



Employability in Programme Development: Establishing a labour market to higher education feedback loop drawing on local labour market intelligence

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Guidance materials on how to implement hackathons in the context of supporting employability in HE course and programme design

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1. Introduction

This document gives an overview of the methodology followed in order to organize the “EPD hackathons” as well as some good practices that can be reused by other institutions to design and organise their own hackathon. All the materials developed and used during the project can be downloaded with this link: [Guidance Materials](#)

2. High-level summary of the process

Extensive preparation is key to a successful hackathon. In the case of applying AI technologies in the context of employability, it became quickly clear that a) the **field of employability is too broad** and b) the **“water was too deep”** between employability & AI experts to organise an ideation workshop straightaway.

3. Preparatory events

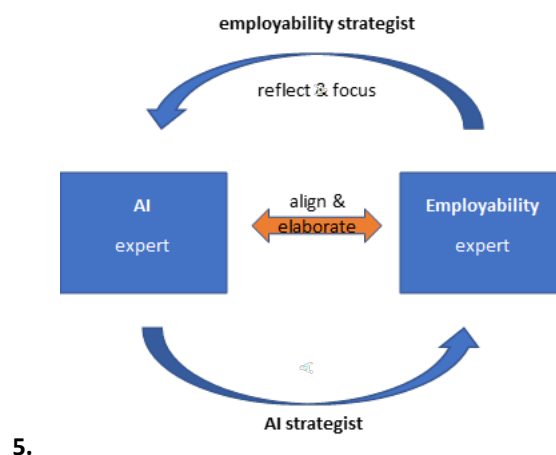
For this reason, we foresaw preparatory events:

1. A *mutual training* to bridge the gap between the experts in AI and employability;
2. High-level *scoping* to prioritize the biggest needs and come to a so-called “*problem statement*”;
3. Workshop to detail the *objectives* and *high-level approach*;
4. Elaboration: map existing data sources & end-users, understand the priorities and interaction between the different stakeholders, as well as their KPIs and funding models.
5. Finally, the hackathon.

4. Participants

Concerning the participants to invite, we advise limiting not only the number of people to 5-8, but also to **limit the number of stakeholders to 1, max 2**. Employability is an intrinsically *multi-sided phenomenon* involving students, HE institutions, employers, employability offices etc. All these viewpoints do need to be considered. However, starting a discussion with all these stakeholders at the same table, quickly leads to **divergence**. It is better to focus on one stakeholder, while keeping the others in mind.

What concerns the *role*, one should *invite*, for each stakeholder, both an expert and a person with knowledge and responsibilities at the strategic level.



6. Description of the guidance materials

The guiding materials consist of an agenda and power point templates to be filled in, live, during the hackathon. The workshops were inspired by design thinking workshops. Here is an overview:

1. **Preparatory documents**
 - a. 01 – problem identification.docx
 - b. 02 – agenda hackathon.docx (can serve as an invitation)
 - c. 03 – problem definition.docx (problem statements to be printed & displayed)

2. **Materials during hackathon**
 - a. **General intro**
 - i.00 – detailed agenda.docx
 - ii.01 – Welcome and outline.pptx

 - b. **Refreshing AI**
 - i.03 – What is a chair.pptx (introduction to AI)
 - ii.04 – AI is a General-Purpose Technology (understanding the *role* of AI)
 - iii.05 – Applications of AI (inspiration)
 - c. **Employability: problem & vision**
 - i.06 – Introducing the problem
 - ii.07 – As-is v to-be
 - iii.08 – Prioritization of pains
 - d. **Divergence: Elaboration**
 - i.09 – Persona
 - ii.10 – Existing data sources
 - iii.11 – Role models
 - iv. Prioritization of opportunities
 - v. Brainstorm of solutions
 - e. **Convergence**
 - i. Comparison of solutions
 - ii. Definition of selection criteria
 - iii. Ranking of solutions
 - f. **Output**
 - i. Mock-up and user journey
 - ii. Pitch presentation

It is essential that open-ended discussion is limited to a minimum, and timings are respected.

7. Supporting material

Context

1. Language
2. Awareness
3. Discoverability
4. Skill mismatch

