

# Useless Machines

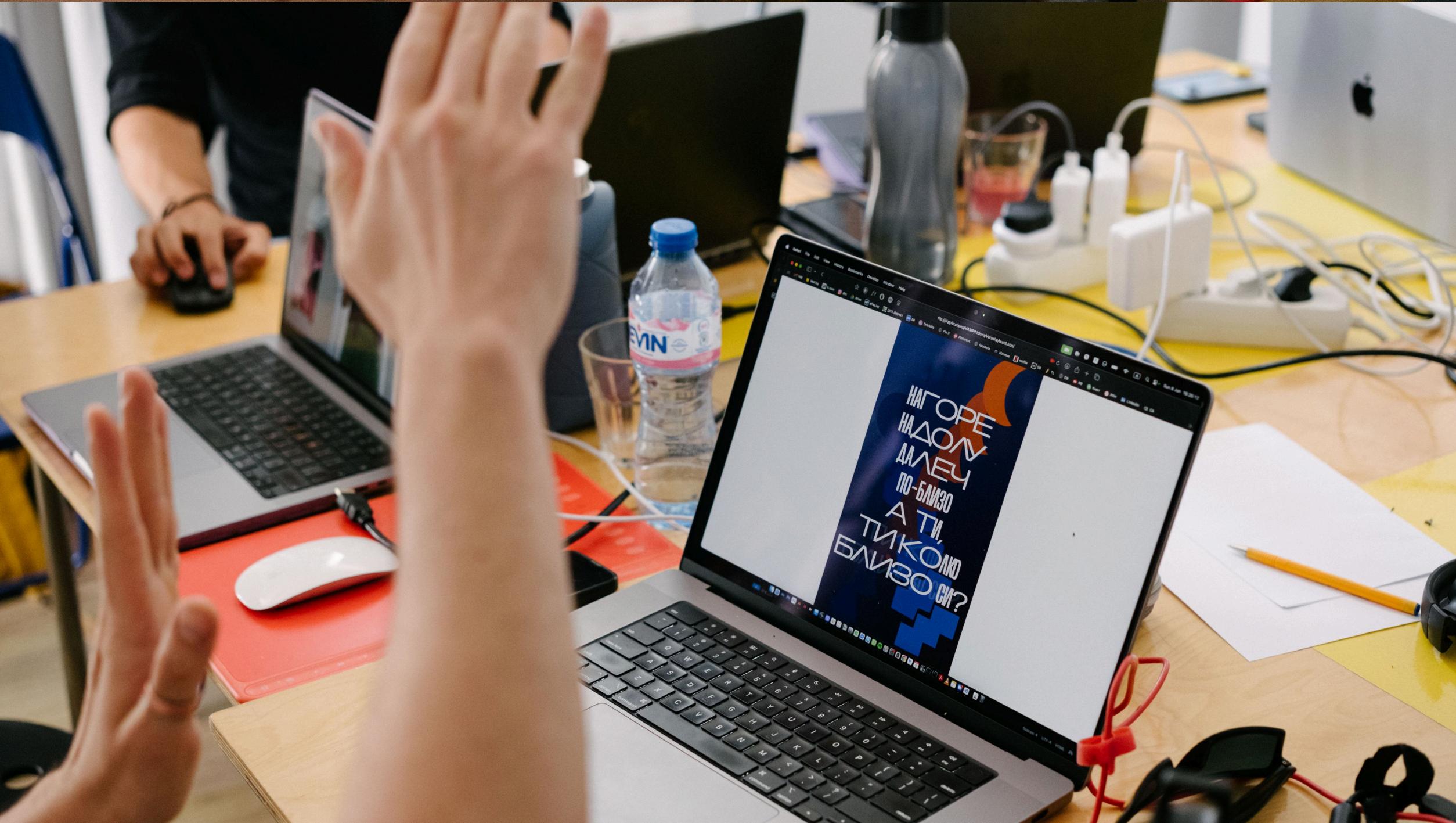
creative coding workshop | script proposal

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## Useless Machines

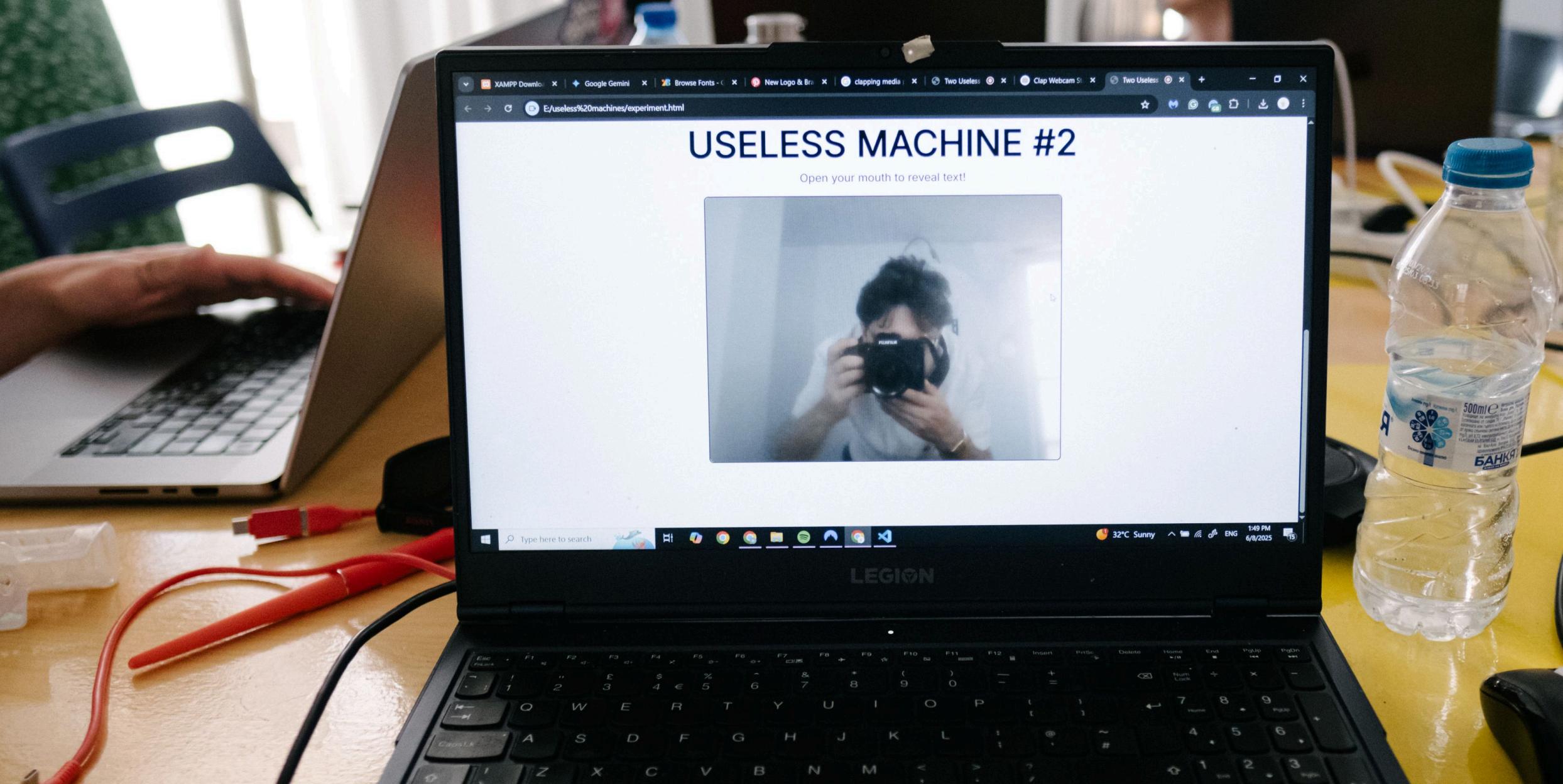
2025

creative coding workshop

In a world obsessed with efficiency and productivity, we invite you to embrace uselessness! This workshop will explore the creation of intentionally unproductive machines that challenge the relentless pursuit of technological progress in a hyper-efficient society. Let's create machines that do nothing useful, except make us rethink our relationship with technology.

In this two-day creative coding workshop, we'll explore AI-powered interaction using beginner-friendly tools. We will create reactive machines that respond to user input, movement, sound, or even emotions in unexpected ways. By the end of the workshop, we will showcase a collection of useless machines made with a purpose. Playful, unexpected creations that offer a break from today's obsession with productivity and automation.





## Useless Machines

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The workshop is beginner-friendly. We'll be working with web-based tools that integrate AI algorithms directly in the browser, making it easy for anyone to get started with creative coding. All you need to do is bring a laptop, and we will provide you with the Wi-Fi password!

The workshop is open to artists, designers, students, and anyone curious about creative coding.

Presented at

FIG.FIVE Festival for Illustration and Graphics, Swimming Pool, Sofia, Bulgaria

# Workshop Script

\* this proposal is subject to changes and further developments

## Materials & Tools

- Stable internet connection
- "Bring your own laptop", or provide a laptop with a webcam for each visitor
- Working tables & power outlets
- 1 x multimedia projector for the showcase

## Facilitators

- Emphasize the importance of playfulness.
- Encourage non-standard ideas that deviate from the established norms or rules.
- Keep tech minimal: one input, one output.
- Scope control to ensure every person/group has finished their project on time.

## Participants

- Artists, designers, students, and anyone curious about creative coding.
- Complete beginners are welcome!
- Up to 10 people (can be adjusted).
- Can choose to work individually or work in a group.

## Teck Stack

- HTML, CSS, Javascript
- ml5.js, face-api.js, TensorFlow.js, Handtrack.js, etc.

### Day 1 | Inspiration, Ideation & First Code

09:30 - 10:00 | Welcome

10:00 - 11:00 | Lecture: Useless Machines & Interactive Installations

- Short visual talk with examples from antiquity to contemporary art
- Discuss: Absurdity, critique of efficiency, humor in design.

11:00 - 11:15 | Break

11:15 - 12:30 | Hands-On Demo

- Intro into the tech-stack and demonstrate to participants how to make a very simple interactive element (present available AI models: face and emotion recognition, body tracking, object recognition, hand tracking, eye tracking, and some more basic interactions like cursor movement, keyboard input, etc.)

12:30 - 13:30 | Lunch

13:30 - 14:15 | Ideation Sprint (Useless Concepts)

- Brainstorm individually
- Share in groups, then cluster ideas.

14:15 - 15:00 | Concept Development

- What interaction?
- What response?
- Physical or screen-based?
- What tech will we need?
- Prepare a 1-slide/1-sketch concept pitch.

15:00 - 15:15 | Break

15:15 - 16:00 | Group Presentations of Concepts

- Each person/group has 5 min to present.
- Peer/facilitator feedback and dev tips

16:00 - 17:30 | Start Building

- Groups begin basic coding & prototyping.
- Facilitator circulates, supports with technical questions.
- Goal: each group ends Day 1 with a working seed.

### Day 2 | Coding, Building & Presenting

09:30 - 10:00 | Check-In & Plan

- Quick recap: where's each person/group at so far?
- Set milestones and goals for the day.

10:00 - 12:30 | Build Sprint

- Facilitators rotate: guide participants, help with technical issues, encourage scope control, debugging, input/output, quick hacks.

12:30 - 13:30 | Lunch

13:30 - 15:30 | Build Sprint II

- Facilitators rotate: guide participants, help with technical issues, encourage scope control, debugging, input/output, quick hacks.

15:30 - 16:00 | Break

16:00 - 17:00 | Final Touches & Prep for Showcase

- Facilitators rotate: guide participants, help with technical issues, encourage scope control, debugging, input/output, quick hacks.
- Groups finish prototypes.
- Prepare 2-3 min pitch:
  - Name of machine
  - What it does

17:00 - 18:00 | Showcase

- Each group presents to peers (and invited guests if possible).
- Reflection: Recap achievements. What did we learn?  
Why is uselessness valuable?

18:00 | Closing

- Invite participants to publish/document projects (GitHub, photos, video).