

## Employee-Driven Activities

Your **employees** can be at the heart of your activities focusing on digital skills development for youth. Through their **career pathways and lived experiences**, their everyday tasks and innovative projects, they are in a unique position to inspire youth to follow similar careers and to understand more about what STEM, ICT and innovation can really do, as well as the kind of impact these fields have in our societies and economies. In this section, you will find step-by-step guidelines on how you can **engage your employees to become volunteers** as **digital experts**, as **instructors**, as **judges**, as **speakers**, and as **mentors**.

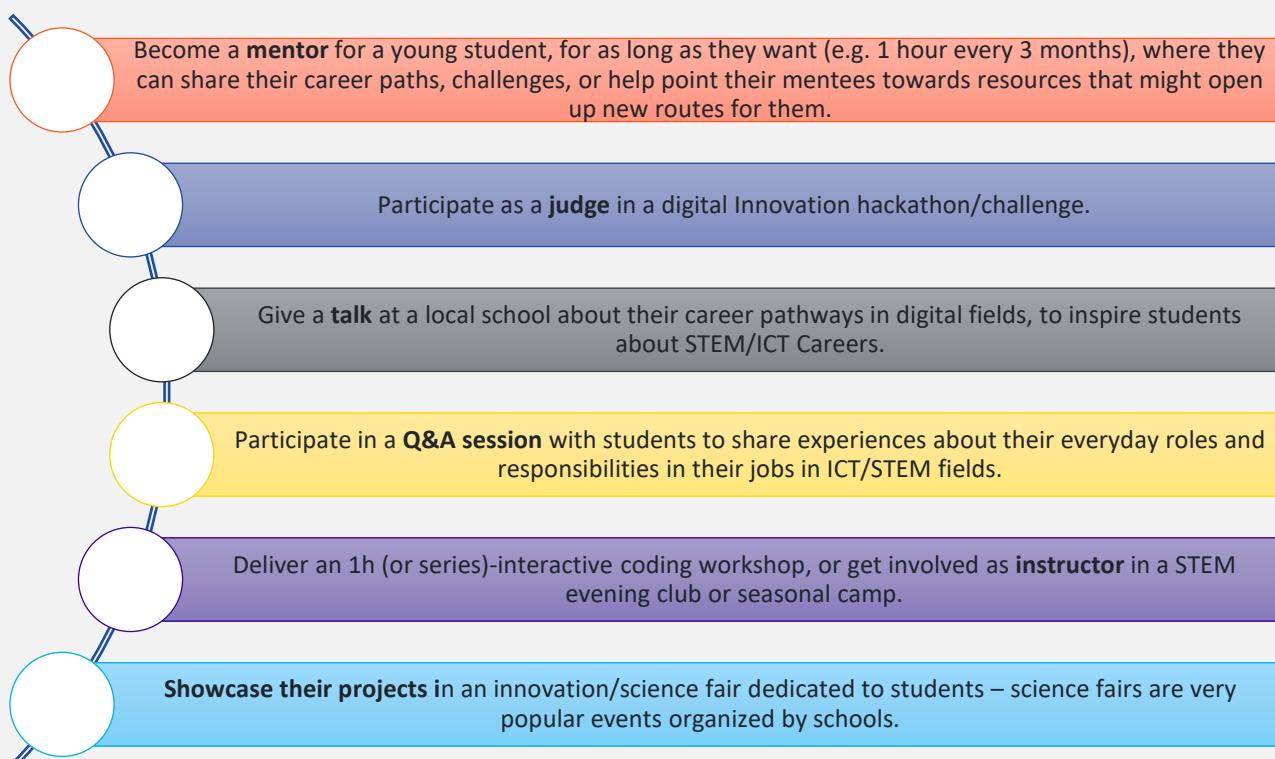
## Employee Volunteering

As businesses deepen their commitment to sustainability, education, and social impact, it's a crucial opportunity to integrate **employee volunteering** into CSR strategies. Employees today seek to contribute to meaningful causes that align with their values. Companies that invest in **structured volunteering programs**, especially in STEM education, not only strengthen their corporate reputation but also build a more engaged and purpose-driven workforce. According to [recent studies](#), the top companies directly implement their CSR and employee volunteering activities into their [Reputation Quotient](#), and most of them measure volunteerism as part of the company's engagement score and performance.

By encouraging your company's employees to lead **coding workshops**, give a **talk** or participate in a **podcast**, be a **judge in a competition**, or **mentor students**, businesses like yours can bridge the skills gap while reinforcing their commitment to innovation and ensuring that every effort drives meaningful change. Moreover, tracking impact through measurable metrics and recognizing employee contributions enhances participation and long-term success. Investing in employee-driven CSR programs isn't just **good for communities** —it's a strategic move for businesses looking to create a lasting, positive impact.

### Inspiration Corner | Suggested ideas

Check out below various ways that are related to "Employee Volunteering". Remember that each activity or event where one or more of your employees participate in can be showcased on the [EU Code Week activities map](#), so don't forget to register them there! By [registering as a volunteer](#), your employees can:



## Checklist

Explore the 4 simple steps below on **how to involve your employees** in [EU Code Week](#):

### Step 1

- After the necessary discussions with **leadership**, launch an internal campaign about **employee STEM volunteering opportunities** and share shortly (via a short ppt or just 1-2 paragraphs) how you are getting involved.
- Inform your co-workers** internally via e.g. Microsoft Teams. An [internal email](#) to announce your involvement, would be ideal, so that all are informed.

### Step 2

- Encourage your employees to register as volunteers on the [EU Code Week platform](#), using [this form](#).
- Create a simple **internal sign-up form** – via e.g. [Microsoft/Google/ Monday](#), for employees to register interest by volunteering type (e.g. mentoring, workshops, judging competitions, expert talk etc.), so that you know who is interested and will be involved (indicate Name, role in the company, expertise and key themes-activities that will be interested).

### Step 3

- Share the news** with your partners and your community via your corporate newsletter, social media pages, or your website.
- Tip:** Maybe you could share a simple **calendar** with the participating employees – via internal extranet/chat – and the activities that they got involved in e.g. “host a podcast,” “run a coding session”). You could also create a simple internal “**Volunteering Dashboard**”, visible to management, showing CSR alignment and ROI, if relevant and needed.

### Step 4

- Track participation** – number of volunteers, hours, student reach, activities delivered in a simple excel file, to use it when needed (e.g. reporting).
- Send a **short feedback survey** to all volunteers and use insights to improve future programs.
- Recognize volunteers publicly – via your corporate newsletter, a team meeting or a [social media post](#).
- It takes only 5 minutes to share your initiatives to the world. Don’t forget to [register your CSR activities](#) in the [EU Code Week map](#).

## Bonus Tips

- To enhance engagement, maybe you could **involve employees** in the creation and design of your **volunteering or other programs**, as well as your overall participation in EU Code Week. You can use a quick poll to see what activities they might prioritise/align more behind.
- **Recognition** plays a vital role in motivating employees. Whether through **awards, certificates, or public acknowledgment events**, recognizing employee efforts strengthens morale and encourages further participation. Companies like Google host annual celebrations to honour volunteer achievements, creating a culture of appreciation and enthusiasm for CSR involvement.

## Case Studies

Company/Program	Description
<b>Amazon</b> <a href="#">Digital Skills Training (Spain)</a>	<b>Amazon</b> , in partnership with Forma Roboti-k, offers <b>STEM workshops</b> to pre-school and primary students and teachers. Employees volunteer to conduct workshops, introducing children to coding and robotics. The initiative has equipped schools with resources like Lego Education Spike Essential and Bee-bots, fostering interest in STEM.
<b>Lenovo</b> <a href="#">Love on Month of Service</a>	As part of its annual “LMOS”, local <b>Lenovo</b> volunteers from numerous countries and partnering organizations deliver a month-long <b>STEM discovery and free training program</b> for teenage girls. More than 1,300 volunteers have impacted 10,000+ individuals, with 7,970+ hours in 38+ projects, from 24 offices. By equipping young people with technical skills and problem-solving abilities, Lenovo contributes to building a skilled workforce that drives innovation and economic growth.
<b>Lockheed Martin UK</b> <a href="#">Women in STEM</a>	The <b>Women in STEM</b> committee was set up at <b>Lockheed Martin UK Ampthill</b> to encourage more women to enter engineering. Members of the committee visit schools and careers fairs to talk to young women about STEM careers and the range of engineering jobs available.

## Communication Templates

Check out the General Guidelines & Templates for Communicating Your Activities in Appendix C in Resources & Supporting Assets file as well as the editable versions of [the internal email](#) and the [social media posts](#) templates.

## Mentorship Programme

A mentorship program connects experienced professionals with young learners to guide, inspire, and support their growth in a particular field. Mentorship is especially crucial to bridge knowledge gaps, boost confidence, and encourage students—particularly girls—to explore careers in ICT & STEM. Employee volunteering is perfectly aligned with a mentorship programme or activity.

### 💡 Inspiration Corner | Suggested ideas

#### "Virtual Code Buddies" for Beginner Coders

- It's a great opportunity for your company's employees to act as mentors for students in basic coding skills in weekly/monthly virtual coding sessions using Scratch (for 6-12) or Python (for 13-18), through a partnership with local schools.

**Timeframe:** 3 months – one-off activity or repetitive in different schools each year (4 sessions of 1/1:30 hour each, monthly).

**Promotion:** Use company's social media and internal newsletters to engage employees. Following necessary communication with the school, the activity can be shared on the school's website.

#### "Mentor Café"

- Students can rotate between different volunteer mentors in 15-minute "career speed-dating" style conversations, with various themes in order to spark more interest. Ideas:
  - **Speed Mentoring ("Career Speed-Dating" Style):** Organize short, 5-minute rotating mentoring sessions where students meet with various volunteers.
  - **Lightning Talks:** Focus on providing specific insights, such as career highlights, recent innovations, or their personal journeys. After each talk, host a Q&A game via an online tool, encouraging students to be active.
  - **STEM Show & Tell:** Ask each mentor to bring a hands-on item—a prototype or experiment they've worked on. This could be a 3D-printed model. Let students touch, feel, and interact with the STEM items, creating an unforgettable learning experience.
  - **STEM Myth Busters:** A myth-busting session where mentors debunk common misconceptions around STEM fields (e.g., "Girls don't excel in engineering").

### 📋 Checklist

#### Step 1: Define purpose, goals & audience

- Align with the company's CSR strategy (e.g., supporting digital literacy, gender equality or other)
- Identify the target audience (e.g. ages 6-12 or 13-18)

<b>Step 2: Internal communication &amp; select mentors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Present the idea to leadership</b> and related teams for approval</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Engage employees</b> from tech, engineering, and digital roles as mentors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Offer incentives</b> (e.g. certificates, a specific recognition, time-off)</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3: Format &amp; activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Decide between <b>virtual or in-person</b> mentorship</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Pick activities</b> based on age &amp; skill level: e.g. 13-18 years → studies mentoring</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partner with local schools</b> through the appointed <b>EU Code Week National/Regional Hubs</b> (see Appendix B in Resources &amp; Supporting Assets file)</li> </ul>
<b>Step 4: Logistics &amp; Promotion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Set a timeline</b> (e.g., a one-day event, a 6-month program, or a year-long initiative), depending on resources (financial, human etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Promote your initiatives</b> through company's social media pages, newsletter, partners' networks and school outreach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Allocate a budget</b> – for materials, virtual platform, or event space</li> </ul>
<b>Step 5: Post-launch metrics &amp; impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Celebrate <b>contributions</b> by tracking both individual and <b>team progress</b> — highlight top mentors and the impact of their efforts on social media</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Share success stories</b> to multiply visibility and inspire others (e.g. via social media posts, or a series of blog posts on company's website)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Assess impact</b> and decide <b>to scale or modify the program</b> for the next time</li> </ul>

## ★ Bonus Tips

- Through a well-designed "**Challenge**" approach, you can **motivate mentors** to actively engage by completing actions like mentoring a female student in tech, or participating in a career panel for underrepresented youth.
- Offer **special recognition or rewards** for the most **active mentors** — such as digital badge, a LinkedIn endorsement, exclusive networking opportunities, or professional development sessions. This gesture reinforces your organization's culture of giving back, while showing employees that their contribution to mentoring the next generation truly matters.

## Case Studies

Company/Program	Description
<b>IBM P-TECH</b> (US, France, Germany, Spain, UK)	<p>The project launched in 2011 with the support of New York City Department of Education, the City University of New York and the New York City College of Technology. IBM's employees' <b>mentor high school and early university students</b> aged 14-21, providing career advice, project coaching, and technical skill-building, focusing on underrepresented groups (e.g., girls in STEM). Mentors guide students through technical education combined with workplace skills, through virtual mentoring, workshops or even hackathons.</p>

SAP <a href="#"><u>Young Thinkers Program</u></a> (Global)	SAP employees <b>mentor and teach</b> (acting as “learning facilitators” too) young students (aged 10-25) basic digital and computational thinking skills. They conduct online/face-to-face coding workshops (e.g., Snap!, Python), design thinking sessions, and app prototyping activities, through strong collaborations with schools and educational organizations.
<a href="#"><u>Women4CyberGreece</u></a>	The 6-month-programme is designed to <b>help women improve their skills and advance their cybersecurity careers</b> at all levels. Mentors provide personal and professional guidance, share their experiences, and help mentees identify and achieve career goals. It is held in collaboration with various industry partners. The partnering entities provide <b>volunteer mentors</b> (women and men of all levels) to the W4C Greece programme.
<a href="#"><u>Women in Research (WIRe) Global Network</u></a>	WIRe offers locally-matched <b>mentoring opportunities</b> in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, London, New York, San Francisco, and Sydney as well as remote opportunities. An interested mentee may also request a “virtual” mentor too. Throughout the program, mentees leverage the success of their mentor by asking questions about work/life balance, professional growth and more, while mentors have an opportunity to grow their leadership and mentoring skills in a one-to-one environment. WIRe also runs “Worldwide Events”, offers “Annual Webinar Series” and “WIRe+ sponsored webinars”, as well as the “Global Scholarship Fund”.
<a href="#"><u>Linkoping Science Park Brilliant Mentors of the Future programme</u></a>	In this innovation hub, they are matching people in leading positions in local/regional companies with students. It aims at creating <b>intercultural connections between universities and companies</b> . The mentor and the mentee meet and discuss subjects that are relevant, interesting and developing for both parties. They also implement an <b>“reversed mentorship”</b> model. The younger talent takes on the role as a mentor for the more senior person within an organization. The aim is to share experience and bring new perspectives and knowledge to decrease the gap between generations.

## 🔧 Tools/Resources

- [Mailchimp](#): Build customized, user-friendly and creative email templates.
- [Mentimeter](#): Survey and polling presentation tool – AI presentations, quizzes and more, that can be used to gauge opinions or knowledge of your audience.
- [Trello](#): coordination of mentoring activities & task management. You may set up “Mentorship Journey Boards” to see employees’ milestones.

## 📢 Communication Templates

Check out the General Guidelines & Templates for Communicating Your Activities in Appendix C in Resources & Supporting Assets file as well as the editable versions of the [internal email announcement](#) and [social media posts](#) examples.