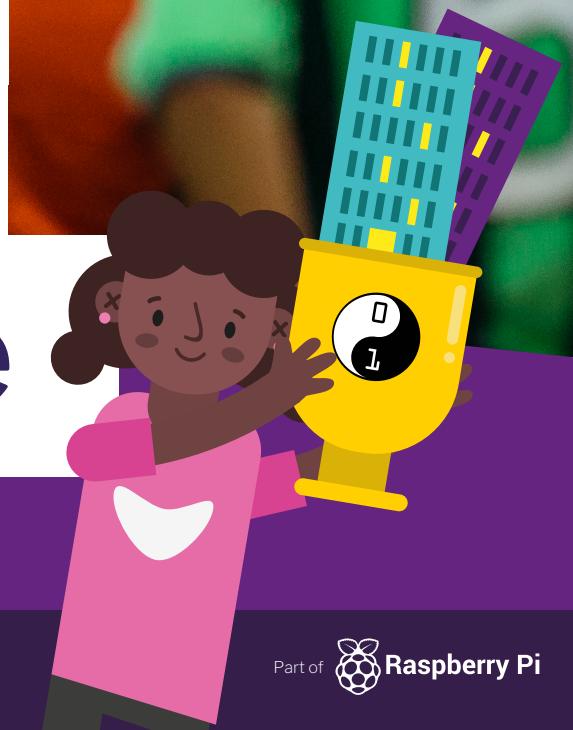


CoderDojo



CoderDojo Champions' Handbook

CoderDojo in the office



CoderDojo in the office

Running a Dojo as a regular club in your office space is a perfect fit for your Corporate Social Responsibility plan and also offers a skills-based, engaging volunteering opportunity for your staff. Offices are ideal locations for supporting young people to create with technology, and this supplement, along with the [CoderDojo Champions' Handbook](#), contains everything you need to know to start a Dojo in your workplace.

Why start a Dojo in your office?

- Employees within companies of all kinds have a growing appetite for engaging with movements for social good that align with their company culture.
- Offering skills-based volunteering opportunities in your office will help to position your company as a key hub for innovation within your industry.
- A Dojo not only adds value to your company but also offers a genuine connection to your local community because you are providing a much-needed resource.
- Dojos in offices give attending youth a feel for how they may someday apply their skills in a workplace environment. This can inspire young people to take up careers in your sector, especially those who would not otherwise be exposed to corporate workplaces.

"STEM education is one of our impact areas for our CSR programme and CoderDojo is amazing – we're really proud to partner with them. It's great that they have Dojos all across the globe, and we are really excited to start up more Dojos."

Amy Wendel
Global Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, LogMeIn



What exactly is a Dojo like in an office?

A Dojo is an informal learning environment, and the open-source ethos of the CoderDojo movement allows you to shape your Dojo to suit your specific circumstances. Everything from the time of day you run your Dojo sessions, and their frequency, to the materials you pick from our extensive resources or your own staff's expertise is up to you and what suits your needs.

"Our co-working space here at Dogpatch Labs is designed to create a community space for people who value working in the same place alongside each other. We know our members are passionate about innovation, disruption, and entrepreneurship, so having a Dojo in this space is a no-brainer. It embodies everything we stand for, everything CoderDojo stands for, and our community has really gotten behind it."

Patrick Walsh, Founder of Dogpatch Labs

One of CoderDojo's main benefits for young people is that it is a **regular club** where they can progressively increase their level of skill and knowledge. In order to ensure this regularity it is a good idea to run your club sessions at the time of the week that most easily fits into your and your staff's regular schedule.

A typical Dojo runs for one to two hours once every two weeks or once a month. Many companies with Dojos have high engagement on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday evenings. If your location is in a busy city centre with few schools or residential areas nearby, keep in mind that parents may find it difficult to bring their children to your venue if the Dojo is too early in the evening.

Also think about how people will get to your offices: what time is rush hour? Are there parking restrictions before a certain time? It may be worth varying the time of your first few Dojos to see what works best for attendees.

How bringing CoderDojo to your company will benefit you

1. Social good

CoderDojo is a global movement having a real impact. To date, the movement has created opportunities for more than 200 000 young people around the globe to learn how to code and create in fun environments. Running a Dojo in your office is your company's opportunity to be part of a relevant, pioneering social good initiative.

2. Value alignment

Promoting an inclusive and collaborative culture within your company is key to attracting and retaining the best talent. The CoderDojo movement is driven by its values and ethos, which foster inclusivity and collaboration in an environment based on mutual respect. CoderDojo is a rewarding, collaborative volunteering programme that will help you cultivate a positive and fulfilling employee culture and experience. As such, CoderDojo has the potential to become a driving force within your corporate social responsibility mission. Moreover, according to a 2017 Deloitte survey, 70% of millennials, those ages 18 to 26, say that a company's commitment to their local community has a positive influence on their decision to work there.

"Accenture has developed a fantastic relationship with CoderDojo over the past few years, aligning with our Corporate Citizenship aim to equip young people with digital skills. We are proud of our growing cohort who contributed to making our Dojo a success, and we're looking forward to continuing to grow the Dojo."

**Julie Spillane
Commercial Director, Accenture**

3. Employee engagement

Investing in staff is a core strategy for fostering employee satisfaction. Running a CoderDojo with the help of your employees is an informal method of upskilling your staff: technically skilled employees will explore different technologies and broaden their capabilities, while employees in non-tech positions will develop their technical know-how, allowing for better cross-team collaboration. At each Dojo session, your staff will practice abilities such as coaching, problem-solving, leadership, and project management, all within a fun youth club! By starting a CoderDojo in your offices, you offer opportunities for your staff to sharpen their technical, design, and social skills, which will add extra value to your organisation. Moreover, a global workforce study by the professional services firm Towers Perrin found that CSR is the third-most important driver of employee engagement. In companies in the USA, an organisation's stature in the community is the second-most important driver of employee engagement, and a company's reputation for social responsibility is also among the top 10.

"Ultimately having children learning to code in every LinkedIn office globally is the dream, with LinkedIn employees volunteering and using their knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm to lead the sessions."

**Charlie Fitzgerald
Senior Manager, End User Support, LinkedIn**



Key things to consider

Internal sponsorship

Having your CoderDojo officially backed by an internal sponsor at a senior level will smooth the path to your first club session, it will ensure that internal protocols are adhered to, and it will support the long-term success and sustainability of your Dojo.

Public liability insurance

Most corporations and office spaces have a standard public liability cover. This will normally also cover the activities of a Dojo running on site. To ensure that your Dojo activities are in fact covered by an existing insurance, you should raise this question with your company's human resources or facilities department.

Security cover

As Dojo sessions usually take place outside of regular working hours, your office might require additional security cover for this period of time. Even if you know that your company's security personnel or porters work outside of core working hours, we recommend that you check whether additional security cover is needed.

Non-disclosure agreements

Some offices, due to the nature of their commercial enterprise, require all external parties to sign non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) for their visits. Most companies have templates for this, or even office sign-in systems, either online or at the entrance. If NDAs are required, then to facilitate this we recommend to have a sign-in desk for your Dojos participants at arrival to the sessions.



Your skills

It's really important to note that **you don't need to have coding skills to champion a Dojo**. Dojos are run by people with many different roles and occupations. Whether you work in IT, HR, or are the CEO of the company, you have what it takes to run a Dojo! This supplement, along with the Champions' Handbook, will guide you in everything you need to know to start your Dojo in your office!

Your role

The role of the Dojo champion, or organiser, is essentially to project-manage the Dojo. You and the staff at your office already have a vast and valuable set of skills for this. For example, you and your staff are comfortable collaborating with each other as a team, and you can recruit Dojo volunteers and promote your Dojo via your company's internal engagement channels. Volunteering at your Dojo is a great opportunity for people from across different teams within your company to come together and collaborate.

Your tasks are to:

- Choose a space
- Select a time
- Gather some like-minded colleagues to help you run your Dojo
- Facilitate your first Dojo session



Your approach

You can be directly involved in facilitating the Dojo sessions if you like. The focus is on helping young people find answers and promoting their independence rather than teaching. When a young person at your Dojo encounters a problem, show them how to research the topic and search for an answer online. Perhaps you even have a colleague who is particularly knowledgeable and who you can ask to help the young person out.

A Dojo is not like school – it is much more informal, with children learning by working mostly on their own, with occasional help from the mentors. The focus is less on teaching and more on helping young people find answers and promoting their independence. Therefore the role of volunteers within sessions is not to be educators, but instead to be facilitators.

"Understanding programming languages is increasingly important in the modern world. So we're hosting a CoderDojo at our office! At CoderDojo, we'll be helping young people with the skills they need for the world of tomorrow."

Ed Harrod, Developer, Yoti



Your team

The numbers of mentors you need depends on how many Dojo spaces for young people you want to offer. A ratio of no less than one mentor to eight attendees is recommended. Ideally, your team of mentors should include at least one person with a background in technology; the other people only need to be eager to support young people and to learn while doing so.

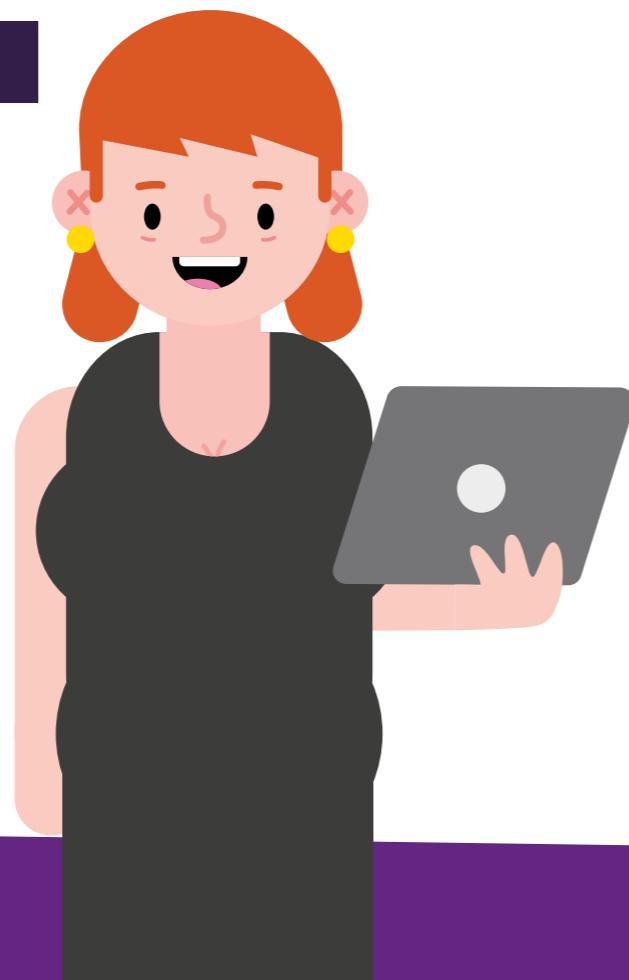
The approach you take to recruiting volunteers in your office doesn't differ from the way you would engage with staff internally to collaborate on a wider company initiative. However, you can try specific avenues to find interested employees and other stakeholders.

IT department

We strongly recommend having volunteers from different departments and teams in your Dojo. As mentioned above, no one (including you!) is expected to run Dojo sessions alone like a teacher in charge of a class. The more mentors you can gather, the better the experience for both the attendees and the mentors themselves. One great place to find mentors with technical skills is the Information Technology department that typically exists in most medium- to large-sized organisations.

Internal volunteer programmes

If you are struggling to attract mentors, try reaching out with incentives. It is not uncommon nowadays for companies to have volunteering time built into their employees' contracts to help achieve their Corporate Social Responsibility mission. For example, an employee might have an allowance of two days per year that they may spend volunteering instead of working. This amount of time could cover between five to ten Dojo sessions.



Preparing your mentors

Technical skills

Mentors will hone their own skills while volunteering. This will primarily be in the areas of facilitation, empathy and working with youth. However, it is never too late to get coding, whatever your background is. Any mentor without prior technical knowledge can use this time to learn along with the young people. We found that mentors who do this are perceived as very approachable and positive role models by the young people in their Dojo.

Some options for people who want to learn:

- The CoderDojo Foundation's [Beginner Scratch Sushi Card](#) resources are the perfect introduction for people new to programming and/or the Scratch programming environment. If you can work through these, then you will be able to support most beginners in a Dojo. They are a great foundation, and those wishing to explore further can continue on, e.g. to the [Intermediate Scratch Sushi Cards](#).
- We are presently developing a mentor training course that will be available for Dojos volunteers to download and use for free on our website.
- The Raspberry Pi Foundation offers a number of free online courses for learning programming with the aim of teaching it, including one course about transitioning to text-based programming in Python from visual languages such as Scratch.
- In the UK, Ireland, and North America, we can offer workshops to familiarise your volunteers with coding and technology. If you're interested in having us come to your area and deliver training for your group, please get in touch with us.



Working with young people

If you or any of your potential mentors have questions about working with young people, see chapter 3 of the [Champion's Handbook](#) for some tips and advice.

Background checking

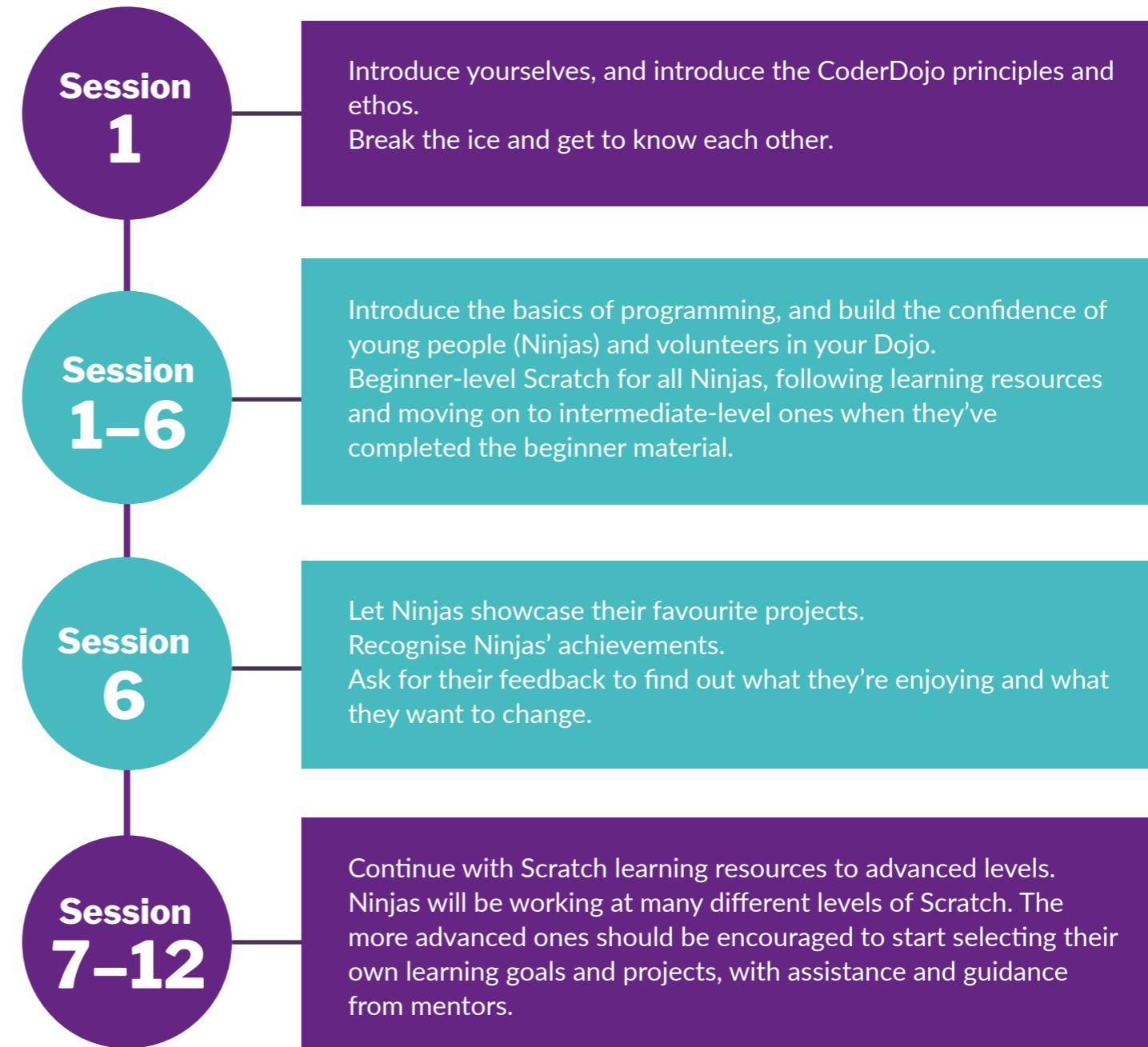
CoderDojo requires all clubs to comply with local regulations regarding child safeguarding. This may mean that volunteers in your Dojo need to have background checks. In the UK, the STEM Ambassadors programme provides background checking for all its members for free; similar programmes in other countries may do this as well.

If your company requires additional background checking, that's perfectly fine.



Your content

Sample Dojo plan



"The best thing about CoderDojo is seeing young people go from 'Programming/technology is not for me' to 'Oh my gosh, I love this!'"

Mark, Dojo volunteer, Australia

Your equipment

Do I need to provide computers at my Dojo?

It is very common practice for Dojos to ask attendees to bring their own laptops. Using their own computers has the added benefit of making it easy to save their work in between sessions if they are not using online tools to do so.

Of course, not everybody has their own laptop, so if you have some computers available, that's great, but not having any isn't a barrier to getting your Dojo up and running. If you provide computers, than allow Dojo attendees to book them on a first come, first served basis so that allocation is fair.

What kinds of devices can I use at my Dojo?

There are many different types of computers and devices available today: laptops, tablets, iPads, Raspberry Pis, and more. If children are bringing their own equipment, you might be faced with a variety of different devices at your Dojo.

Laptop or desktop computers

Any laptop or desktop computer is generally suitable for Dojo use. Even very old laptops can be given a second life by having Linux installed (we recommend Raspbian x86), which makes them perfect learning tools for a Dojo.

Raspberry Pi

The Raspberry Pi is just like any other computer and therefore can be used for many projects including Scratch, Python, and web development. A number of programming tools come pre-installed on Raspbian, the official operating system for the Raspberry Pi.

Tablets

Although not the ideal choice, tablets can be used in a Dojo. There are a limited number of free tablet apps, such as ScratchJr., that can be used to learn programming. For iPads specifically, there is also Swift Playgrounds, which lets complete beginners learn to code with Swift, the programming language created by Apple. If a keyboard and mouse can be connected to a tablet, this may allow its use for some online project work with more standard tools.

Sourcing equipment

If your company does not already have a number of spare computers available, it is often possible to acquire some equipment for your Dojo without having to make any purchases.

Donations

Many companies send their old computers for recycling. Therefore, it is worth getting in touch with your internal Information Technology department to see if they are willing to donate old computers or other equipment such as monitors, keyboards, and mice to your Dojo.



Marketing your Dojo

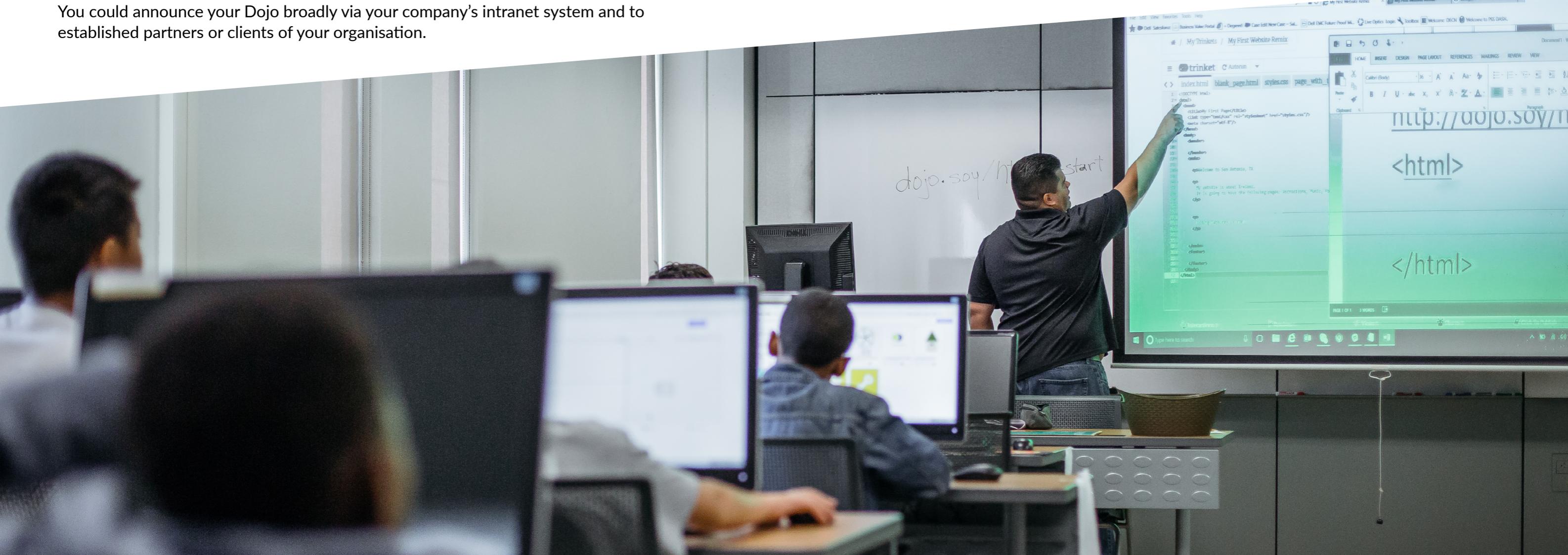
Promote your Dojo within your organisation

The simplest way to promote your Dojo and recruit young people to attend it is to advertise the club to parents you employ. Add posters/entries to your notice boards and your calendar of upcoming events if you have them; you could also tap into existing activities taking place in the company.

To reach a wider audience and potentially attract new people to your company, you can do a number of things:

Use existing networks

You could announce your Dojo broadly via your company's intranet system and to established partners or clients of your organisation.



Publicise Dojo events online

We recommend creating events for your sessions on the [CoderDojo ticketing system](#). This will make them show up on your Dojo's listing page on the CoderDojo website, and also let attendees sign up for sessions so you can monitor attendance. You can also use social media platforms such as Facebook to create event pages and make it easier for people to find your Dojo sessions. Make sure to promote your events on any social media channels that your Dojo or your company have, and ask your volunteers and staff to share them as well. Also reach out to local schools, youth clubs, sports clubs, and similar organisations to make them aware of your coding club.

Find more tips on page 18 of the [Champions' Handbook](#). You can also find some promotional materials for your Dojo online at:

[dojo.soy/flyers](#)



Case studies:

Woodside Energy

CoderDojo Western Australia has partnered with Woodside Energy as both a funding partner and a partner in community engagement. Woodside Energy employees volunteer at CoderDojo activities all across Western Australia, and the corporation has also sponsored CoderDojo community events such as the first-ever DojoCon in Australia. This partnership originally had a primary focus but through employee engagement it has evolved to encompass much more.



Accenture

Within Accenture's global Corporate Citizenship programmes, there was a growing appetite for digital volunteering opportunities. Among the growing group of computer-science skills focused non-profits emerging around the world, CoderDojo stood out to Accenture as an excellent fit for volunteering across multiple company locations. Specifically, having a Dojo in the Accenture office in Dublin, Ireland, as a tested success was a critical factor in Accenture's decision to choose CoderDojo as a CSR initiative. This growth partnership encompassed the development of toolkits, materials, and a roll-out plan for starting up Dojos across Accenture Innovation Centers.

Additionally, both Accenture and the CoderDojo Foundation collated best practices and lessons learned from existing Dojos and identified collaborative opportunities with existing non-profit partners. Each organisation allocated a project lead to work collaboratively on the partnership.

Accenture CoderDojos around the world as of August 2018



23 Accenture Dojos in **10 countries**, **10** new Dojos since FY 2017



First international Dojo with Ireland, Columbia, Mexico involved



235+ mentors and **650+** Ninjas at Accenture Dojos to date



More than **4700** hours of learning



Top tips for making your Dojo sustainable

- **Build the community.** Create a place where people feel a sense of belonging and want to keep coming back. This applies to the young people as well as your team of mentors
- **Don't do it alone.** To share the workload, ask somebody to be co-champion with you, or form a core team that will be in charge of running the Dojo.
- **Inspire Ninjas to foster their interest.** Find things that encourage them to continue learning, e.g. suggesting they participate in events and challenges such as Coolest Projects or Astro Pi. Use digital badges or other methods of rewarding their achievements – you can read more about this in the main Champions' Handbook.
- **Value your volunteers!** This may seem obvious, but it is important to make sure your volunteers do not feel taken for granted. Let them be part of the decision making and session planning, check in regularly to see how everyone is, and thank them for sharing their time. Organising social events such as DojoCons or local meetups is a great way to help your mentors connect with other volunteers in the CoderDojo community and share experiences.
- **Plan long-term.** You won't be able to champion your Dojo forever, but the club can live on if you plan it properly. If you have a thriving community and a passionate volunteer team, it will be much easier to hand over the reins to



Your Dojo in your office

