CodeWeek.

#CodeEU event toolkit

EU Code Week is a grass-root movement run by volunteers who promote coding in their countries as Code Week Ambassadors. Anyone – schools, teachers, libraries, code clubs, businesses, public authorities – can organise a #CodeEU event and add it to the codeweek.eu map.

How to organise your own #CodeEU event

- **Make the event beginner friendly, accessible even to those with no previous programming** whatever technology is being used.

- **The format of the event is up to you**. We do, however, recommend to include at least some practical, hands-on time, where participants can create something on their own. Even better if they can take what they've learned home to share with family and friends!

- **You can use whatever tools and technologies you're most familiar with**, although we do favour freely available open source tools and frameworks.

- Learning something completely new can be intimidating. **A smile and a friendly atmosphere** can help break the ice and make those, who don't consider themselves "technical", more at ease.

- It's also a good idea to **plan a follow up**. How can your participants keep learning? Who can they turn to if they have more questions?

What you need for a #codeEU event

Here's what you'll need if you want to organise an event:

- **A group of people willing to learn.** For example, your students, co-workers, friends, or a specific group you want to help. Remember, two is a group already!

- **One or more coaches or facilitators.** The number depends on the type and size of the event. For hands-on workshops, it is a good idea to form smaller groups that can work with their own facilitators. Code Week events are usually targeted at beginners, so teachers/facilitators don't have to be professional programmers. It's more important to have a passion for sharing knowledge, the patience to answer questions and the empathy to understand a beginner's perspective. For larger events, it might also be a good idea to have a host that makes sure everyone has what they need and keep things running smoothly.

- **A place to be at.** Classrooms, libraries, co-working spaces, conference rooms and various public spaces can all make a great event venue with some preparation.

  When determining the amount of people a venue will accommodate, keep in mind that the room will get noisy and the air bad with during a hands on workshop, so don't try to stuff too many people in a windowless room because nobody enjoys coding with a headache.

- **Computers and internet connection.** Depending on your target group, you might ask participants to bring their own laptops, in which case don't forget to provide enough power outlets. You will also need to provide connections to the Internet or strong WiFi.

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If you have existing computer equipment at the venue, make sure they already have the necessary software installed and provide participants with instructions on how the installation can be done on their own devices. When planning internet access, keep in mind that participants will probably also want to Google or StackOverflow things and share the event through social media on mobile devices, so make sure your WiFi can accommodate those extra devices.

- And finally, **something to work with/learn**. Depending on your focus group, try to find topics that are age appropriate and present them in a way that's relevant to your participant's interests. See our list of resources here.

Kids might enjoy making games with Scratch, teenagers making a dating app with Rails, college students using Python for data collection/analysis, adults learning the basics of HTML/CSS for a online CV or setting up their blog.

You can't create programmers in a day or week, but you can show your participants how fun it can be to create something on your own. When choosing a topic, don't start with the tools you want to use, but rather focus on the outcomes you wish to achieve. Search the web for existing lesson plans, workshop programs and adjust them to your group's needs.

Bonus hint: chocolate and snacks keep people happy, especially during longer events.

How to promote your #CodeEU event

Unless you're organising an event for a closed group of students, co-workers or friends, you will need to do some promotion to attract participants.

Social media is a good promotional tool, and you can also get in touch with local media outlets. Remember to use #CodeEU and mention @CodeWeekEU if you are on Twitter.

Feel free to use any parts of the following material for that purpose:

- Save-the-date: EU Code Week 15-23 October 2016
- New record for the EU Code Week: more than half a million people took part in 2015

If you have limited spaces available, you can use tools like online forms like Wufoo, Google Forms or event pages on Facebook or Eventbrite to collect registrations. While we do favour free to attend events, you can charge a small fee to cover the costs of the event. Alternately, you can turn to local IT companies or startups for sponsorship.

Questions?

If you have questions about organising and promoting your #codeEU event, you can get in touch with one of EU Code Week Ambassadors from your country or send us an email at info@codeweek.eu.

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