

# Climathon



# Playbook

**You're now  
reading  
the Climathon  
Playbook,  
with all the  
information  
to get you ready  
to organise a  
Climathon in  
your city.**

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# TIME FOR CHANGE. BE THE CHANGE.

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## OUR MANIFESTO

Unprecedented times call for new heroes.  
Heroes like you.

The impacts of climate change are all around us, coming even harder and faster than the models predicted. When global climate politics is stifling, it's your turn to move.

When business-as-usual is blind to the scale of the crisis we're facing, you have the ability to envision.

When faith in policies to fix the problem is fading, our hope rests in people like you.

Seeds of change can sprout from a single idea.

That is what Climathon is about.

Climathon is a stage for those that want to act on behalf of the needs of our planet.

**The Time to Act is Now**

Already, there is momentum on the streets. There is an inner fire among people to self-organise and take the climate crisis into their own hands. And home is where it counts.

Real change is made within the communities and cities you take part in every day.

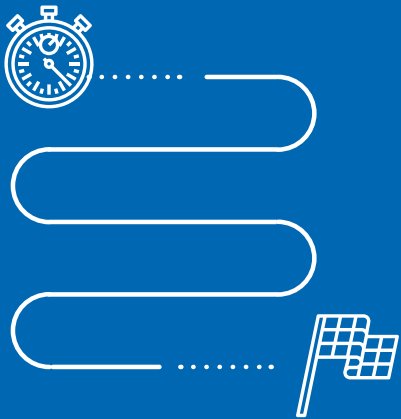
By 2050, more than two-thirds of the world's population will live in cities. Our cities must be carbon neutral by 2030, and the people that live in them are a powerful driving force towards that goal.

Together, cities and their citizens are forming a global wave of change-makers.

Only a combined effort can help humanity achieve the zero-emissions goal over the next 20 years.

Through Climathon you have an opportunity to propel this wave forward.

# 1. WHAT IS CLIMATHON



Climathon is a city-based programme that offers a pathway to climate action.

It is an opportunity for citizens to co-create ideas that address local climate challenges. Its intent is to raise climate awareness, disrupt the status quo, and rethink the places we live in and the future we want as citizens.

At the core of the Climathon programme is an ideathon. Although there is flexibility if other dates work better, ideathons mostly take place on Global Climathon Day in hundreds of cities across continents and many timezones.

This year **Global Climathon Day** is **13 November 2020**.

The 12-72-hour ideathon brings together a diverse group of Participants and ideally kick-starts long-lasting conversations with decisionmakers around city plans and policies.

It's amazing to see Climathon communities from all over the world come together, either in-person or virtually, to collaborate, raise climate awareness and co-create ideas to shared local climate challenges.

But we also love seeing Local Organisers put their own stamp on this self-organised event.

Ideathons are powered by Local Organisers because you are the people who know your cities, local networks and climate challenges the best.

Although the programme is **built around an ideathon**, there are roughly **four phases**, each asking for different types of activities. Sometimes activities cover multiple phases, it's not a linear process.

You'll learn that along the way!

Of course, you can pick and choose what activities - on top of the ideathon - are fit for your Climathon.

You can think of it like a marathon.



## Phase 1

You'll need 3-6 months to warm-up and get ready, including deciding who you're running with.

- Chapter: *Scout your stakeholders*

Then you might want to do some fundraising for your cause.

- Chapter: *Secure the funding*



By now you'd want to give some thought as to why you're running.

- Chapter: *Set the challenge*

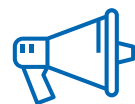
To help your marathon have visibility, you'd want to let people know you were doing it and spread the word amongst your friends and network.

- Chapter: *Spread the word.*



To be ready for the marathon, it helps to have done some warm-up exercises in preparation.

- Chapter: *Warm-up events*



## Phase 2

After the immense warm-up, race day is here and it's time to shine

Chapter: *Ideathon*

## Phase 3

After the big day you can put your feet up for a bit, but not too long as part of a marathon is to celebrate its winners and party with the people that ran the races.

Section – *Global Awards*

## Phase 4

Don't forget running for something that's bigger than you!

If you're in this for the long haul, you need to keep training. Meeting other runners to stay motivated and be in shape for the next big race.

Chapter: *Follow-up activities & Share and grow*



# 1. WHAT IS CLIMATHON

## a ▪ Climathon Dictionary

Yes, this Playbook is in English. Most probably that is not your native language. To make it easier for all of us to understand each other, we've put together a list of definitions. A tiny Climathon dictionary. We hope it helps.

### Climathon

- A climate action programme with a powerful ideathon at its core.

### Local Organiser

- A person or organisation ready to activate climate action by organising a local Climathon.

### Climathonians

- The team curating Climathon across the globe.

### Challenge

- A focused problem that touches on a local climate-change related issue in your city.

### Warm-up

- The first month(s) of local activities with, for example, citizens, City Reps and (potential) partners to raise awareness, define challenges, build teams and/or start to work on challenges leading up to the ideathon, including warm-up events.

### Follow-up

- Essential follow-up activities, including events, to enable the developed ideas to be implemented, and nominating ideas for the Climathon Global Awards.

### Ideathon

- Climathon's core event, typically lasting between 12 and 72 hours, in which a large number of people meet to develop ideas together.

### Global Awards

- A well-deserved celebration of ideas where winning Climathon ideas can participate. This event offers citizens and cities a global stage for their local climate innovation to help with scale and exposure, as well as the opportunity to network and meet other like-minded people in the community.

### City Reps

- Representatives of the local municipality, whether civil servant or public organisation.

## Citizens

- The people living and/or working in the city where the Climathon takes place, (potential) participants in your Climathon.

## Team

- The Local Organiser's team to organise and execute the Climathon.

## Stakeholders

- Citizens, City Reps and organisations potentially relevant for increasing the impact of the Climathon.

## Participants

- The people contributing to the ideathon or other Climathon events as participants.

## Partner

- Organisations who contribute to the Climathon financially or in-kind.

## Idea

- An idea which is either created or developed during the Climathon that responds to a local challenge and shared on the Climathon website.

## Winning Idea(s)

- The winning idea(s) from your Climathon, usually voted on locally by a jury and that can apply for the Global Awards.

## Success Story

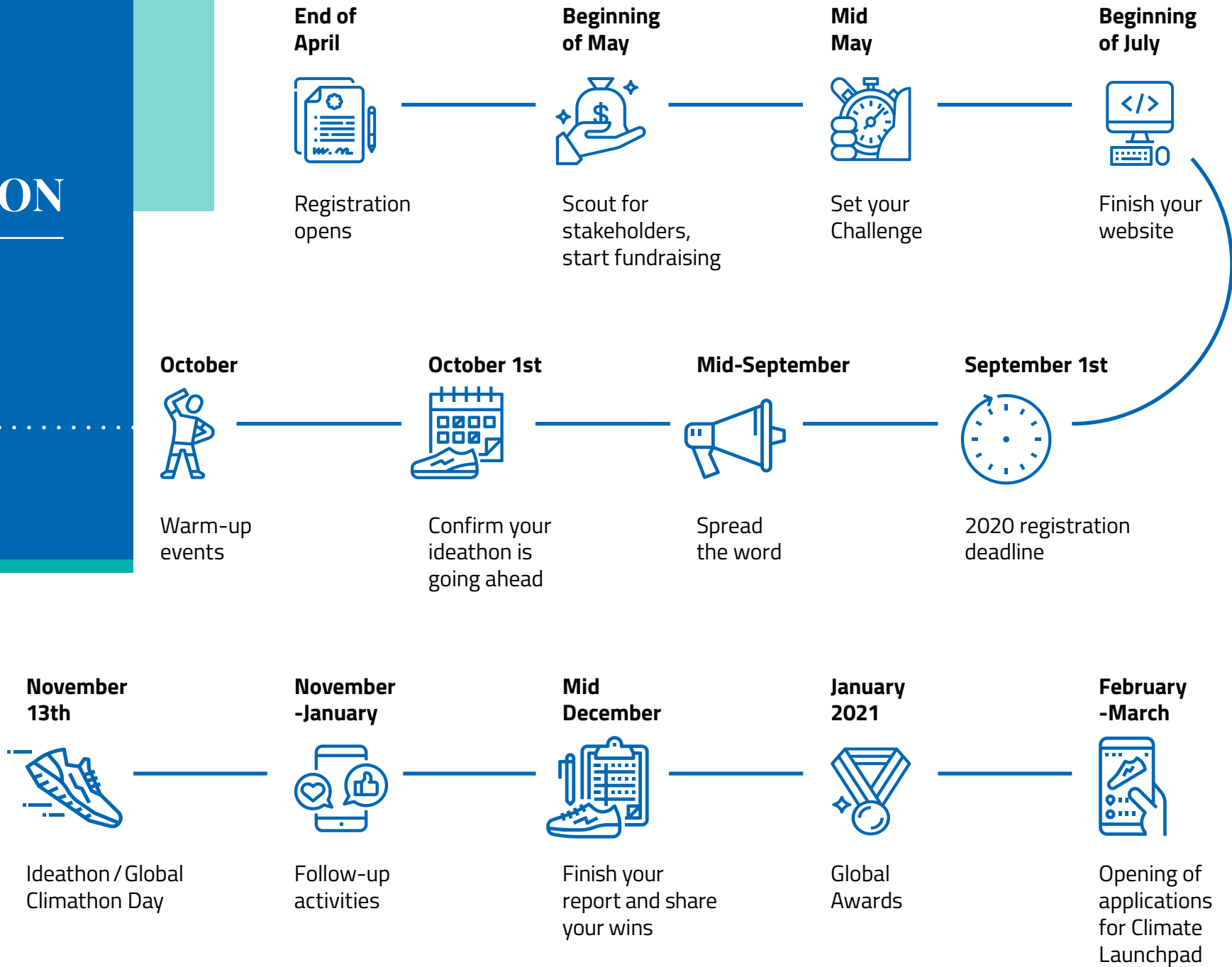
- A Climathon-related story worth sharing to the wider community, often a successful idea/project, new collaborations or learning outcomes.

## MoU

- The (unfortunately) necessary Memorandum of Understanding clearly outlining the rules of collaboration between a Local Organiser and the Climathonians.

# 1. WHAT IS CLIMATHON

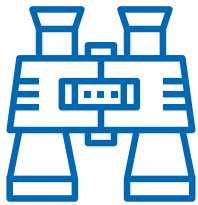
## b • Timeline





## 2. WARM UP

### a • Scout your stakeholders



### The city matters

We believe cities are the place to pioneer exemplary climate action. We highly recommend you to involve your local municipality, because their involvement makes it more likely that you pick the right challenge and that any ideas developed through your Climathon are eligible for continued support.

### Positioning your Climathon

Before you reach out to any City Representatives, consider how they might benefit from supporting your Climathon.

- Could they engage citizens for a diversity of perspectives on climate challenges?
- Raise awareness on progress and plans to tackle climate action locally?
- Show thought leadership on climate issues?
- Acquire global recognition as a pioneering city encouraging and driving climate action?
- Enjoy potential promotion of successful ideas at the Global Awards?

Ideally, you develop a close relationship with your City's Representatives and keep them involved from beginning to end. To make that a reality, it's best to update them regularly on your progress.

Consider a clear role for your City Representative(s) during the Climathon, whether before, during or after the ideathon.

- Formal endorsement  
*press release, municipality's website*
- Sponsorship  
*financial or other*
- Ownership over a specific challenge
- Offering (free) space/venue
- Marketing / promotional support

## Your Team

You're likely not organising a Climathon just by yourself. Maybe it's even a group of you who signed up as Local Organisers. Nevertheless, it helps to think through the roles of your Team and make sure you have everything covered — or know who you still need to get on board.

We recommend the following roles for your Climathon Team, of course, one person can have multiple roles:



### A. Lead Local Organiser:

signs up their organisation to organise the Climathon, takes full responsibility for realising the programme and is the contact person for Climate-KIC's City Managers.

**B. Partnerships Lead:** takes the initiative in getting partners (funders and sponsors) on board for the ideathon and other Climathon-related activities. Coordinates involvement of partners during events (e.g. as moderator, coach, workshop organiser).

### C. Communications Lead:

oversees execution of all communications that goes out in the name of your local Climathon, coordinates (volunteer) support of the photographer and videographer during your ideathon, and can be the contact person for the central Climathon comms team.

### D. Ideathon Lead:

oversees and coordinates content and logistics of the ideathon event.

**E. Volunteer Lead:** coordinates the responsibilities and commitments of volunteers (it's likely you'll need helpers during the ideathon).

## Other individuals

**Coaches, experts, moderator/facilitators and jury members** will be part of your Climathon programme especially during the ideathon but also during other parts of the programme.

Coaches are important to help support the participants in coming up with ideas, particularly during the ideathon but can also be involved in a warm-up workshop. Moderators/facilitators can be helpful to lead a challenge workshop or any warm-up or follow-up event. Experts bring a deep knowledge in a certain area, mostly in the challenge area. They can be involved during the challenge creation process, but it's also helpful to have them around during the ideathon to help participants come up with relevant ideas for the challenge. Jury members will have to be involved in judging participant ideas and will mostly be there during the ideathon but can also be involved in a follow-up workshop to judge the further development of the ideas.

When planning your programme think who you will need and during which phase of your programme.

Also think what you can offer (e.g. visibility, and who in your net-work would be

interested in collaborating with you) Make use of your existing community and who might want to get involved. Find organisations who could, with their experience, add value to the programme and help you develop it further.

## Participants

If you're looking to enhance the impact of your Climathon, the following groups are often the best fit. Ideally you want to encourage diversity and different ways of thinking across the groups, as well as different levels of experience

- Intra/entrepreneurs
- Students and researchers
- Developers and techies
- Policymakers and influencers
- Professionals and experts

During your ideathon, you can subsequently create opportunities to attract different audiences by creating tracks for new projects/participants without ideas, start-ups, intrapreneurs and policymakers.

## 2. WARM UP

### b • Secure the funding



Securing funding and additional sponsorships is important for a successful Climathon.

Before reaching out to funders (financial support) and/or sponsors (other support) it is important to think about how you want to involve them.

Often, funders and sponsors - we prefer to call them partners - are also committed to delivering climate action or solving the challenge together with you. To get you started, we have comprised some basic recommendations:

- 1 • Identify and prioritize companies, organisations, NGOs, and/or city representatives you know that might share your Climathon's mission
- 2 • Try to understand what they would like to achieve by partnering with your Climathon (if you can, then try to your assumptions before starting a broad recruitment campaign)
- 3 • Determine how you want to involve your partners, e.g. by including them in the challenge creation, offering speaking slots or coach/expert seats; considering Climathon as their team-building activity; giving them some airtime during lunch or dinner; creating merchandise or a goodie bag for participants to take home; letting them build and brand

a 'relax corner' during the ideathon; allowing them a take-over of your social media, etc.

- 4 • Write a proposal for each potential partner and include the options for involvement. You can use the general PPT presentation template for this.
- 5 • Start reaching out to potential partners with your proposal to setup meetings where you can present your vision and idea of how you want to involve them
- 6 • With your partner you should agree on a definition of success for the partnership, and a metric that proves the partnerships' added value for both parties. Examples: visibility created online and offline, or number of ideas to be further supported
- 7 • Experience taught us that your local network is often the best place to start, and that it will be a driving force for securing the funding and sponsorships needed to host your local Climathon.

## 2. WARM UP

### c • Set your challenge

Your challenge(s) is/are the central focus of your Climathon as it is what glues all your stakeholders together.



Finding an engaged Challenge Provider and identifying an impactful Challenge will determine the quality of your outputs.

The Challenge creation process will also be valuable in getting your partners engaged not only in the warm-up but also in the follow-up after the ideathon. Be sure to keep the Challenge relevant to tackling climate change and taking further action, in line with international guidelines.

[Check out this beginners guide to the IPCC report](#)

### Identify a Challenge Provider

As a Local Organiser your first step is to recruit the Challenge Provider, who is often a city authority or someone related to the city departments, or any local businesses that experience real-life climate-related challenges.

The Challenge Provider should be “married” to the Challenge, meaning they should have a real interest in, or need to, overcome the challenge. The extent to which your Challenge Provider really cares about the Challenge will contribute to the potential impact of your Climathon.

Think about how Climathon can help a Challenge Provider overcome their challenge(s), for example by:

- Creating climate innovation together with citizens with out-of-the-box ideas for actual challenges
- Strengthening ties to citizens, businesses, and local ecosystems that share, or are interested, in the challenge
- Improving existing projects or plans with citizen input and engagement
- Empowering citizens with bottom-up approaches and engaging them in decision-making processes
- Receiving organisational visibility; the opportunity to showcase climate ambition and climate action
- Integrating employee volunteer programmes

## Facilitate the Challenge creation process

Once you have identified your Challenge Provider, your role is in supporting the challenge creation, which often determines the quality of the ideas as well as the overall interest from the public. The challenge creation process can serve a number of objectives, including:

- To engage and get commitment from Challenge Providers through a participatory approach
- To provide an opportunity for collaboration across stakeholders that might not usually work together (eg. cross departments, citizens or experts)
- To regulate your Challenge Provider's expectations in terms of defining success and capturing Climathon results
- To provide structure around deliverables and deadlines for submitting Challenges as well as ongoing support (e.g. organise a Challenge Workshop)

As a Local Organiser, it is useful to ask your Challenge Provider a few questions to understand their motivations and expectations early.

Here are some example questions:

- What do you expect to have as a result of the challenge, given the limited Climathon resources (elaborate here if possible on event timeframe and the type of audience)?
- Do you intend to offer a winning idea or team any follow up if they meet your criteria for success? How can the engaged Climathon community further support you afterwards and how?
- How much engagement do you wish to have with the Climathon (both before, during and after the ideathon)?



## Topic and Challenge definition

To find the right topic is for you and the Challenge Providers to define together. Climate Challenges may either touch on mitigation (reduction of greenhouse gas emissions), adaptation (minimize damage) or a combination of both. Ultimately, we want to focus our innovation on ideas that can lead to a 1.5 degree world.

We encourage more transformative ideas, those that address a core problem, and not only the symptoms.

For example, why replace cars with electric cars, when we can reduce the amount of travel or mobility needed all together? Ultimately we are talking about avoiding emissions all together, not simply reducing them.

To get inspired you can check out previous challenge examples on the Climathon website or refer to the cross-cutting themes:

- Mobility & Transport  
*clean transport, shared services etc.*
- Buildings & Urban Landscapes  
*nature-based solutions, retro-fit etc.*
- Green Finance & Governance  
*Influencing policy, access to green finance etc*
- Food & Agriculture  
*plant-based alternatives, farmland management*
- Energy & Electricity  
*renewable energy transition, energy systems, energy efficiency*
- Land Use & Conservation  
*afforestation, biodiversity*
- Materials & Recycling  
*waste management, circular initiatives, water management etc.*
- Equality & Education  
*empowering citizens, vulnerable groups, education etc.*
- Health & Well-being  
*climate and health impacts*
- Disaster Risk Reduction  
*building resilience to extreme weather, natural disasters*

## Presenting the Challenge

Making your challenge attractive to your audience is key. A challenge is presented in three core sections:

### 1. Challenge summary:

question or statement

### 2. Challenge description:

status quo - detailed description of the challenge context

### 3. Challenge vision

directing the ideas or solutions towards a desired outcome.

Some general guidelines to take into account when presenting your Challenge:

- It should consist of a clear, easy to understand and well-researched problem statement.
- It helps participants if the Challenge indicates in which direction the ideas should go.
- Gather relevant data or information sources to help inform the innovation process
- Have an engaged set of Challenge experts who are present during the challenge creation and also during the ideathon to guide participants in their idea finding process.
- The Challenge can also be presented in the form of a video



## Local Challenge example

### 1. Challenge summary:

How can we create a restful, edible city and take care of it as a self-organized community?

### 2. Challenge description:

In Zurich, space is a precious and finite good. Many citizens are keen to get involved in urban farming activity and produce their own food. Yet with the limited space, it is not always possible to meet this desire.

Today, food production is possible in family gardens, community gardens and similar spaces specifically reserved for farming and gardening activities.

However, one could use other spaces as well for example, roofs, rest-areas, and even grey spaces can be co-used for urban farming.

### 3. Challenge vision

How could we bring together the citizens' needs and the requirements of the city? Moreover, how can citizen engagement in urban farming become a lasting and caring community-run system?

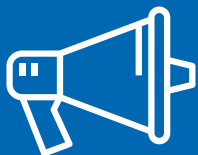
Focus on the combination of urban spaces and urban farming activities in a community-run system.

Possible solutions could focus on:

- What are the needs of the citizens? How can we implement the needs?
- What are realistic spaces for co-using and what are the synergies in relation to climate, CO2, etc.?
- How do other cities approach this topic?
- How do these types of urban farming look like? New forms of production?
- What does a sustainable community look like?

## 2. WARM UP

### d • Spread the word



## Your Climathon campaign

There is no Climathon, without a campaign. A good campaign is clear, consistent and compelling across all channels.

Ideally, your campaign serves two goals:

- **Recruit community**

Find and sign up the right audience for your Climathon programme (warm-up/ideation).

- **Build community**

Share progress and results during and after the ideathon to stay connected and accelerate the ideas.

## Channels

With your target audience in mind, choose the channels you want to use. We recommend selecting a mix of online and offline channels.

- **Online:**

LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube

- **Offline:**

Events with printed materials (posters, flyers), face to-face conversations, phone

calls, taking the stage at other events to promote your Climathon (e.g. supported by a Climathon slide template)

- **Media:**

You can also reach out to your local media network or contacts and see if they're interested in what you're doing. If you know of any reporters in your area that are interested in climate and the environment, tell them about your activities!

Or you could put together a basic press release. Maybe they'd be interested in sending someone along to your ideathon to talk to participants or interviewing you on why you're doing it.

Of course, if your local community is very active through things like specific e-mail newsletters, Meetups or WhatsApp, integrate them into your campaign.

Your campaign is more than a Facebook post and e-mail with flyer attached. Every time you and your Team speak to potential partners, participants, or press, you are the campaign, too.

A walking bill-board, essentially.

## Channels

Clarity is key. Make sure that what you share about Climathon is easy to understand for people who are not familiar with Climathon (yet). It's better to assume your audience knows little, than to assume they fully understand what Climathon is about.

Because you can't share a lot of information all at once, it always helps to include a call to action: what can people do after they have read or seen your story? For example, sign up on your website, share the message with others interested in climate action, get in touch if you want to learn more, etc.

## Consistent

Once you have your channels and messaging aligned, it's important to stay consistent with the Climathon brand — we're stronger, together! We'll supply you with a package to support you in getting your campaign out there.

## Compelling

Lastly, step into the shoes of your future partners or participants: if you would come across the social media post or flyer, what would you do? What do you take-away from the message? Does it activate you? Do you understand what to do next? Is it compelling enough?

## Keep emphasising the benefits

If you want to motivate City Reps, citizens and other organisations to get involved in your Climathon, it's key to speak to the potential benefits of their involvement.

We've included a few examples of those benefits to get you started and use in e-mails, proposals or on social.

*We can unite the world's cities in the face of this challenge.*

*Seeds of change can sprout from a single idea.*

*Join the Climathon journey!*

*Climathon offers a clear pathway to climate action.*

*Cities and citizens can co-create local answers to shared climate challenges.*

*Help tackle your city's local climate challenge, and make your city greener and more livable.*

*Boost your career or validate your impact-driven business by taking on something new.*

*Build on your leadership skills and create partnerships that last.*

*Meet a community as committed to climate action as you*

*Know that you're not alone — there's a global Climathon community to support you!*



## Where local meets global

Whilst laying out your recruitment campaign, you can set-up a local city website through the Climathon website and your recruitment process can start.

Although we strongly believe your local network is the place to start for recruiting your participants, we will also run a global social media campaign to support all Local Organisers in their recruitment efforts.

## Don't be discouraged too soon!

We've learned that it's common for ideathon participants to sign up last-minute, so do not be discouraged when you don't have dozens of sign-ups when your campaign goes live. It is important to keep encouraging people to sign-up as soon as possible, though. Maybe come up with Early Bird Benefits sponsored by one of your partners for the first x number of sign-ups? Just an idea.

### 3.

# HOST YOUR EVENTS

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## a • The basics

Events are at the core of your Climathon.

During these events you bring people together for a clear purpose, whether it's defining a challenge or creating ideas, and you need to really understand why and how your event contributes to your Climathon before deciding to fill in the details.

Let's guide you through the different type of events, and what we've learned are the essentials that set you up for success.

## Recruitment of participants

You, as the Local Organiser, are the one to reach out to your community to encourage applications and build interest.

To recruit your participants, make sure you engage other local organisations like Universities, the climate strike movement or other national or locally community based organisations.

Top tip: for open events like ideathons, which don't have event fees or pre-screening of ideas and participants, attendance can be 50- 60% of registrations, so cap the registration at 100-150% of your actual maximum capacity.

If you do include some pre-screening of ideas, hand-pick participants and/or charge for tickets, the attendance rate is likely to be higher.

Find some tips in the spread the word section on how to engage participants.

## How many people should attend?

How many people should participate in the ideathon, and what's enough of a crowd for a pre-ideation workshop?

Well, the optimum number of participants varies across Climathons, and Climathon-related events.

For the ideathon, we recommend having at least 50 participants present. This is the optimum number for good vibes and a fair chance of getting to feasible, exciting ideas. Ideathons with 100 to 150 participants have been rated the best in terms of participant experience but let that not demotivate you to organise something smaller (or larger!).

For warm-up events and follow-up-activities it depends on the purpose. If you want to use a speaker event as a recruitment tool, you can aim for a crowd larger than what you're looking for during your actual ideathon. For a challenge workshop, get in touch with your City Reps to find out who they might like involved and how many people. For a follow-up event, the crowds could be a lot smaller, if you invite teams of the winning ideas directly instead of through a public campaign.

## Language

Past ideathons and events were English-only, both English and a local language, or only in the local language. In what language you hold your events and talk about the Climathon depends on your target audience.

Entrepreneurs, developers and university students often navigate in an English-speaking environment and are comfortable with attending English-speaking events.

If your events are more focused on reaching your local citizens, going for the local language makes more sense.

## Local meets global

As you know, Climathon is locally organised, but takes place all over the world. To help us spread the message globally, we encourage you to use English on social media during the different Climathon events and especially during the ideathon on Global Climathon Day (13 November 2020).

After the ideathon, we'll ask you to deliver a simple online report in English highlighting the learnings and successes of your Climathon

programme. That way, it's easier to build upon each other's online outreach and understand Climathon's global impact.

## Prizes

If you choose to hand out prizes for your ideathon, think of sustainable prizes. Prizes help to encourage teams to continue working on the idea after the ideathon. Examples are a sponsored workspace, expert coaching, incubation, but also visibility for the team on your sponsor's social media, local press or your Climathon's channels.

It can be really impactful to hand out small prizes to all your participants to reward their efforts. Even throughout the day, it is the perfect motivator and energy booster. Don't forget to announce your prizes beforehand, as this can definitely lower the threshold for people to join your ideathon. Don't forget the winning solutions of your ideathon are eligible for nomination in the Climathon Global Awards.







## Venue

We know you have organized events before but do not underestimate what influence a venue can have on the creativity and well-being of your participants. Plan enough time to look for a nice space that has enough tables, chairs, power outlets and most importantly good internet connection.

## Walk your talk

Working on ideas is one thing, doing that in an environment that actually shows how to tackle climate challenges, is even better.

This is what we've learned you can do to green your ideathon and other Climathon-related events.

- Can you include vegetarian options in your food line-up? Or go 100% veggie or vegan?
- Do you use re-usable plates, glasses and cutlery?  
Plastic-free where possible?
- Can you order exactly enough food?  
Do you have any idea what to do with (still edible) leftovers?
- Can you put recycling bins out for e.g. paper and plastics?
- Is your venue accessible by public transport, or on foot? How can you encourage shared transportation?
- Can you limit the amount of printed materials?
- Can you propose sustainable materials in your sponsorship deals?
- What does your office stock look like?  
Do you use recycled printing paper?
- Have you considered virtual participation instead of flying people in from far away?

### 3. HOST YOUR EVENTS

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#### b ▪ Warm-up events



Initiate the Climathon kick-off with a warm-up event to create buzz and involve your target audience(s).

- **Run a challenge co-creation workshop**

To create the challenge together with the input of different stakeholders. Include the municipality as this is a great way for them to hear the citizen's perspective.

Understanding the problem is key to developing winning ideas!

- **Set up a pre-ideation workshop**

for registered ideation participants to kickstart brainstorming on the challenge and team-building.

- **Organise a Fireside chat**

with speaker/challenge expert as a teaser for your upcoming ideathon to recruit participants

- **Run a climate/Climathon-related pub-quiz**

to get people excited about the ideathon





### 3.

## HOST YOUR EVENTS

### c ■ Ideathon

The ideathon is the event where people come together to develop, innovate and build ideas ("disruptive" or "transformative") to solve local climate challenges in a creative way.

The ideathon focuses on the uniqueness of an idea more than on the feasibility of implementation.

### The ideathon basics

The ideathon typically lasts between 12 and 72 hours and focuses on providing the right context for participants so they can create and develop their ideas together.

Allowing participants enough time to understand the challenge is crucial for the potential future development and implementation of the idea.

### What does an ideathon look like?

The ideathons organised for Climathon follow a flow that we've seen work best. Bear in mind there's many valuable resources out there on how to organise ideathon type events. As an inspiration we have listed example pages on how to run a hackathon, which in terms of organisational flow is almost identical to an ideathon.

[Organize a Hackathon \(WikiHow\)](#)  
[Hackathon Guide](#)

### Build your flow

When you start designing the flow of your ideathon you can get guided by the 6 proposed stages:



## Kick-off

This is the time to set the tone of your ideathon and get everyone excited about participating in it.

Make sure to give a warm welcome to all your participants, sponsors and city authorities and make sure to share agenda and any relevant details. This is also the time you can get your partners or sponsors to introduce themselves.

A good part of the kick-off is to ask your Challenge Provider to introduce the Challenge shortly in an inspirational way, to get people excited.

## Build a team

During an ideathon it's way more fun for participants to work with a great team to be able to come up with new ideas to the challenge.

Ideathon teams typically have members with complimentary skill sets and are groups between three and six people. Make sure to have coaches to support in this process, as some participants will find it harder to commit to a team than others.

### **Input**

#### ▪ **Idea pitches**

Anyone who brings in an idea can introduce it to the other participants to gauge other participants interests and get team members. You can do this in plenum or within smaller groups.

Additional reading

> [Team formation example](#)





## Understand the Challenge

The best ideas emerge when participants properly understand your local climate challenge before coming up with ideas. Encourage your groups to research about the challenge to understand the context better. Research can be done in different ways, by talking and interviewing challenge experts, by talking to the general public about the challenge and also online research.

### **Input**

#### ▪ **Workshop**

Host a workshop how to do best interview experts and users to understand their needs in relation to the challenge/problem.

#### ▪ **Transformative thinking**

This is about not creating point innovations ideas that can be used globally and at scale. For example, why replace cars with electric cars, when we can reduce the amount of travel or mobility needed all together? To encourage this type of thinking participants need to understand the core of the problem of the challenge. In an exercise they can ask themselves five times "why" a problem exists.

## Brainstorm ideas

Once your participants are familiar with the challenge, they can turn on their solution engine.

To start this process you can do a facilitated brainstorming session to help people spark their creativity.

### **Input**

#### ▪ **Exercise**

Take the challenge question and instruct each person from the group to write down an unconventional idea to solve the challenge on a post-it and have them pass it to the person sitting next to them. Ask everyone to write a reason why the idea will fail and have them pass the post-it note to the left again. Instruct them to write down a way to resolve the critique.

#### ▪ **Inspirational talk**

Inspire participants by inviting entrepreneurs or previous participants that came up with great ideas.

Additional reading

> [Board of Innovation ideation tools](#)

> [Interaction Design tools](#)

## Create and validate

This is the phase to make the ideas more tangible by creating prototypes and also keep validating them.

Prototypes can range from paper storyboards that illustrate the idea, a video animation that explain the idea, a real object/model that shows how your idea looks like but also a wireframe of an app or even a coded app and much more. Important for a prototype is that it communicates the challenge and idea clearly.

Make sure that in this phase you leave enough time for teams to work on refining their idea without too much distraction. You can include small distractions but make sure it helps to energize and motivate participants. Ideas are midnight snacks, Zumba, Power Yoga or any other exciting energizer.

Anyone can help to validate participants ideas but it helps to have coaches and experts to do this.

You can either have your coaches and experts going around or get participants to book slots with certain coaches or experts.

## Input

### ▪ Peer-to-peer feedback

Have a session where teams can give feedback to each other's ideas to be able to refine them further afterwards.

### ▪ User testing

Send participants outside and get them to explain their idea with their prototype to people in the streets to receive feedback.

Additional reading

> [SessionLab Energizers](#)





## Pitch

The pitch is the final stage of your ideathon and is the time for participants to shine and show what they have worked on during the ideathon and also to get recognition for their work.

### ▪ **Presentations**

Invite each team to present their idea to the fellow participants and the local jury ideally consisting of at least 4 members.

Get teams to create a short presentations in creative ways to present their idea. Try to keep this session to 1-2 hours maximum.

You can invite sponsors and other interested people to this session if you want.

Make sure your teams hand in ideathon related deliverables before the pitches, so you can see, what they worked on. Encourage all your teams to upload their ideas on the Climathon website.

### ▪ **Awards**

It's a great end the pitch-session with awarding winners. You can give prizes for the top 3 if you have one challenge or a challenge prize per challenge category or also decide to award specific aspects (e.g. the best pitch, the most innovative or creative team, or the team with the best team dynamic).

Make sure to leave some time for the jury between the presenta-tions and the award ceremony so they can choose the winners. Close the ceremony with some food and snacks for everyone to decompress, network and share stories.

## ▪ Ideas for prizes

These are possible prizes you can give to the winning teams

- Coaching
- Training courses
- Co-working membership
- Incubator/Accelerator entry  
*e.g. Climate Launchpad*
- Cash prizes  
*make sure the team will use it to work on idea and not something else*
- Small prizes for everyone to ensure all participants are rewarded
- Eligibility for the 2021 Global Climathon Awards

## ▪ Wrap-up

Ideally, provide at least 15 mins for feedback and closing the event. If you want you can create your own detailed participant feedback.

The Climathon team will provide example questions. The best way to guarantee the participants to fill out the survey is to make them do it on the spot! The coach/facilitator can also run a short oral feedback session.

If you invite non-participants to the presentation round and the award ceremony, it is better to do the wrap-up before they arrive.



### 3. HOST YOUR EVENTS

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#### d ▪ Follow-up activities



After putting your feet up, patting yourself on the back and taking a moment to celebrate your successful ideathon, keep the momentum alive!

Host a follow-up event to coordinate with the teams of winning ideas, decide on the winner(s) by public voting or present the winning ideas to your City Reps.

Of course, nominate your winning ideas(s) for the Global Awards. See below for a few examples for follow-up activities.

#### Nurture the community

You might not be aware, but by running a Climathon you have created a community.

A first step could be to choose a platform where your community can stay in touch. That platform can be a follow-up event (or light-touch meetup), a Facebook Group, a newsletter or Family Dinner for the most promising ideas and interested stakeholders (City Representatives, funders and sponsors).

#### Winning teams follow-up

As part of their prize, winning teams could discuss next steps e.g. plan a pilot with someone, identify partners to approach, make commitments/pledges to carry on working on the project for x months, discuss fundraising and prepare go-to-market or figure out a validation strategy.

#### What now for your ideas?

Involve the City Reps, funders and sponsors in a follow-up workshop where the teams can further develop their idea.

Stakeholders are often willing to participate in a follow-up as coaches or experts on e.g. implementation, impact assessment, finance and legal or technology. You can also think of local Climate-KIC offices as expertise partners.

## Incubation

Climate-KIC's Climate Launchpad is a global incubation programme, and you can provide one Climathon winning team with an entry ticket for the national bootcamp.

If you have a Climate Launchpad partner in your country (check [here!](#)) and are interested in providing this entry as a prize please contact a Climathonian and we can connect you with your local CLP partner.

## Climathon Global Awards

The most transformative ideas can be taken forward to the Global Climathon Awards. This annual event offers citizens and cities a global stage for their local climate innovation to help with scale and exposure, as well as the opportunity to network and meet other like-minded people in the community.

### Additional reading

You can find plenty of resources online to host workshops and co-creation sessions or to do plan your events. We have listed a few of our favourites below.

> [\*Essential Guides \(Eventbrite\)\*](#)

> [\*Facilitator's Guide \(IDEO\)\*](#)

> [\*Hyper Island Toolbox \(Hyper Island\)\*](#)





## 4. SHARE AND GROW

When it's all wrapped up, we'd love it if you stayed part of the Climathon community and keep connected so we can continue sharing your progress and building on all the ideas that will come out of your Climathon.

Here you can find some examples how you can keep the Climathon impact growing.



### Design for impact

Impact is something we achieve all together, as a collective. We encourage you to share your learning to help us achieve this.

Locally, there are three simple things you can do early to design for impact:

#### 1 ▪ Think long-term:

What outcomes would you (and your partners) like to see one year later from your partners, winning teams and participants?

If implementing ideas is important, then consider how you could support afterwards.

If raising awareness is important, then consider what key learning outcomes you would like to focus on.

#### 2 ▪ Keep your community engaged:

Identify concrete opportunities for further action, so your participants can stay engaged as a community after the ideathon.

Organise a debrief and follow up to bring participants together and share learnings. Being able to track the progress of your

winning teams over time may also reveal further success stories.

#### 3 ▪ Capture and share impact:

This can either be in the form of event KPIs, participant feedback, individual stories (see Sharing your success section for examples).

If you capture it, share and celebrate it. It will also set you up well for finding further sponsors.

### Share your learning

You are likely to encounter all kinds of challenges and learning – help other organisers learn from your experience to increase the speed of our collective effectiveness to tackle Climate action.

If you get stuck, use the wider community of Local Organisers to help you (SLACK is a great channel). For example, one Local Organiser informed us recently that the best participants are those that feel strongly connected to the city they live in, and that is a useful insight!

## Online post-Climathon reporting

We do ask that all Local Organisers complete an online report to support us.

We know it takes some time to complete but your input really helps us to share insights and to inform and improve the design of the Climathon concept.

We want to ambitiously scale and reach thousands of citizens, and we need your help to grow. Being a public entity also means we have an obligation to be transparent to our taxpayers!

## Sharing your success

Here are some examples of success stories we would encourage you to share with us and the wider community:

### ▪ Citizen activation or outreach:

A community initiative, event or activity that has led to further climate action following your Climathon and includes additional people.

### ▪ Citizen learning and awareness:

Learning outcomes that your participants take home after their participation (eg. learning around climate challenges or city plans) and how this contributes to behavior change.

### ▪ Informing policy or city decisions:

Your city partners have adopted ideas, data or contacts through Climathon that have helped contribute to decision making on climate issues.

### ▪ Successful ideas:

Any Climathon idea that is further developed into a climate solution (is incubated, receives funding or support, or may even be prototyped or implemented) that can be shared with the global community.

Success stories sometimes take time to emerge, so it helps to stay in touch with your (winning) teams so you can track their progress over time.

# 5. E- CLIMATHON



The digital Climathon enables you to bring together your local community online.

We believe that the digital Climathon can be an alternative to the in-person Climathon, leading to positive impact through visibility of ideas and communities globally, while contributing to further promoting carbon neutral events.

We recommend that you read the section in the part warm-up to ensure you have the basics in place before starting to organise your events.

Here is a proposal to help you run such a digital Climathon.

## Warm-up

### ▪ Challenge creation

You can invite all relevant stakeholders and come up with a challenge via video conferencing tool. We recommend to use Zoom or Cisco Webex to facilitate a challenge creation workshop. It could also be an idea to organise a public voting on Facebook to involve the wider community in your challenge creation.

### ▪ Challenge upload

You'll be able to upload your challenge on the website.

### ▪ Participant registration (incl. ticket sales)

Participants can register (and buy tickets) for Climathon events on the Climathon website.

### ▪ Communication with participants

You can communicate with participants before the event via the website and the integrated E-Mail tool.

You can also use Slack to share in-formation and links with participants.

### ▪ E-learning resources for participants

Participants can access local e-learning platforms or EIT Climate-KIC content to learn more about climate change and update their skills.

E.g. On the EIT Climate-KIC platform you can find ideathon related courses that you can offer to participants to make them prepare better for the online event

## Ideathon

### ▪ Participant team formation

Participants can find teammates based on skills/interests. The online platform DevPost is ideal for this. Another way is to set up a Slack channel where participants can post what they are looking for.

### ▪ Live stage

You can deliver presentations, energizers, and take questions in real time via a webinar tool. We suggest you use Zoom or Cisco Webex. Another alternative is to do livestream on YouTube.

#### *Tips for the live stage*

- Kick-off: Start your digital ideathon with a 10-15 minute welcome and quick introduction to the problem. Consider inviting a speaker, sponsor or mentor to do the welcome.
- During: Keep the momentum and spir-its high by organising a few digital check-ins (e.g. after 6, 12 and 18 hours) where you either present something new or simply invite participants to take part in an energizer (update on their idea or something fun that has nothing to do with the ideathon).

- Pitch: This is your chance to create even more visibility around your event and let participants pitch their solutions. You could include a public voting for the best solution or a virtual after-party following the final presentations.

### ▪ Participant teams live discussions/ideation

Participants can chat, share notes, exchange files and links in real time in a breakout room. Zoom allows the creation of breakout rooms. You can also encourage teams to communicate through Slack, Facebook or other messaging services.

### ▪ Coaching

Coaches/mentors can help participants in a breakout room. Zoom would be the preferred option, with Slack as an alternative.

### ▪ Pitching

Participants can pitch their ideas to jury using a virtual space, video submission and enabling public voting. Here we suggest that you use Zoom or Cisco Webex. Upload to YouTube can be an alternative

### ▪ Final idea submission

Participants to submit ideas to Climathon website.

## Follow-up

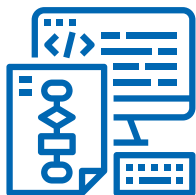
### ▪ Update idea

Update any changes to the idea on Climathon website.

### ▪ E-learning

Teams that are interested in continuing to work on their idea can access Climate-KIC learning resources for examples a handbook on how to enter to Climate Launchpad (CLP).

## 6. TOOLS



### Website

The website is the main tool that guides you through the Climathon process.

The website offers the following services

- Application as a Local Organiser
- Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)
- Onboarding dashboard to lead you through the important Climathon steps.
- Creation of a simple automatically generated city website for your Climathon after MoU is signed, to give you visibility
- Creation of a fully functional city website with more features
- Online knowledge base where you can find more detailed information on what was presented in this playbook and where the community will be able to contribute
- Participant registration with free and paid tickets
- Participant idea upload
- Online report after Climathon

### Slack

Our dedicated Slack\*-channel is where the community meets and exchanges Climathon related information. We highly recommend you join this Slack channel as it will connect you to the wider community for a better experience. By joining Slack you have read and agree to the EIT Climate-KIC Privacy Policy.

*\*Slack is a free online collaboration, and chat-tool for teams.*

### Branded materials

On our website we will share branded materials that you can use for your Climathon.

Here a list of the most important assets you can find:

- Our brand story and guidelines for you to use creating your campaigns and materials
- A branded PowerPoint with some key messaging to help with fundraising
- Toolkit to create communication and event materials and social media campaign (available to logged-in users)

# Climathon

## Thank you

Thank you for reading this guide through to the end.

We hope it contributes to the success of your Climathon!  
Good luck!

