

There have been a number of hackathons devoted to improving government, and specifically to the cause of open government.[37] One such event, in 2011, was hosted by the United States Congress.[38] Starting in 2012, NASA has been annually hosting the International Space Apps Challenge.

In 2014, the British government and HackerNest ran DementiaHack,[39] the world's first hackathon dedicated to improving the lives of people living with dementia and their caregivers.[40][41] The series continues in 2015, adding the Canadian government and Facebook as major sponsors.[42]

The judging panel (seated, left) at DementiaHack asking questions of a team that just demoed their project (standing, right).

NHS England benefit from a community of supporters running regular hackdays.[43] These are planned 3 times a year are held in a variety of locations including London, Cardiff, Manchester, Oxford, Leeds and Cambridge. The first NHS Hackday was held in London on May 26, 2012.

With over 6,000 registrations in their first year, HackingEDU's hackathon, held in San Mateo, California, is the world's largest education hackathon by attendance on October 23, 2015.[44] The event is run by a non-profit organization whose mission is to "inspire the next generation of students to solve the problems that plague our education system." [45]

The Global Game Jam, the largest video game development hackathon,[46] often includes optional requirements called 'diversifiers'[47] that aim to promote game accessibility and other causes.[48] [49]

Various hackathons have been held to improve city transit systems.[50] Hackathons aimed at improvements to city local services are increasing, with one of the London Councils (Hackney) creating a number of successful local solutions on a 2 Day Hackney-thon [51] There have also been a number of hackathons devoted to improving education, including Education Hack Day[52] and on a smaller scale, looking specifically at the challenges of field work based geography education, the Field Studies Council[53] hosted FSCHackday.[54] Random Hacks of Kindness is another popular hackathon, devoted to disaster management and crisis response.[55]

Hackathons have also been held to benefit nonprofit organizations with their technology and website needs. For example, Florida DrupalCamp's Coding with a Cause, Chennai based non-profit Code 4 Cause,[56] and Droplabs' Coders with a Cause [57] events both benefit local nonprofits.

Hack for Big Choices is an organization that organizes hackathons around the world in order to come up with solutions to local problems. Among the hackathons they have co-organized was the largest hackathon ever held in Africa, which took place in Accra on February 20–22, 2015; it gathered 215 hackers and more than 400 attendees.