

RULES & GUIDELINES for the Hackathon “Inclusive Tourism for Everyone”

Article 1 – Overview

In today’s Europe, where one in four adults lives with some form of disability and the Ageing Index continues to rise, the **SITE project** seeks to transform demographic challenges into opportunities. By fostering more inclusive tourist destinations, it is possible not only to improve travellers’ experiences, but also to stimulate sustainable and diversified economic growth.

The **SITE Hackathon: “Inclusive Tourism for Everyone”** will bring together multidisciplinary teams of students and recent graduates to design and prototype innovative solutions that make tourism more accessible, inclusive, and enjoyable for all. Over the course of two days, participants will co-create both digital and non-digital tools—such as apps, chatbots, websites, interactive totems, and event formats—embedding the principles of Universal Design throughout the entire visitor journey.

End-users with specific needs (including older adults, people with disabilities, and new parents) will actively participate in the design process, ensuring that the solutions developed are practical, user-friendly, and genuinely inclusive.

By combining creativity, technology, and social innovation, the Hackathon aims to foster cross-disciplinary collaboration and contribute to the development of tourism that is not only sustainable, but also universally accessible.

Article 2 – Organisers

The University of Trieste, with the support of the SITE (Shaping Inclusive Tourist Experiences) project co-funded by the Interreg IT–HR 2021/2027 territorial cooperation programme, is promoting the SITE Hackathon: “Inclusive Tourism for Everyone” to generate creative and innovative solutions to real-world challenges related to the accessibility of the SITE pilot sites.

The initiative is carried out in collaboration with all SITE project partners: Municipality of Šibenik, DURA Dubrovnik Development Agency, Dubrovnik Airport, Central Marketing Intelligence (Trieste), VEASYT (Venice), Municipality of Fano, Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (University of Rijeka).

In addition, the Hackathon is supported by the Municipality of Trieste, PromoTurismo FVG, CRIBA and STARTUP TURISMO. Thanks to the joint commitment of these partners, the Hackathon represents a collective effort to engage young innovators from across the programme area in designing practical and forward-looking solutions that enhance accessibility in tourism services and public spaces.

Article 3 – Objectives

Participants will be asked to work in multidisciplinary teams to ideate, design, and, where possible, prototype innovative solutions that address the challenge set by the organisers, with the goal of making tourism accessible to everyone.



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The Hackathon will focus on several thematic areas, including but not limited to:

- **Physical accessibility of spaces:** inclusive architectural and urban design solutions for tourist sites and public areas.
- **Digital tools and technology:** apps, platforms, devices, and interactive systems that enhance accessibility for all visitors.
- **Inclusive communication:** plain language, translations, signage, and solutions incorporating Sign Language.
- **Tailored tourism experiences:** cultural, culinary, and nature-based itineraries designed to ensure universal accessibility.
- **Sustainability and social innovation:** projects that combine inclusivity, positive social impact, and creativity.

These themes aim to encourage participants to integrate Universal Design principles and to develop solutions that are practical, user-friendly, and socially impactful.

Article 4 – Participants

To foster interdisciplinary collaboration and bring together a wide range of specialist skills, the Hackathon is open to applications from university students and recent graduates of any degree level and field of study.

Participants will be organised into multidisciplinary and cross-border teams, reflecting the collaborative spirit of the IT–HR programme and encouraging the exchange of knowledge and ideas across different fields and regions.

Each team can include up to 5 participants, preferably with diverse skills to cover multiple areas of expertise. Teams will be formed by the organisers on the first day of the Hackathon. The total number of participants is limited to 30, although this number may be increased after careful assessment of applications based on skills, motivation, and project requirements.

Article 5 – Date and Venue

The Hackathon will take place on 26 and 27 November 2025 at the Urban Center in Trieste, located at Corso Camillo Benso Conte di Cavour 2/2. The event will start on the morning of 26 November and will conclude in the afternoon of 27 November with the presentation and awards ceremony for the designed solutions.

The organisers reserve the right to make changes to the schedule or programme due to technical or organisational needs. Any updates or modifications will be communicated to participants via email.

Accommodation and travel: Accommodation costs will be covered by the organisers. Participants will be hosted for the nights of 25 and 26 November 2025. Travel expenses to and from Trieste are the responsibility of the participants.

Meals and refreshments: Coffee breaks and light lunches will be provided during the Hackathon. Dinner is not included.



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Article 6 – Registration and Participation Rules

Participation is free and open to a maximum of 30 participants who meet the eligibility requirements described in Article 4.

To participate each participant must provide all requested information and agree to:

- This Regulation;
- The processing and sharing of personal data among the SITE project partners, in accordance with the relevant privacy policy;
- The use of photos, videos, and other materials produced during the event by the organisers and project partners for communication and dissemination purposes.

Submission of the registration form does not guarantee participation in the Hackathon. Participants acknowledge that the personal information provided is truthful, and any decisions made by the organisers regarding acceptance are final. Incomplete or inaccurate registrations may result in exclusion from the selection process.

Team formation: Participants can register only as individuals. The organisers will group individual participants into multidisciplinary, cross-border teams to reflect the collaborative spirit of the IT–HR programme. Each team can include up to 5 participants. Participants may only join one team. The teams will be supported by experts.

Confirmation of participation: Once registration had been successfully completed, participants had received a confirmation email from the organisers and a copy of the present Regulation. The organisers reserved the right to modify the Regulation, the schedule, or the event programme for technical or organisational reasons. Any changes were communicated via the registration email or other appropriate channels.

Participation rules: All participants are informed that taking part in the Hackathon does not confer any entitlement to financial compensation. Participants will be hosted by the organisers during the Hackathon, and accommodation provided will cover the official event days only, as specified in Article 5.

Following acceptance of this Regulation, each participant commits to a conscientious, diligent, and respectful use of the premises where the Hackathon will take place, as well as the materials and equipment provided by the organisers. Participants agree to comply with the safety and conduct rules established by the venue and the organisers, and will be responsible for any damage caused to people or property.

Withdrawal: Participants who leave their team or the Hackathon at any time will not affect the continuation of the competition. Those who withdraw irrevocably waive any claim to compensation or prizes awarded to their team.

Article 7 – Design Themes / Hackathon Challenges

Teams will be asked to work collaboratively to ideate, design an innovative solutions that enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of tourism experiences at the SITE pilot sites.



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The specific challenges will be presented at the start of the Hackathon by representatives of the project partners and local stakeholders. Teams will use their own computers for design and presentation purposes.

The challenges will be evaluated by a jury of experts, and solutions should focus on creating tourism experiences that are usable, welcoming, and enjoyable for all visitors, integrating principles of Universal Design.

Article 8 – Hackathon Procedure

The Hackathon will take place in person at the Urban Center, Corso Cavour 2/2, Trieste.

The event will start on 26 November 2025 at 9:30 AM and conclude on 27 November 2025 at 4:45 PM, with project presentations and the awards ceremony included in the schedule.

Project submission: Each team must complete and submit at least one project and one presentation to the organisers before the start of the presentations on 27 November 2025 at 2:30 PM.

Work and resources: Participants, organised in teams, will dedicate their time to defining, developing solutions for the assigned challenges. Each participant will use their own laptop and may use any personal software or equipment they deem necessary for the development of their team project.

Organisers will provide:

- High-speed internet connectivity
- Designated working areas
- Projector and audio system
- Tables and chairs for pitch sessions and the awards ceremony

Expert support: During the Hackathon, teams may request guidance and support from thematic experts available to all participants.

Presentation: At the end of the competition, each team must present their project following the instructions provided by the organisers.

Article 9 – Evaluation of Results

The projects and supporting documentation submitted by the teams will be evaluated by a jury appointed by the organisers, composed of members of the organising committee and external experts. The jury will be responsible for selecting the Winning Team (1st place), as well as the teams awarded 2nd and 3rd place.

The jury will assess the projects according to the following evaluation criteria:

- Alignment with the assigned challenge
- Completeness and feasibility of the project
- Design/User Experience and impact of the proposed solution
- Clarity of the pitch and supporting materials



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Each jury member will assign a score of up to 5 points per criterion. At the end of the evaluation, a ranking will be compiled based on the total scores. The Winning Team and second and third place winners will be announced during the final plenary session of the Hackathon.

The decisions of the jury are final and binding, and the jury is not required to justify its decisions. Participants explicitly agree not to raise objections regarding the composition of the jury, the decision-making process, or the final decision.

Participants acknowledge and accept that if none of the submitted projects meet the above criteria, the organisers may decide not to award a winner.

The evaluation process aims to recognise solutions that are practical, creative, and capable of improving accessibility and inclusivity in tourism, reflecting the goals of the SITE Hackathon.

Article 10 – Prizes and Opportunities

The Hackathon offers participants the opportunity to showcase their projects and receive recognition for their work.

The prizes for the winners of the hackathon are funded by STARTUP TURISMO.

Prizes:

- 1st place: €4,000
- 2nd place: €2,000
- 3rd place: €1,000

Participation to the final transnational conference of the SITE project in Opatija (Croatia): The winning team (1st place) will be hosted by the SITE project and the participation in the Opatija conference is free of charge.

In addition, the winning team will present their project idea/solution during the conference, contributing to the dissemination of innovative outcomes developed within the Hackathon.

In addition, all three awarded teams will be included for one year in the STARTUP TURISMO network, gaining access to mentoring opportunities and dedicated support.

Certificates and visibility:

- All participants will receive a Certificate of Participation, endorsed by the Interreg Italy–Croatia Programme.
- Teams will have the opportunity to showcase their projects on SITE's official channels

Important note: Prizes will be awarded to teams based on the final evaluation of the jury, and participation in the Hackathon, including winning a prize, does not entitle participants to any additional financial compensation beyond the amounts specified above.



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Article 11 – Intellectual and Industrial Property Rights

Participants retain, under current regulations, ownership and full availability of their projects and related documentation, including ownership of any intellectual and/or industrial property rights on any elements of which they are composed and/or that contribute to forming them, such as, but not limited to, the idea, business model, format, developed concepts, proposals, and solutions presented and/or the results achieved, produced by the teams during the Hackathon. Each participant remains fully responsible for the protection of any innovative and/or original elements identifiable in their projects. Participants authorize the SITE project to disseminate the description of their ideas through the SITE website and other platform related to the project.

Art. 12 – Privacy and Data Processing

Each participant acknowledges the Privacy Notice provided pursuant to Article 13 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR).

The processing is intended solely for the management of participation in the Hackathon and the subsequent promotion of its results. It will be performed both manually and through electronic systems.

The provision of personal data is required by law and is mandatory. Failure to provide the requested data will result in exclusion from participation in the Hackathon.

The Data Controller is the University of Trieste . Participants may exercise their rights under the GDPR by contacting the Data Controller directly.

By registering, participants expressly consent, pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2016/679, to the processing of their personal and, where applicable, sensitive data — including their possible communication or dissemination to project partners, the Lead Partner, and the programme’s Managing Authority — strictly within the purposes described in the Privacy Notice.

The University of Trieste also provides a release form for the communication and dissemination of personal data, images, and/or video recordings for cultural, social, and promotional purposes related to the Hackathon “Inclusive Tourism for Everyone.” Such materials may be published on institutional communication channels or shared with third parties in accordance with the agreements and conventions of the University, exclusively within the scope of the event and the SITE project.

A separate consent form regarding the processing of personal data, including the use of images and video recordings, will be provided to all participants and must be signed prior to or during the registration phase of the event.

Art. 13 – Image Rights

Each participant grants, free of charge and without time limits, the organizers the right to acquire, process, store, use, and publish the submitted materials, as well as images and audio-visual recordings of the participant, pursuant to Articles 10 of the Italian Civil Code.



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The organizers guarantee that such data and materials will be used exclusively for dissemination purposes, to document and report on the outcomes of the Hackathon and the project, through social media channels, the dedicated project websites, seminars, conferences, and other initiatives promoted also in collaboration with third parties. These materials may be published on websites, in print, or through any other communication means.

This authorization does not allow the use of the participant's image in contexts that could harm personal dignity or decorum, nor for purposes other than those expressly indicated above.

Art. 14 – Awarding of Prizes

Each member of a winning team will be entitled to receive an equal share of the corresponding prize. The distribution of prizes will be managed and administered by STARTUP TURISMO.

Cash prizes will be paid within 30 days from the official communication by the hackathon organizer to STARTUP TURISMO, containing the names and complete details of the individual winning participants.

Prize payments will be made exclusively via bank transfer, to ensure proper traceability.

In the case of individuals or legal entities, Italian or foreign, the applicable laws and fiscal obligations will apply.

Art. 15 – Code of Conduct

The organizers reserve the right to exclude and remove participants who fail to comply with this Regulation, obstruct the proper functioning of the competition, damage the premises or equipment provided by the organizers, or engage in offensive, defamatory, or inappropriate behavior toward the organizers or any other individuals or organizations involved in the Hackathon. Participants must also comply with the provisions set out in Article 14.

Art. 16 – Acceptance of the Regulation

Participation in the Hackathon is subject to full compliance with this Regulation, which each participant declares to accept in its entirety at the time of registration.

Art. 17 – Applicable Law and Dispute Resolution

This Regulation is governed by Italian law. Except in cases where jurisdiction is mandatorily established by law, any disputes arising from the interpretation or execution of this Regulation shall fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Court of Florence, with participants expressly waiving any objections regarding such jurisdiction.

