

Lead the Way



CloudFest Hackathon Project Leads Success Secrets

EVERGREEN, LAST MODIFIED ON Mar 5, 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on being selected as a project lead! We're thrilled to have you on board and can't wait to see what innovative creations you and your team bring to life.

This handbook is your guide to preparing for your role as a project lead, ensuring a smooth and successful experience for you and your team. It covers these key areas:

- 2** Pitching your project
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- 7** Team collaboration
- 8** Communication with the Hackathon crew
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YOU'VE GOT THIS

Relax and have fun, the hackathon crew is also here to support you every step of the way!

We understand that leading a team during a hackathon can seem like a big responsibility. But remember, this handbook is here to help you prepare and guide you through the process. The hackathon crew is also here to support you every step of the way, so don't hesitate to reach out ([#project-leads](#) channel on Mattermost / [project mentor](#) or [Carole](#) directly / email) if you have any questions or need assistance.

Most importantly, relax and have fun! Hackathons are a fantastic opportunity to learn new skills, collaborate with others, and build something amazing. Embrace the challenge, enjoy the experience, and we're confident that you'll have a great time at the CloudFest Hackathon!

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PITCHING YOUR PROJECT

You have two exciting opportunities to pitch your project and recruit an amazing team:

1. Before the Event (Video & Promotion)

We'll publish a video on each project page on our website. This is your first chance to introduce your project and get attendees excited about what you'll be building! Spread the word! Share your project page with potential team members.

2. On-Site, at the Beginning of the Hackathon (Stage Pitch)

You'll have a short time on stage to pitch your project. Make it count! Be concise, engaging, and highlight what makes your project unique. Here are some tips for crafting a compelling pitch:

- **Start strong.** Grab the audience's attention with a compelling problem statement or a unique solution.
- **Clearly define the problem you're trying to solve.** Explain the pain points you're addressing and the impact your project will have.
- **If you have a solution in mind, outline it at a high level.** Explain how your project will address the problem and the benefits it will provide.
- **Highlight the key features and benefits of your project.** What makes it stand out?
- **Close with a call to action.** Encourage the audience to join your team and help bring your project to life.
- **Format & deadline:** Please use Google Slides (preferred), PowerPoint or JPG/PNG for your presentation, submitted before Tuesday, March 11th, 12PM CET.

2 mins

Keep it short and concise, 2 mins max.

1 slide

1 slide max, keep it readable ;)

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ONBOARD ATTENDEES

As a project lead, you'll help new team members get set up and comfortable in the hackathon environment. Here are some tips for onboarding attendees:

- **Consider creating a welcome package.** This could include information about your team's project and any necessary resources (like a checklist).
- **Be mindful of operating system differences.** Attendees may be working on various operating systems (Windows, macOS, Linux, etc.). It's a good idea to be aware of this and avoid providing materials that are specific to one operating system.
- **Answer questions and provide guidance.** Be available to help new team members and offer any guidance they might need.
- **Create a sense of community.** Welcome new team members and make them feel like they are a part of the team.

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT

As a project lead, you'll guide the project management process for your team. This may involve setting goals, allocating resources, and ensuring the project stays on track. Here are some tips for project management:

- **Setting clear goals:** Work with your team to define what you want to achieve during the hackathon.
- **Organizing tasks:** Find a system that works for you and your team to break down the project into smaller, manageable steps.
- **Assigning responsibilities:** Encourage team members to take ownership of different aspects of the project.
- **Tracking progress:** Regularly check in with your team to see how things are going and make any necessary adjustments.
- **Embrace change:** Sometimes, during discovery or while working towards your goals, it may be necessary to shift your project's direction. This can be a valuable learning experience and can prevent other open-source teams from going down the same path. Remember, at the CloudFest Hackathon, nothing is set in stone!
- **Manage your project efficiently:** Consider using tools to help you organize tasks, assign responsibilities, and track progress. A GitHub Project is already set up for your team if you'd like to use it.

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PREPARE FOR DIVERSITY

The CloudFest Hackathon will attract a diverse group of participants with varying backgrounds, skills, and experiences. It's important to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone. Here are some tips for preparing for diversity:

- **Be mindful of your language and actions.** Avoid using discriminatory or exclusionary language or making assumptions about people based on their appearance or background.
- **Encourage open communication and collaboration.** Create a safe space where everyone feels comfortable sharing their ideas and perspectives.
- **Celebrate diversity.** Highlight the unique strengths and contributions that each team member brings to the table.

Remember, the CloudFest Hackathon has a variety of awards (see section 10 below) that recognize different aspects of a successful project. This means your team needs diverse talents, not just in engineering! By recognizing and utilizing the diverse skills of your team members, you'll have a better chance of excelling in all areas and potentially taking home one of these awesome awards!

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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Communication is key to a successful hackathon team. As a project lead, you'll ensure everyone is on the same page and working towards the same goals. Here are some tips for effective communication:

- **Define clear roles and responsibilities.** Make sure everyone knows their role on the team and what is expected of them.
- **Utilize the right tools for communication.** Each team will have a dedicated Mattermost channel for all team communication. Encourage everyone to use it to stay connected, share updates, ask questions, and collaborate effectively.
- **Facilitate code collaboration.** We suggest leveraging GitHub for collaborative coding. If you need to create repositories, you're welcome to use the CloudFest Hackathon organization on GitHub.
- **Be an active listener.** Take the time to understand what others are saying and provide feedback.
- **Be respectful and considerate of others.** Always communicate in a positive and constructive manner.

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TEAM COLLABORATION

Encouraging team collaboration is essential for a successful hackathon project. Here are some tips for fostering collaboration:

- **Create a shared vision.** Make sure that everyone on your team understands the goals of the project and is working towards the same outcome.
- **Encourage open communication.** Create a safe space where everyone feels comfortable sharing their ideas and perspectives.
- **Foster a sense of camaraderie.** Build a strong team spirit by celebrating successes and supporting each other.
- **Encourage diversity of thought.** Leverage the different skills and experiences of your team members to come up with innovative solutions.
- **Resolve conflicts constructively.** If conflicts arise, address them promptly and respectfully. Remember, your Project Support Team is here to help!

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COMMUNICATION WITH THE HACKATHON CREW AND OTHERS

As a project lead, you'll be responsible for communicating with your team's project mentor and other hackathon crew. Here are some tips for effective communication:

- **Be proactive and keep your project mentor informed.** Provide regular updates on your team's progress and any challenges you may be facing.
- **Be responsive to questions and requests.** Respond to any questions or requests from your project mentor or other crew members promptly and professionally.
- **Seek feedback and support.** Ask your project mentor for feedback on your team's performance and seek support if you need it.
- **Collaborate with other teams.** Share resources, ideas, and best practices with other teams. Cross-team collaborations are a great way to overcome temporary shortcomings.

Your Project Support Team, here to help!



Carole Olinger

Head of CloudFest Hackathon



Alain Schlessler

Principal Architect @ Yoast
Google Developer Expert in Web Technologies



Lucas Radke

Product Manager @ Automattic / VIP
WordPress Hosting team rep



Thierry Muller

Engineering - Head of Scaled Activation @
Google & Investor

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PREPARING FOR THE PRESENTATION

At the end of the hackathon, your team will have the opportunity to present their project to a panel of judges. Here are some tips for preparing for the presentation:

- **Start early.** Don't leave presentation prep until the last minute! Start thinking about your presentation throughout the hackathon. Take notes on your progress, key features, and challenges overcome. This will make it much easier to put together a compelling presentation when the time comes.
- **Practice, but don't aim for perfection.** Rehearse your presentation a few times to ensure you're comfortable with the material and can deliver it effectively. However, don't get bogged down trying to make it perfect. Spend a reasonable amount of time on preparation and focus on conveying your project's value clearly and enthusiastically.
- **Keep it concise and engaging.** Focus on the key points of your project and make sure your presentation is interesting and informative.
- **Use visuals to support your presentation.** Use slides, charts, or other visuals to help illustrate your points and make your presentation more engaging.
- **Be confident and enthusiastic.** Show your passion for your project and your team's hard work.
- **Format.** Please use Google Slides (preferred), PowerPoint, or JPG/PNG for your presentation.

5 mins

Keep it short and concise, 5 mins max.

5 slides

5 slides max, keep it readable ;)

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PREPARING FOR THE AWARDS

The CloudFest Hackathon celebrates the amazing achievements of its participants through a variety of awards. Is your team the next "Tech Visionary" and/or "Social Media Master"? Here's how to increase your chances of taking home some well-deserved recognition:

- **Know the Awards:** Familiarize yourself with the criteria for each award. Does your project demonstrate innovative tech? Exceptional teamwork? A knack for creating buzz? Tailor your presentation to highlight the strengths of your project.
 - **Tech Visionary Award:** Innovative technical implementation (this is where your engineers shine!)
 - **Dream Team Award:** Exceptional teamwork, collaboration, and communication
 - **Social Media Master Award:** Creating buzz on social media during the hackathon (we will track the use of #CFHack and #CFHack 2025)
 - **Breaking Barriers Award:** Inclusive design principles
 - **Pitch Perfect Award:** Delivering a compelling project presentation
 - **Overall Winner:** The ultimate #CFHack Champion!
- **Practice your pitch:** Be ready to answer questions from the judges about your project and its impact. Practice your pitch, but don't overthink it! A confident and enthusiastic presentation goes a long way.
- **Collaborate with your team:** Winning an award is a team effort! Work together to craft a presentation that showcases your collective achievements and the unique contributions of each team member.

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AFTER THE HACKATHON

The hackathon might be over, but the journey doesn't end there! Here's what you can do to keep the energy high and make the most of your accomplishments:

- **Share Your Success at CloudFest:** We'll invite you to join us on stage to present your project during the official presentation of Hackathon results to the CloudFest audience. You'll have 2 minutes to share your team's amazing work – what you set out to do, what you achieved, and what the future holds for your project. If you can't make it on Tuesday afternoon, ask a team member or your project mentor to take the stage. You can check out [last year's presentation](#) for inspiration.

Scheduled on: March 18, 3:55 PM - 4:40 PM on the [Ring Stage \(Dome\)](#)

- **Capture the Highlights:** We'll ask you to write a short recap of your project, highlighting your goals, outcomes, memorable moments, and any challenges you overcame. Include links to your GitHub repo, blog posts, presentations, or websites you created. You can check out [last year's recap](#) for inspiration (individual project summaries in accordion).

Deadline: March 23rd.

- **Use the momentum, ride the Wave!** You've created buzz, built something amazing, and the CloudFest audience is excited to see what you've accomplished. Keep that energy going!
 - **Spread the word:** Share your project with your communities and followers.
 - **Embrace opportunities:** Accept podcast invites, give talks, or write blog posts about your experience.
 - **Keep building:** After a well-deserved rest, explore ways to continue developing your project and make a lasting impact.