

# HOW TO THROW A HACKATHON

@ShyRuparel

NYCWiC | April 8th 2016

[Github.com/Shy/talks](https://github.com/Shy/talks)



**SHY**  
eSHYRUPAREL

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER**  
**MAJOR LEAGUE HACKING**



MLH



# MAJOR LEAGUE HACKING

POWERED BY



**WHAT IS A  
HACKATHON?**

# **HACKATHON = INVENTION + MARATHON**

The word hackathon is a portmanteau of the words hack and marathon, where hack is used in the sense of playful, exploratory programming, not its alternate meaning as a reference to computer crime.

— *Wikipedia*



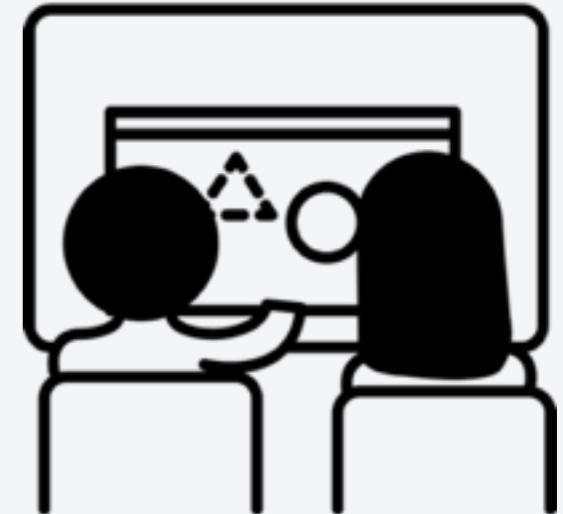
## FRIDAY

Students arrive by bus, train, and plane. They pitch ideas and form teams organically and get straight to work on bringing their ideas to life.



## SATURDAY

They spend the next 24-36 hours intensely focused on building and designing their hack projects. There are breaks for meals and fun mini-events.



## SUNDAY

Students demo projects science-fair style. The top hacks demo on stage in front of the audience and a panel of judges to determine a winner.

# EXPERT MENTORS



I wish I could have attended hackathons as a student. As a mentor, I'm glad I can help the next generation of programmers discover their passions, learn new skills, try out concepts they have learned in class, and build real applications that real people can interact with.

— John Britton (GitHub Education Lead)

# SCIENCE-FAIR STYLE EXPOS



**WHAT DOES A  
HACKATHON LOOK LIKE?**



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# **HOW POPULAR ARE HACKATHONS?**

# **EXTREMELY**

and still growing



### TunaHack

AUGUST 7TH - 9TH  
SAN LUIS POTOSI, SLP



### PennApps

SEPTEMBER 4TH - 6TH  
PHILADELPHIA, PA



### HopHacks

SEPTEMBER 11TH - 13TH  
BALTIMORE, MD



### MHacks

SEPTEMBER 11TH - 13TH  
ANN ARBOR, MI



### IC Hack

FEBRUARY 7TH - 8TH  
LONDON, UK



### FebJam

FEBRUARY 19TH - 20TH  
HUDDERSFIELD, UK



### StacsHack

FEBRUARY 21ST - 22ND  
ST ANDREWS, UK



### HackLondon

FEBRUARY 28TH - MARCH 1ST  
LONDON, UK



### WeCanCode Ensenada

SEPTEMBER 11TH - 12TH  
ENSENADA, MX



### RamHacks

SEPTEMBER 12TH - 13TH  
RICHMOND, VA



### WeCanCode Tijuana

SEPTEMBER 12TH  
TIJUANA, MX



### BigRed//Hacks

SEPTEMBER 18TH - 20TH  
ITHACA, NY



### KHacks

FEBRUARY 28TH - MARCH 1ST  
BARCELONA, SPAIN



### WarwickHACK 2.0

MARCH 7TH - 8TH  
WARWICK, UK



### Hack The Burgh

MARCH 14TH - 15TH  
EDINBURGH, UK



### AnvilHack

MARCH 21ST - 22ND  
LONDON, UK



### HackTheNorth

SEPTEMBER 18TH - 20TH  
WATERLOO, ON



### WUHack

SEPTEMBER 18TH - 20TH  
ST. LOUIS, MO



### HackPR

SEPTEMBER 19TH - 20TH  
MAYAGÜEZ, PUERTO RICO



### HackGT

SEPTEMBER 25TH - 27TH  
ATLANTA, GA



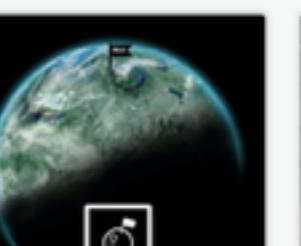
### BrumHack 2.0

MARCH 28TH - 29TH  
BIRMINGHAM, UK



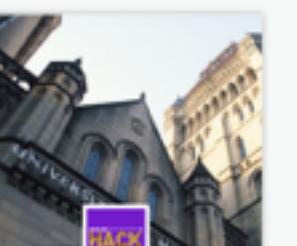
### HackDee

APRIL 4TH - 5TH  
DUNDEE, UK



### Landing Hack

APRIL 11TH - 12TH  
LONDON, UK



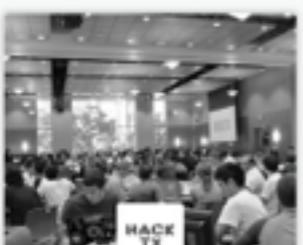
### Great Uni Hack

APRIL 17TH - 19TH  
MANCHESTER, UK



### hackNY

SEPTEMBER 26TH - 27TH  
NEW YORK, NY



### HackTX

SEPTEMBER 26TH - 27TH  
AUSTIN, TX



### Huskie Hack

SEPTEMBER 26TH - 27TH  
DEKALB, IL



### MavHack

OCTOBER 2ND - 3RD  
ARLINGTON, TX



### RGUHack

APRIL 18TH - 19TH  
ABERDEEN, UK



### Apps For Students

APRIL 25TH - 26TH  
LEUVEN, BELGIUM



### DragonHack

MAY 16TH - 17TH  
LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA



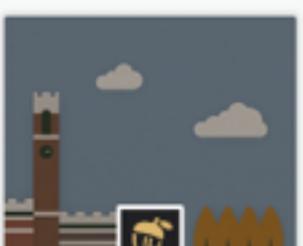
### WearHacks Paris

MAY 22ND - 24TH  
PARIS, FRANCE



### SDHacks

OCTOBER 2ND - 4TH  
SAN DIEGO, CA



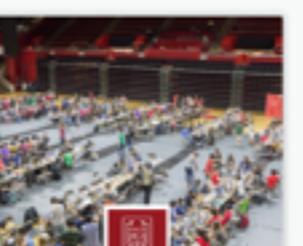
### VandyHacks

OCTOBER 2ND - 4TH  
NASHVILLE, TN



### HackDartmouth

OCTOBER 3RD - 4TH  
HANOVER, NH



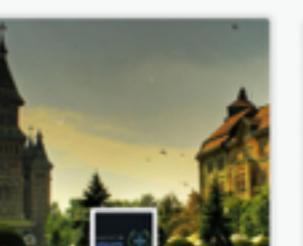
### HackRU

OCTOBER 3RD - 4TH  
NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ



### HackCypres

JUNE 26TH - 28TH  
NICOSIA, CYPRUS



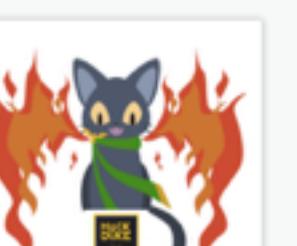
### HackTM eHealth

JUNE 27TH - 28TH  
TIMISOARA, ROMANIA



### hackUstate

NOVEMBER 6TH - 7TH  
LOGAN, UT



### HackDuke

NOVEMBER 7TH - 8TH  
DURHAM, NC

# 2015

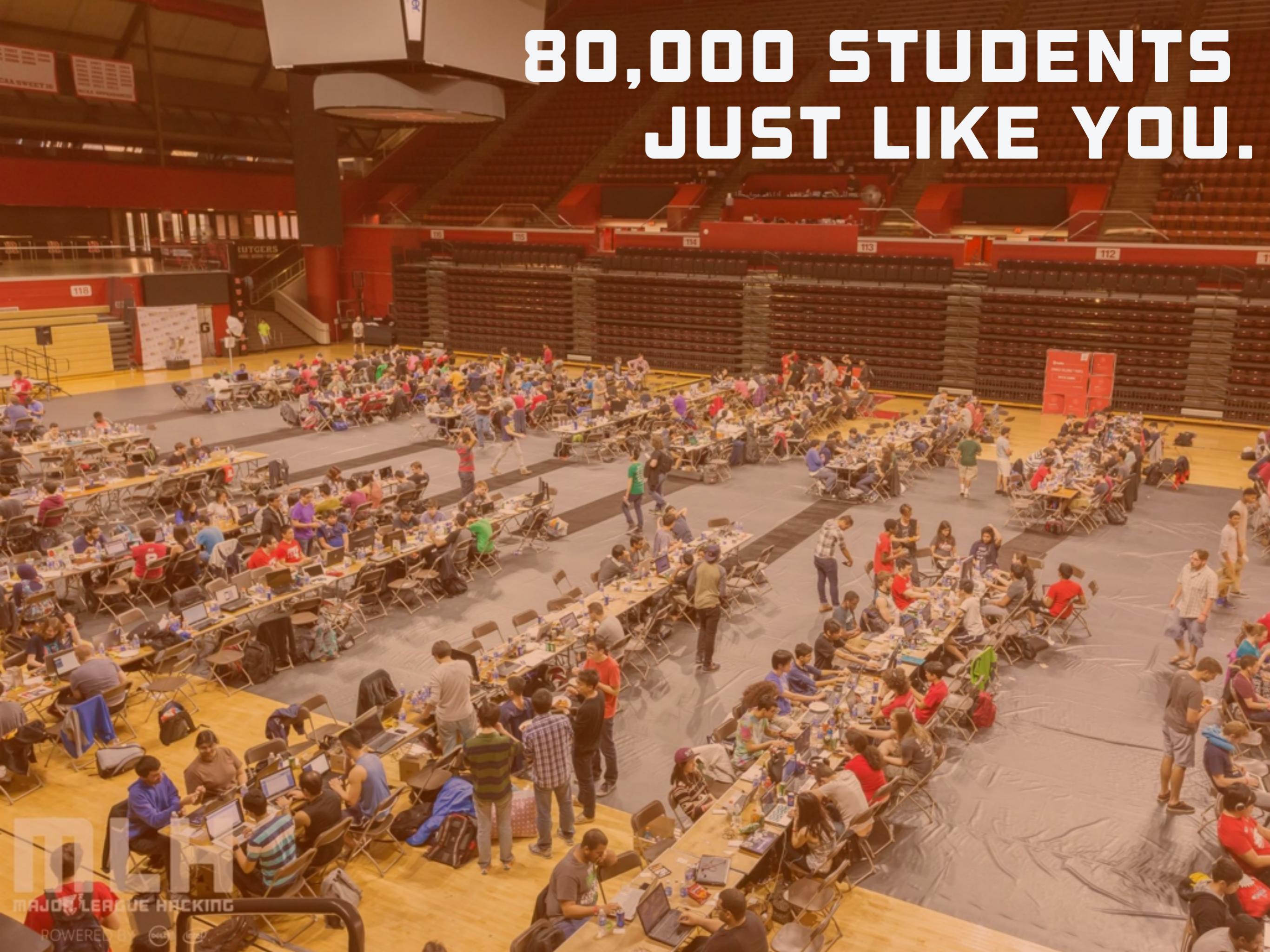


**MLH**

200+

Major League Hacking Member Events in 2016

# 80,000 STUDENTS JUST LIKE YOU.



**10,000+**

**IDEAS BROUGHT TO LIFE**

# THE SPONSORS

The world's top brands participate as sponsors at our hackathons.

Many sponsors send mentors and recruiters.



**GitHub**



**Bloomberg**



**venmo**



**facebook.**

**LEAP  
MOTION**

**COMCAST**



**Atlassian**



**LinkedIn**

**Google**

**△ DELTA**

**salesforce**

**H E A R S T**

**pebble**

**Morgan Stanley**



**BrainTree**

**coinbase**



**YAHOO!**

**T E S L A**

**MLH**

# WHY SHOULD YOU ORGANIZE A HACKATHON?



# SKILLS ORGANIZERS LEARN

Student organizers gain experience planning a large scale event and collaborating with many stakeholders.



**MANAGING AND  
PARTICIPATING  
ON A TEAM**



**MANAGING  
FINANCES**



**INTERACTING WITH  
CORPORATIONS ON A  
PROFESSIONAL LEVEL**



**FUNDRAISING**



**EVENT PLANNING  
AND LOGISTICS**



**MARKETING**

# HOW TO THROW A HACKATHON

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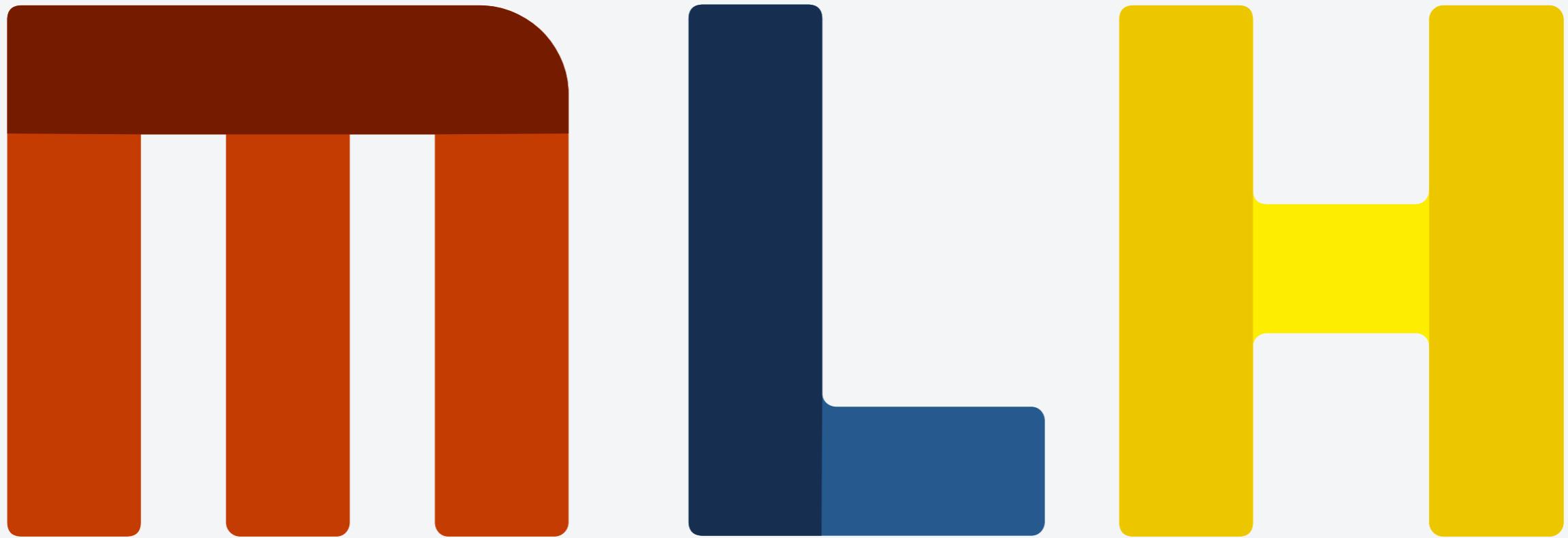
NYCWiC | April 8th 2016

*let's talk about...*

# HACKATHON PLANNING

*Organizing a Hackathon is*

# NOT EASY



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**HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE  
TO PLAN A HACKATHON?**



**MOST HACKATHONS  
ARE PLANNED  
IN 4-9 MONTHS**

# TIMELINE



# TIMELINE

**4-9 Months Out**

4 Months Out

2 Months Out

1 Month Out

1 Week Out

Pre Hackathon

Opening Cermonies

During Hacking

Judging

Event Closing

Post Event

*Finding a*

# VENUE



*Types of*

# HACKER SPACES

# LARGE ROOM



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# SMALLER ROOMS



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**WIFI**



**4**  
**HACKWARE**  
**DEVICES PER ATTENDEE**

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# POWER



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A young woman with long dark hair and glasses is standing in front of a green screen. She is wearing a black t-shirt with a colorful floral graphic on it. She is making a peace sign with her right hand. The background is a solid green color.

**2.5 OUTLETS  
PER HACKER**

# TABLES

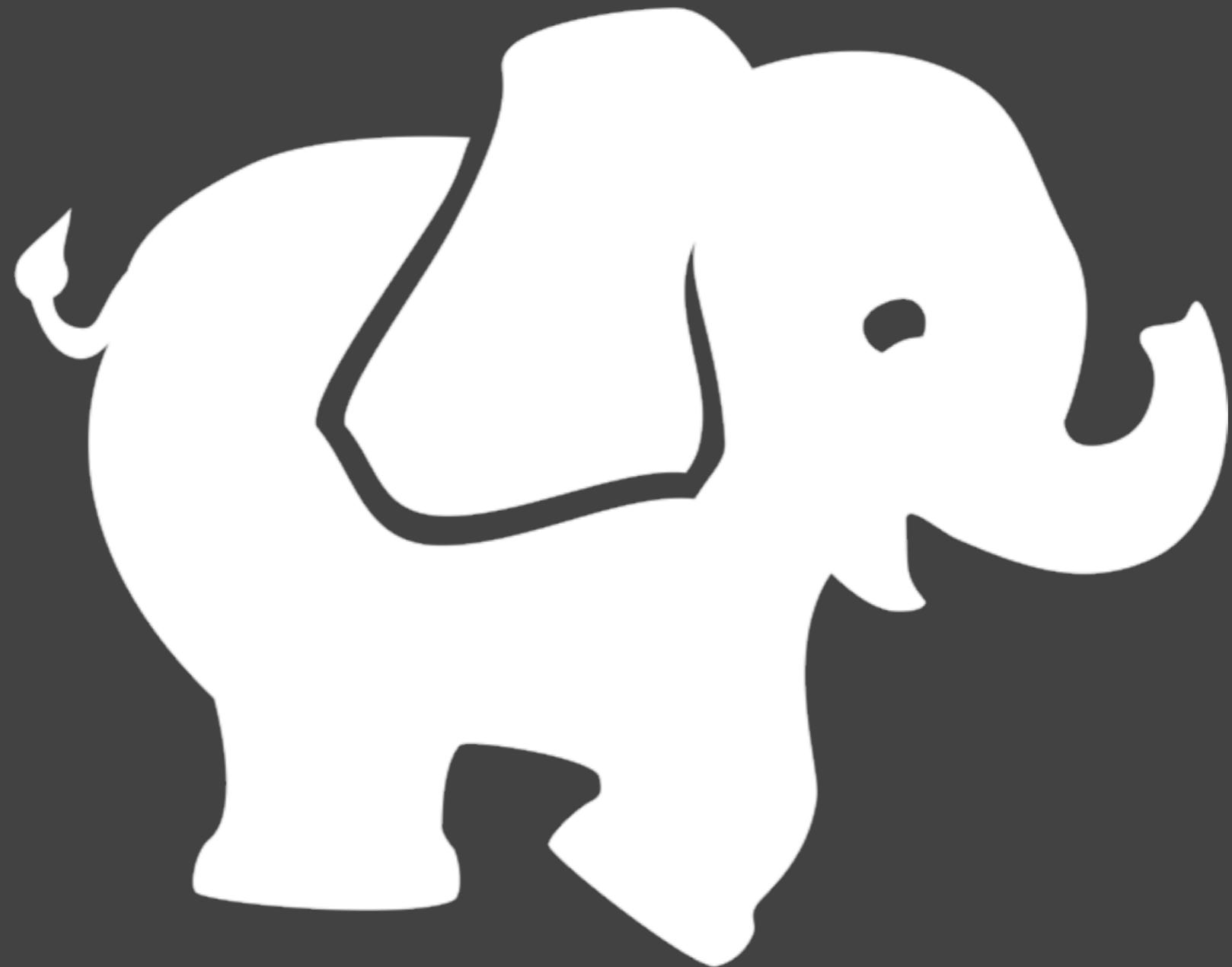


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# AUDIO/VISUAL



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# COST



# TIMELINE

4-9 Months Out

**4 Months Out**

2 Months Out

1 Month Out

1 Week Out

Pre Hackathon

Opening Cermonies

During Hacking

Judging

Event Closing

Post Event

# FINALIZE YOUR TEAM

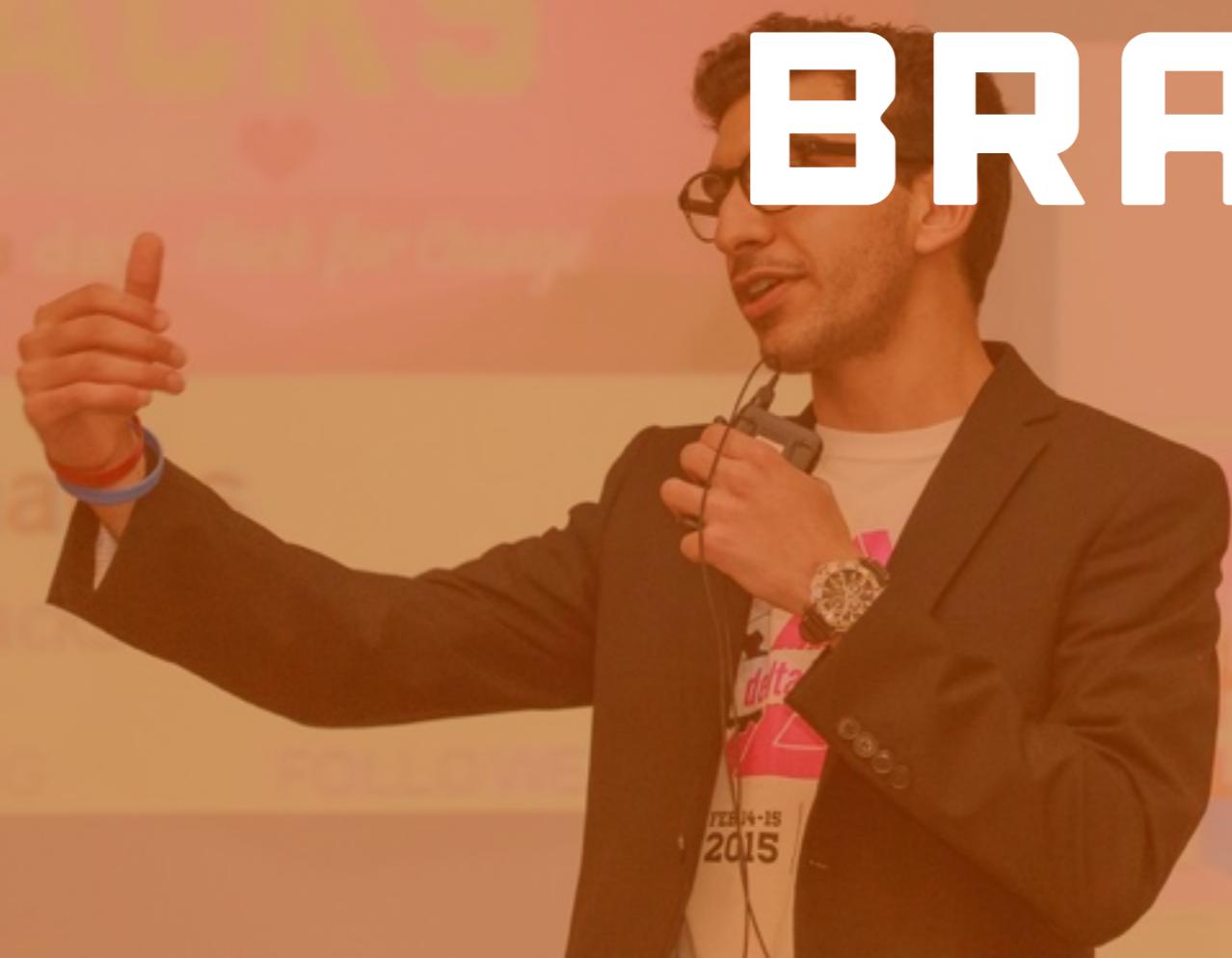


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# Social Media

om/deltaHacks

## ESTABLISH A BRAND



This valentine's day  
DeltaHacks  
Computers/Technology

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# START WORKING ON SPONSORSHIP



linode



IBM Bluemix™



QUOTIDIAN  
VENTURES



▶ heywatch

a16z  
ANDREW LERNER

BuzzFee



COLUMBIA ENGINEERING

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STUDENT LEAGUE HYPE

@hackNY

hackny-32015.challengepost.com

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*Sponsorship*

**IS HARD**

# TIMELINE

4-9 Months Out

4 Months Out

**2 Months Out**

1 Month Out

1 Week Out

Pre Hackathon

Opening Cermonies

During Hacking

Judging

Event Closing

Post Event

*Start your*

# PROMOTION

CodeRED

Room

2

*line Up*

# PRIZES

*Find*

**MENTORS,**

**JUDGES,**

**AND**

**VOLUNTEERS**

**MLH**

*Source your*

# WORKSHOPS

# PROS/CONS

# PROS/CONS

# **PROS/CONS**

launch

# REGISTRATION



LOCAL  
**HACK**  
DAY

Unite your community for the most Global Local Hackathon of the year.

Local Hack Day brings together the students at your school for **twelve hours** of learning, community, and building.

October 10, 2015 • Everywhere, Worldwide

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

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# TIMELINE

4-9 Months Out

4 Months Out

2 Months Out

**1 Month Out**

1 Week Out

Pre Hackathon

Opening Cermonies

During Hacking

Judging

Event Closing

Post Event

*Establish a*

**HEADCOUNT**

**LETS TALK ABOUT  
ATTRITION**

*Schedule*

# TRANSPORT





Order

SWAG

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Order  
FOOD

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**CATERING  
VS.  
LOCAL  
RESTAURANTS**

A photograph of a group of people in what appears to be a backstage or preparation area. In the foreground, a person with long dark hair and glasses is looking down at a bright orange smartphone held in their hands. They are wearing a dark zip-up hoodie. Behind them, another person with glasses and a light-colored shirt is visible, looking towards the camera. In the background, other people are partially visible, some wearing headphones. The lighting is warm and somewhat dim.

*Release a*

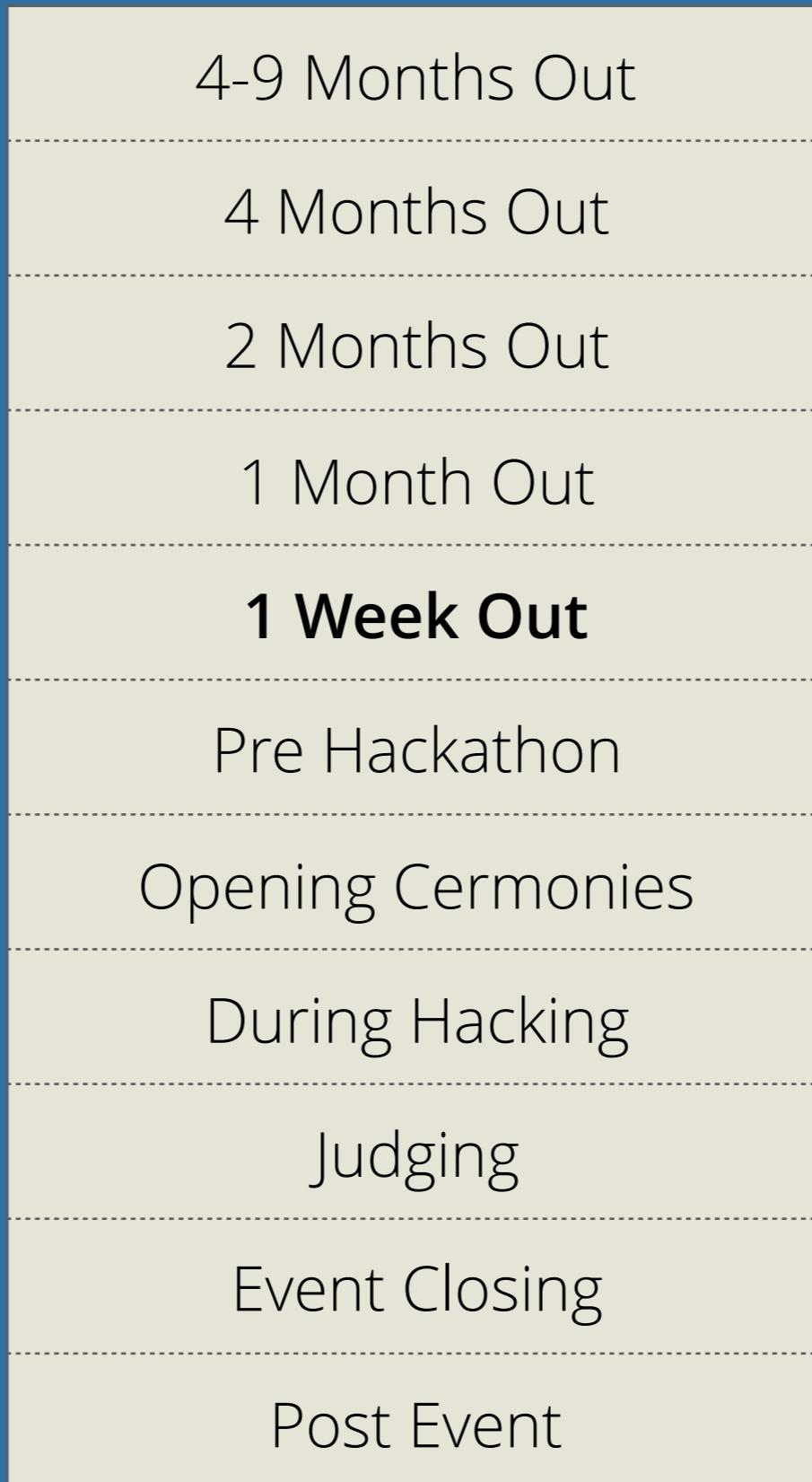
# SCHEDULE

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*Planning for an*

# **EMERGENCY**

# TIMELINE



*Send*

# REMINDERS

# OVER-COMMUNICATE





Prepare your

# VOLUNTEERS

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*Buy*  
**SNACKS**

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*Create a*

**RUN OF SHOW**

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# RUN OF SHOW

Hackcon III - Run of Show star file

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help All changes saved in Drive shy@majorleaguehacking.com Comments Share

Print Back Forward Find \$ % 0.00 123 Arial 10 B C D E F

1	Date	Time	Type	Owner	Action	Notes
5	Thursday	11:51 AM	Internal	Swift	Arrive at SFO	
6	Thursday	12:15 PM	Internal	NQ, Swift, Jon	Nick picks Jon and Swift up at Airport, with Stickers	
7	Thursday	1:00 PM	Internal	NQ, Swift, Jon	Meet with Valerie for walkthrough of the Computer History Museum	
8	Thursday	2:00 PM	Internal	NQ, Swift, Jon	Visit Github HQ	
9	Thursday	2:45 PM	Internal	NQ, Swift, Jon	Meet with Marie for room assignments and keys, confirm checkin logistics, confirm wake up calls	Marie: 415-269-0713
10	Thursday	2:53 PM	Internal	Tim	Arrive at SFO	
11	Thursday	3:00 PM	Internal	NQ, Swift, Jon	Visit Galvanize	
12	Thursday	3:08 PM	Internal	Niko	Arrive at SFO	
13	Thursday	4:15 PM	Internal	Hamer, Jared, Carl	Arrive at SFO	
14	Thursday	7:00 PM	Internal	Hamer	Pickup printing from FedEx (Signs + Liability Waivers + Schedule)	Need to order printing from FedEx near
15	Thursday	7:06 PM	Internal	Shy	Arrive at SFO	
16	Thursday	8:00 PM	Internal	NQ, Swift, Jon, Shy, Hamer, Niko, Tim, Jared, Carl	Team Dinner	Need reservation
17	Friday 7/17/15					
18	Friday	8:30 AM	Internal	NQ, Swift, Jon, Shy, Hamer, Tim	Arrive at Galvanize	Bring some swag, stickers, and badges
19	Friday	9:45 AM	Internal	Hamer	Breakfast arrives at Galvanize	
20	Friday	10:00 AM	Public	NQ	Workshop Checkin Begins	Sign Liability waiver, swag, badge, stick
21	Friday	10:00 AM	Internal	Hamer	Breakfast is served at Galvanize	
22	Friday	11:00 AM	Public	Hamer	Set up snacks	We need to buy snacks and drinks (Cos
23	Friday	11:00 AM	Public	NQ	Workshop: Why run a hackathon - Nick Quinlan	
24	Friday	11:30 AM	Public	Swift	Workshop: Budgeting - Mike Swift	
25	Friday	12:30 PM	Public	Jon	Workshop: Sponsorship - Jon Gottfried	
26	Friday	1:15 PM	Internal	Hamer	Lunch Arrives at Galvanize	
27	Friday	1:15 PM	Internal	Swift	Swift walks to hotel	
28	Friday	1:30 PM	Internal	Niko, Carl, Swift	Setup checkin table at Hotel	
29	Friday	1:30 PM	Public	Hamer	Lunch	
30	Friday	2:00 PM	Public	Niko, Carl, Swift	Checkin Begins	Sign Liability waiver, swag, badge, stick
31	Friday	2:00 PM	Internal	NQ	Set out snacks at Galvanize	We need to buy snacks and drinks (Cos

# PLAN TO SLEEP



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# TIMELINE



# EVENT SETUP

*Establish*

# REGISTRATION

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# WELCOME AND CHECK IN ATTENDEES

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A woman with long dark hair, wearing a grey t-shirt and blue jeans, stands behind a red-clothed table. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. A lanyard with a white badge hangs around her neck. On the table in front of her are several boxes of NERF toys, including "N-Strike Elite Centurion" and "Ultra Distance Up to 100 Feet!". There is also a Chromecast box and an Xbox One game case for "Assassin's Creed Unity".

# WELCOME SPONSORS

A photograph of a person from the waist up, wearing a dark green zip-up hoodie with a small orange and white logo on the left chest. They are holding a white paper plate with a red border, filled with a variety of food including what looks like fried rice, vegetables, and meat. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and more plates of food.

*Put out*  
**FOOD**

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A medium shot of a man with a beard and short hair, wearing a brown zip-up hoodie with white stripes on the cuffs and collar. He is leaning over a white projector on a stand, looking down at it. His hands are visible; one is on the projector's side and the other is near his chest. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

*Do a*

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# TECH CHECK

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A blurred background image showing a room with multiple computer monitors on desks and a large server rack in the background. Several people are visible in the distance.

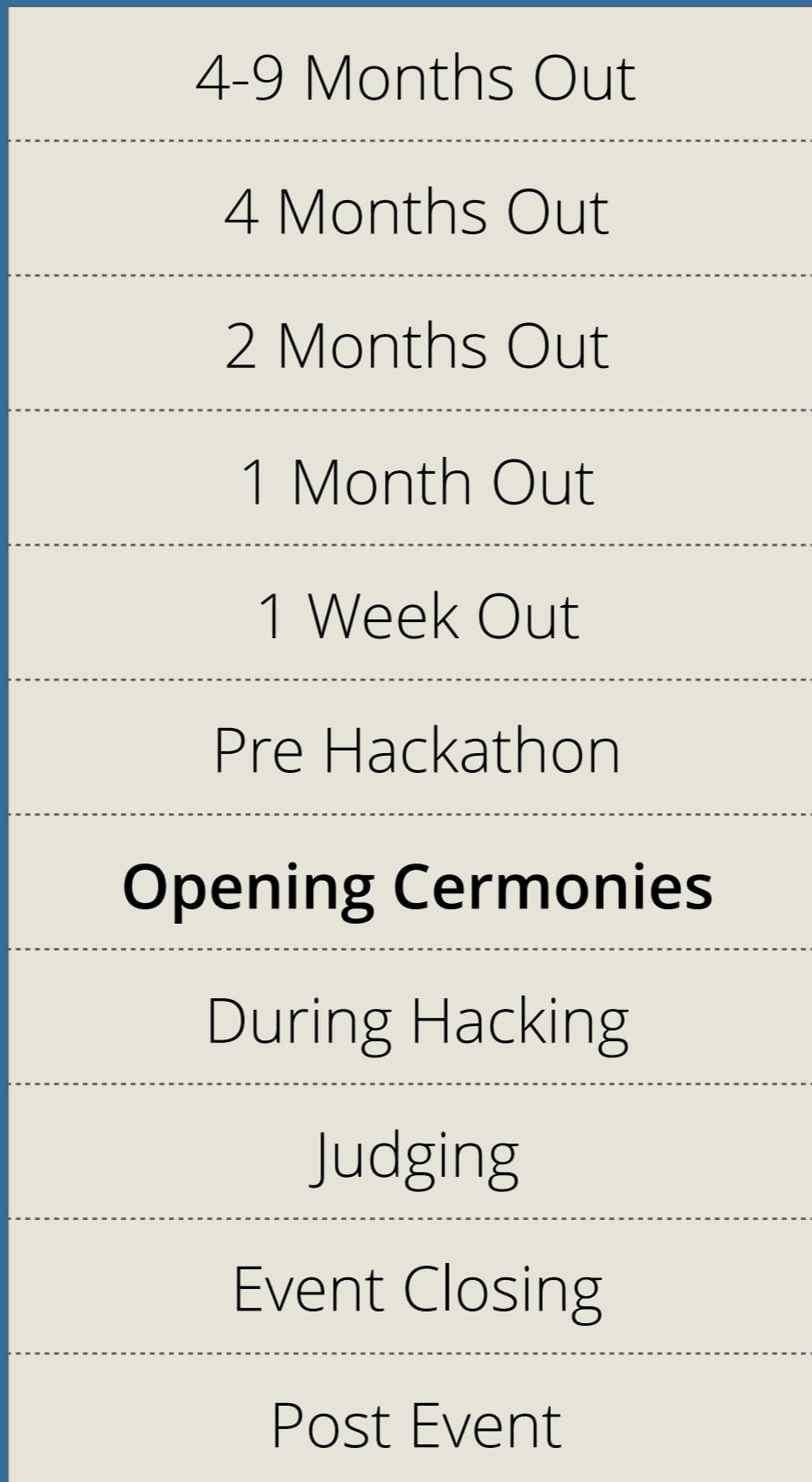
*Double Check*

# POWER & WIFI



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# TIMELINE





# SET THE TONE

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# WELCOME

# API DEMOS

Illini Union

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# TIMELINE



# TEAM FORMATION





**MAINTAIN ENERGY**

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# BE UVISIBLE

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A photograph of two young men sitting on the floor, eating pizza from white plates. The man in the foreground is wearing a green t-shirt and jeans, looking down at his food. The man in the background is wearing an orange t-shirt and jeans, looking directly at the camera with a surprised or excited expression. They are in a room with a window and a door in the background.

# HUNGRY HACKERS

# STOP AND LOOK AROUND

YOU'RE  
AWESOME

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A photograph of a group of people at a hackathon. In the foreground, a woman in a white shirt and blue jeans is working on a mannequin. Behind her, another woman in a green shirt and glasses is looking up. To her right, a woman in a black hoodie and glasses is speaking into a microphone. A mannequin in the background has the word "ctrl" written on its chest.

# PROJECT SUBMISSIONS

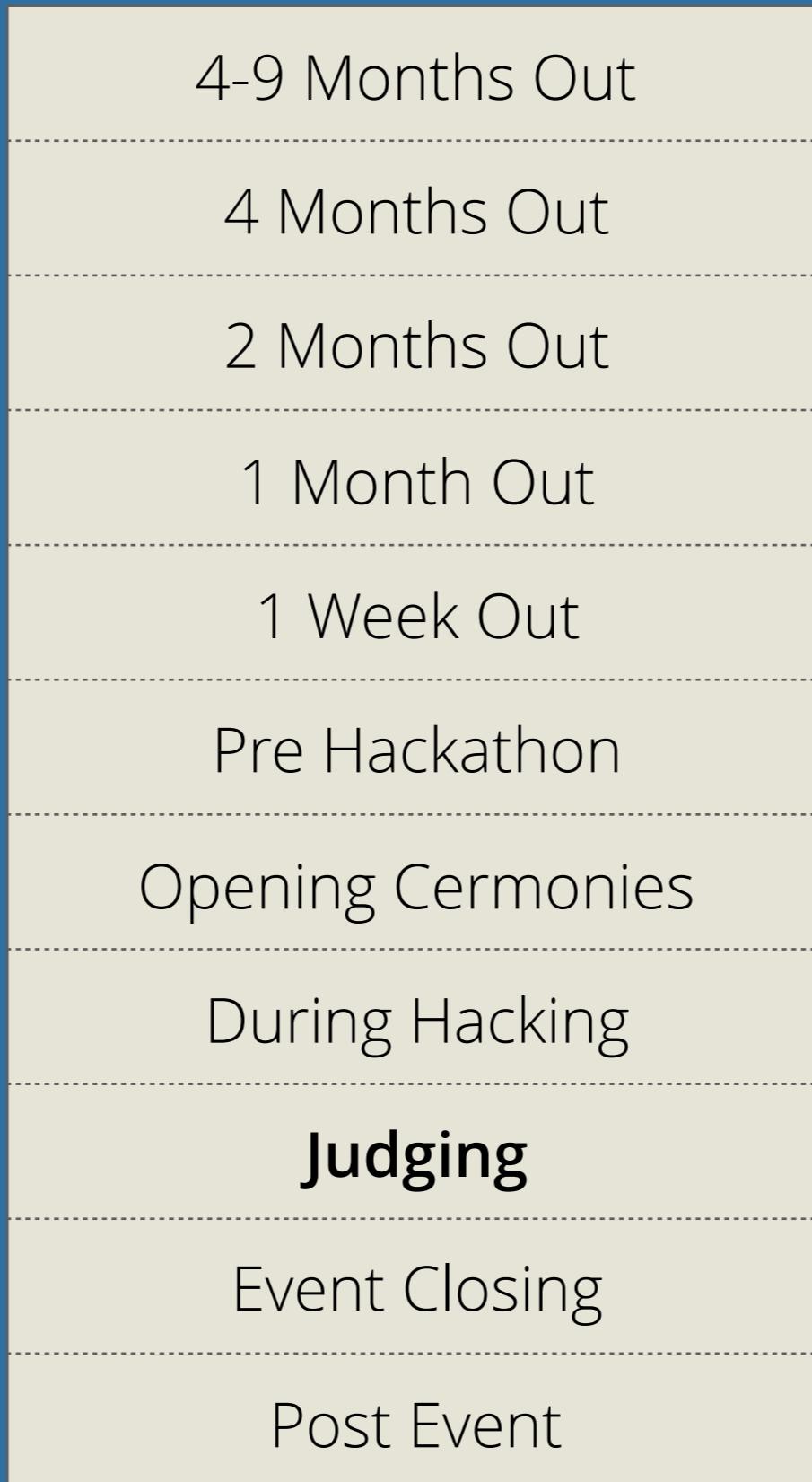


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# TIMELINE



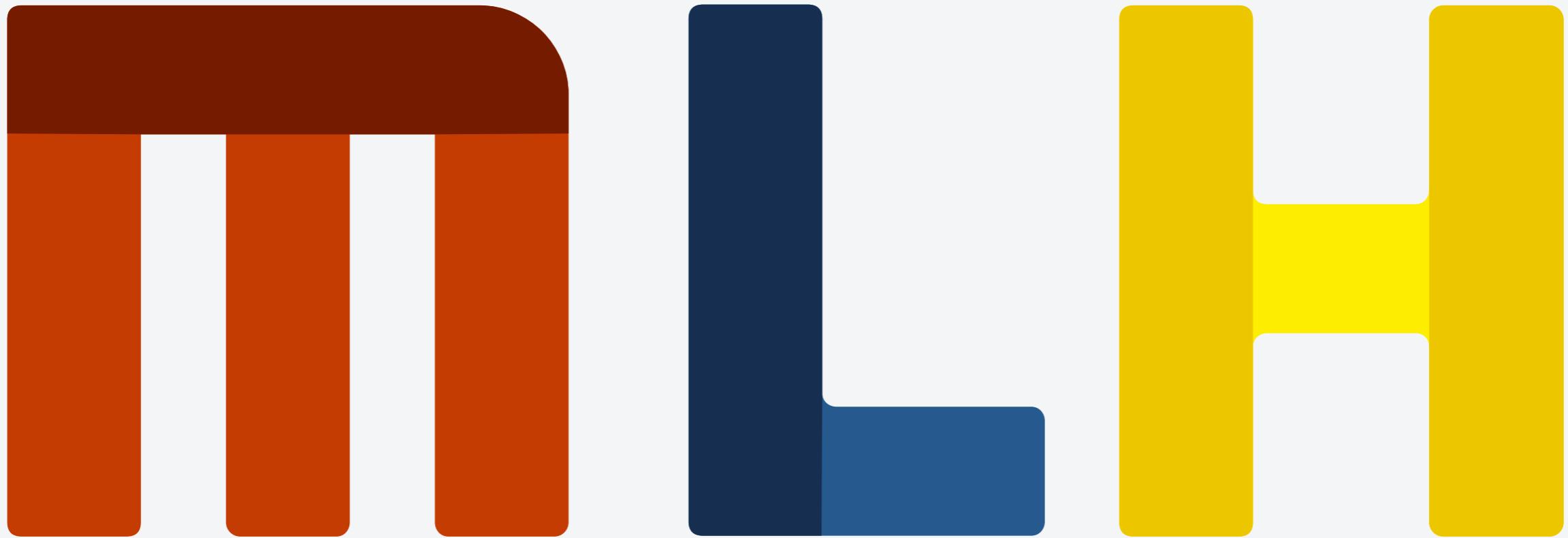
**PRESENTATIONS  
OR  
EXPO?**

# PRESENTATION STYLE

A photograph of a group of people gathered around a table in what appears to be a library or public space. Several individuals are wearing yellow headbands with the "Firebase" logo. In the foreground, a man on the right is looking down at something on the table. A woman in the center is holding up a yellow piece of paper. Other people are standing behind her, some looking at the paper. The background shows shelves filled with books and other people in the distance.

**EXPO STYLE**

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# MAJOR LEAGUE HACKING

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# STACK RANKING

# TIMELINE



**RESPECT  
PARTICIPANTS TIME**



# TECH CHECK AND PRACTISE



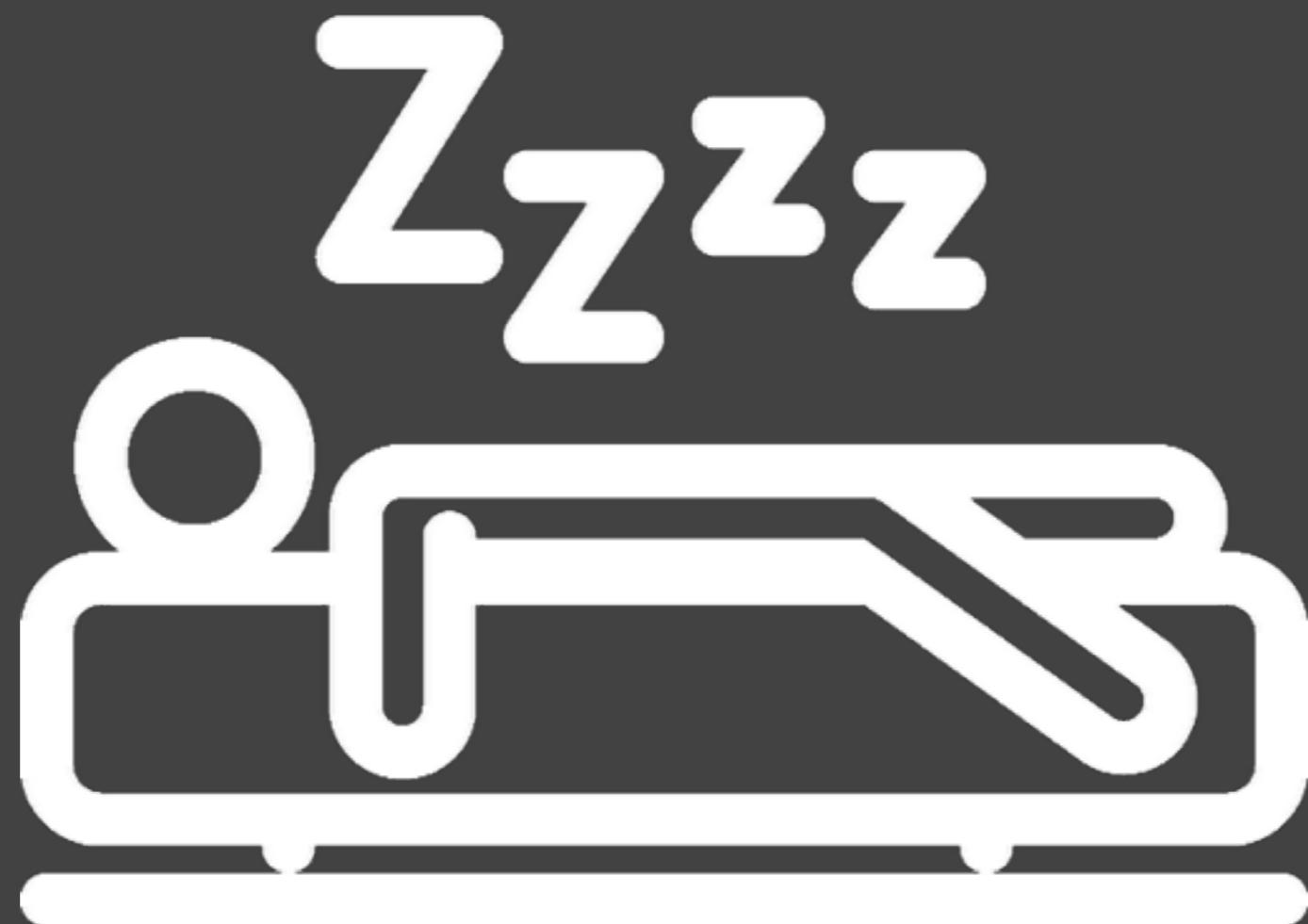
# THANK EVERYONE



# TIMELINE



# SLEEP



**FOLLOW  
UP**

**SETTLE THE  
BOOKS**



A photograph of two men. On the left, a man is wearing a large, white, fluffy costume that looks like a dog or a sheep. He is covering his mouth with his hand, looking surprised or excited. On the right, a younger man with short blonde hair is smiling at the camera. They are standing in front of a blue wall with some text on it that is partially visible.

# SUCCESS STORIES

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**LETS DO THIS  
AGAIN!**

# GUIDE.MLH.IO

## Introduction

*"I learned more in one weekend than I did in the last month of lectures!"*

Are you ready to host your school's very own hackathon?

[Submit a Pull Request to Help Us Evolve the Guide](#)

Each semester, more than 50,000 developers, designers, and makers compete for their school's glory at the 150+ official MLH hackathons around the world. Whether you're hosting your first or third MLH hackathon, our organizer guide will give you the tools to blow away your student hacker community.

Major League Hacking's [mission](#) is to spread the hacker ethos to every student on the planet; to cultivate communities where aspiring hackers have the opportunity to learn, build, and share their creations with the world.

### Resources

- Article: [How to Throw an Epic Hackathon](#)
- MLH: [Official Slack channel](#)

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- [Promote Your Event](#)



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