo must always remain free and open to all. Any breach of this goes against the CoderDojo ethos and is a breach of the CoderDojo Charter.

Is there funding available for Dojos in low income areas?

At this time the CoderDojo Foundation is not in a position to give donations to Dojos in low income areas. All Dojos are autonomous groups and providing grants can create a dependency on the Foundation

How can I handle donations?

If your Dojo is the receipt of financial sponsorship we recommend forming a committee and opening a bank account to process the donation.

Can I open a bank account?

Yes. We recommend forming a committee who decides on what expenses are permitted.

Do you provide laptops?

No. From time to time the Foundation may receive hardware donations. In these

circumstances we identify Dojos in underserved areas to pass the donation on to.

In Ireland we have a partnership with Camara who can provide low cost laptops to Irish Dojos. Contact laptops@coderdojo.com for more information.

Support for Champions:

What supports are in place to help start up Dojos?

There are numerous support systems in place to help Dojos get up and running and to support them as they run their regular session.

Support Desk

The CoderDojo Foundation support desk staff are constantly monitoring new Champion registrations and Zen verification requests and speaking directly with new Champions setting up and Dojo Champions who are up and running as well as dealing with all general requests and queries. If you wish to contact our support team at any time please email info@coderdojo.org and we will help you as best we can.

CoderDojo Organisers Group

If you are running a Dojo or in the process of setting one up you can join the CoderDojo organisers Google group. Here you will be able to engage in discussion with Dojo organisers from all over the world.

You can apply to join the Google group

[here](<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/coderdojo-org>). Please use a personal Display Name and Email (NOT your Dojo name or email) when requesting to join and provide a little information about yourself and your Dojo.

Kata

Kata is the Coderdojo community wiki where you can find learning resources, non English language resources (eg. KatalItalia), instructions for organising a Dojo and advice from CoderDojo organisers and mentors around the world. You can see Kata at <http://kata.coderdojo.com/>

Community Calls

We currently run regular monthly CoderDojo Community Calls, one for US Dojos and one for EU Dojos where organisers can get together and have a chat about what is We hope to organise Australia/Asia community calls soon. For more information on our regular community calls please see [here](http://kata.coderdojo.com/wiki/Community_Calls).

If you have any queries not resolved by the information above then please feel free to see our FAQ. If you wish please feel free to contact a member of the Foundation team at info@coderdojo.org for assistance.

Intended for RP Pilot Participants

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