Booklet CREATE YOUR ACTION!



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Introduction

Have you ever found yourself thinking about making a change in your local community, but you did not know how? For example, you are aware of climate change and its negative impact on your community, but do not know how to fight it. Well, local initiatives might be your answer! Continue reading this booklet to find out what local initiatives are, how they can help you, and how you can plan your own local action.

Local initiatives are a great tool for creating positive social change and resolving societal-local challenges. They can have a positive effect on each community member. Not only will they improve their quality of life, but local initiatives will also make both participants and organisers feel like a part of a community – accepted and listened to.

By being an organiser and planning your own actions, you will open the door to new experiences, skills and knowledge that will help you feel more confident in yourself. You will connect with other people who share the same ideas as you. You might motivate them to start planning their actions and actively participate in their local communities.

At first, planning an action might seem like a challenging process. But don't be discouraged. With the support from your trainer and this booklet, you can turn your idea into a reality in a short time!

This 'Create your Action!' Booklet is a step-by-step guide to preparing and promoting local actions. From planning to doing, you will go through four main steps in three different phases (before, during and after the action):

Before the action:Step 1.Identify the local challengeStep 2.Prepare the actionDuring the action:Step 3.Implement the activitiesAfter the action:Step 4.Evaluate and reflect

Each step has different questions and examples to help you easily move from one step to another and reach your final goal. But before that, let's give you some tips and tricks on how to use this booklet and prepare yourself for this journey:

- Go through the booklet and if you find something that is unclear or confusing to you, ask your trainer for an explanation and advice.
- Think outside the box and stay open to new ideas.
- Overcome the fear because it can interfere with your creativity.
- Skip working on the action when you are too tired or stressed out. You are less likely to find inspiration and dig deep into the topic.
- Share your ideas with others while planning. You might encourage others to make suggestions or share experiences, and this can enrich your action plan.





- Remember you don't need to do this alone. Ask your friends, family, co-workers or neighbours to help you in brainstorming or organising the action. As they say, two heads are better than one!
- Use a checklist to monitor your steps and oversee your progress. That will prevent skipping some steps (see Attachment 1).
- Use environmentally friendly materials and activities throughout the whole process. Whenever possible, avoid using paper and plastics, create digital materials, recycle, and avoid wasting material, food or equipment.
- For more inspiration, take a look at an example of preparing and implementing a local action in the City of Rijeka in Croatia called *(G)OLD!* (see Annexe 1).
- If you need to strengthen your skills in financial literacy, health literacy, sustainability or digital literacy needed for a successful action, reach for the Microlearning kit (visit https://citizensxelerator.eu/results/microlearning-sessions/) and go through short learning units to learn more about individual competences and get tips on how to improve them.
- For tips and ideas, look out for the lightbulbs 🏹
- For hints on how to make your action greener, look for this symbol *P*.¹
- Have fun! The process of preparing your action should be exciting and inspirational.

¹ Images taken from Pixabay: <u>Karikatur Symbol Die - Kostenlose Vektorgrafik auf Pixabay - Pixabay;</u> <u>Blatt Blaugrün</u> <u>Stilisiert - Kostenlose Vektorgrafik auf Pixabay - Pixabay</u>.



Before the action

Step 1: Identify the local challenge

Where to begin? This might be the first question you ask at the beginning of your action journey.

What is the local challenge?

First, you should identify the challenge or an issue in your local community. Look for the answer in your notes and materials developed during the brainstorming sessions. Go through the list of local challenges—and potential ideas to address them—created with the group and the facilitator. Check which challenges you have voted to be the most important and feasible. Now, choose one of the challenges you find most relevant to you and to what you would like to change or implement in your local community. Then, you are ready to continue to the next part – setting up your goal (see 'What is my goal?' section).

If you have not taken part in the brainstorming sessions, do not worry – you can get ideas by asking yourself:

- Which local topic is interesting to me?
- Is there a certain challenge or issue in my community (such as food waste, street barriers for persons in wheelchairs, people not recycling)?
- Is there a certain behaviour or situation in my local community I would like to change (such as helping people in need, increasing educational opportunities)?

Try asking your friends, family or neighbours for their opinions and help, or maybe do some desk research. Here are some ideas that can help you find inspiration:

Brainstorming with your friends/family/co-workers

- Bring up your topic of interest when chatting with others.
- Ask others for their opinions and listen to their thoughts and arguments.
- Exchange opinions and ideas.
- Try to see what might be the main issue related to this topic.
- Think about what will happen if you resolve this issue.

Local news

Find out what is happening in your local community by reading local newspapers, listening to local radio, or watching local news and TV shows.

Desk research

Do some Internet research on the topic of your interest. Type in keywords related to the topic. Look at the articles, photos, videos or anything else that might help you find your answer.

Observation

Observe your surroundings at work, at home, and on the streets. Watch people's behaviour or pay attention to the environment. Is there a joint behaviour or a situation you want to change or improve?





Local strategies

Policy documents and strategies are also a great source of information. Find out what local objectives your local community is willing to achieve and whether there is a way you can help achieve them.



Always have a pen and paper with you to note down ideas. Or put them into notes on your phone.

What is my goal?

Imagine you are driving. How do you know the direction you need to go or where you need to turn? How do you know how much time, fuel or money you need? By knowing your destination!

Think about your goal as your destination; your action plan will be the roadmap to get you there. Your goal will tell you which activities to choose, who to invite to your action, how much time and what material you need for the organisation. Key questions for defining your goal are:

- What do I want to achieve with my action?
- What do I want to change?
- What results do I expect and at what time?

Read some tips on how to make your goal SMART:

- Be specific and simple. Focus on the concrete situation, people or environment.
- Be realistic. You cannot stop pollution, but you can reduce food waste or increase the number of people recycling.
- Define the time. When will you achieve this goal? In two months, one year, 45 days?
- Your goal should be relevant to your local community. By brainstorming with people around you, you can find out whether they share your opinion and find this challenge as important as you do.
- Focus on something you can measure (for example, we improved skills, designed a course, removed barriers for persons in wheelchairs, started a book club, and so on). In the end, you will have to compare the results with your goal to see if it is achieved.

Who is this action for?

The last thing you need to define is the group of people this action is aimed at (the **target group**). Think about who you are organising this action for and whose behaviour you want to change or improve.

Try to be specific while describing their profile:

- Age: children, youth, adults, elderly people
- Gender: female, male, other
- Working status: employed/unemployed/students/pensioners
- Social roles: parents, grandparents, workers, children, neighbours, citizens
- Profession: nurses, teachers, chefs, drivers
- Location: workplace, school, city, town, rural area or whole local community



Step 2: Prepare the action

Great job! The first step might be the toughest, but now you are moving on to the creative part of your journey – choosing activities, connecting with others, and sharing your story!



As you can see from the graphic above, to move on to the next step, you must have finished the previous one. For example, if you have not defined your goal and target group, you cannot choose the right activities. Once you are sure of your goal and target group, these will guide you in picking the right methods and materials, as well as the people who will support you in the process (your associates).

What activities will I organise?

Plenty of creative, interactive, and practical activities might be useful for your action. To choose the right ones, look again at your goal and target group. They will influence the type of activities you will organise, where, and with how many participants.

Some useful activities are listed below. You can use one, two, or more, or they might inspire you to come up with new ideas.

Workshops

To create or design an item, repair, reconstruct or redesign something, workshops might provide a good solution. They allow you to gather a group of people working together, sharing ideas, and creating something meaningful.

Workshops can be organised indoors or outdoors:

- Indoors: skills improvement, creating materials/documents, sewing, painting, designing clothes or accessories, creating products from non-recyclable material, designing postcards, cooking, creating mugs/plates, *etc*.
- Outdoors: planting/gardening, reconstructing old buildings/parks, repairing, recycling, cleaning outdoor surfaces (city parks, children's playgrounds, streets, promenades), *etc*.

Creative activities

Art and creative activities can have a great impact on people by allowing them to creatively express their ideas and perspectives. By using imagination and metaphors, you can present the challenge from different perspectives and reach people's emotions, attitudes, and encourage their thinking. These types of activities also enable people to connect with each other through art.

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Examples:





- exhibition
- acting performance
- dance performance
- poetry nights
- painting nights
- theatre

Volunteer activities

Volunteer work—such as collecting donations, community work or social support—encourages people to help those in need and supports local voluntary organisations.

Examples:

- collecting donations (groceries, clothes, hygiene products, books, etc.)
- preparing food for people in need
- repairing items/rooms/machines within volunteer organisations
- providing social support to people with disabilities, elderly, homeless people
- charity concerts

Events

If you want to gather a larger number of visitors and participants, try organising an event in the city or town centre or at another location where your target group is found; these events could be:

- concerts
- competitions
- cooking classes
- live discussions with influential people
- hosting

Projects

Projects include several different activities aimed at the same goal. You can work alone or form a team that will work together and share ideas, knowledge and skills. Projects are usually longer, but they have greater results such as the development of programmes, courses, materials/documents/tools, starting a book club, and so on.



For certain activities (such as events or performances organised in public places) you will need permission from legal authorities. To begin with, choose activities that can be implemented within 3 to 6 months. That way, you could see your action's results sooner and have time to reflect on the action and move on to the next one!



Choose the activities that are least harmful to the environment or modify them to be friendlier for your surroundings. For example, if you are organising a cooking workshop, consider applying zero-waste cooking.





What materials and places do I need?

For each activity, you will need certain materials and space. Consider what you will need for the **activities** (paper, pen, colours, microphone, tools, machines, *etc.*); **promotion** (flyers, brochures, invitations); **associates** (will they charge a participation fee) and **evaluation** (online surveys or printed evaluation forms).

You might need to rent a space or a stage for workshops or performances.

You could create a checklist (see Attachment 2): that way you will not forget to prepare or buy certain materials needed for your action:

- start creating your list by brainstorming
- from a pen to renting space write down everything!
- record how much money you have and how much you need
- note where sponsors could help you
- carry the list with you so you can immediately write down new things you remember
- refresh your list every day

Always try to think in an environmentally friendly way: avoid using paper and create your materials in a digital form; avoid using plastics; prepare recyclable bins at the event *etc.*

Who can help me?

It is hard to organise your action alone. Depending on which activities you choose, search for people or organisations that will help you. Also, do not forget to reach out to your closest friends and family for support and help.

INDIVIDUALS

actors/musicians/dancers restaurant chefs association directors volunteers photographers filmmakers mechanics writers construction workers

ORGANISATIONS/INSTITUTIONS

associations local authorities restaurants marketing agencies construction companies volunteer organisations coffee shops schools/kindergartens nursing homes

Contact your potential associates via email, phone or in person. Describe your goal, explain the importance of your action, and inspire them to get on the board. In the Attachment 3, you can find a template for your email.



When possible, talk to your potential partners in person. The Internet produces high levels of emissions that are negatively affecting the environment.



Action Programme

Now that you have your activities and materials set and ready, it is time to design an action programme. The programme should contain information about the time, place, and activities.

The name of your action

Your action should have a name that is catchy and easy to remember. Make it short and use rhymes or acronyms. You will later use the action name for promotion and sharing your story.

When?

Provide information about the times the event will start and end. If you plan to organise your action over several days, specify the time for each day.

Where?

Supply information about the location of your action. Write down the address, floor or room number – everything you can to make it easier to find.

What activities?

List or describe what you will do in this action.

Why? Write down the action's goal.

For whom?

Describe who this action is for and who can join your action. If there is a maximum number of participants, make it clear how many people can attend your event.

Special guests?

If you are inviting certain guests (such as lecturers, speakers, directors, artists) mention them in the programme and give a short description of who they are.

You do not always need to include all the information in your programme. It can differ depending on your action type and the activities you will organise. In Attachment 4, you can find a simple template for an action programme. If you have a maximum number of participants, you should give people instructions on how they can register (*e.g.* contacting you by email or phone). You can also prepare a registration form using Google Forms (get instructions here).



Create a file of your programme in digital form using Word/Excel or some free digital tool such as Canva (see Attachment 5). This way, you can send the programme via email or mobile App, or share it on social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) without the need to print it out.





Networking and sharing the story

The last part of preparation is networking and sharing information about your action. To reach your target group, you need to choose the right communication tool.

How to share your story? Here are some tips:

Where?

How?

- Social media Local newspapers Radio Email Public places (posters, flyers) Mobile Apps (WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram, etc.)
- Posters Flyers Brochures Videos Photos Conversation Podcasts

Who can help me?

Friends and family Marketing experts Partners Sponsors Organisations Local community Volunteers



Be careful not to share your story too late! Start promoting it at least **two months in advance.**





During the action

Step 3: Implement the activities

The date of your action is finally here! To make sure everything goes smoothly, read some advice on how to prepare before your action starts and participants arrive, and what to consider once the event is underway.

Before the start

- Go through your checklist once again. Make sure everything is ready, including the material and your associates.
- Go through the programme with the people you are working with. Check if everyone knows what they need to do and when.
- Prepare the introduction. You should greet your participants and thank them for their participation.
- Prepare a participation list where you will count the number of people attending the action and get their contact details to update them with the action results or further activities.
- Prepare a consent form for taking photos and videos of your participants. You can include the consent form in the participation list (see Attachment 6).

During the action/event

- Monitor the activities.
- Interact with people and expand your network. You might get new ideas and partners willing to work with you.
- Talk to your participants and ask for their non-formal feedback on the action.
- Cooperate with your associates to find out how they are managing their activities.
- Take photos or videos and encourage your participants to do the same. That way, you will reach a greater audience.
- Try to smile and stay positive. You should enjoy and admire your results!







After the action

Step 4: Evaluate and reflect

Congratulations! You have reached the final step of your journey - evaluation and self-reflection.

Participants' and partners' evaluation

To find out if you've achieved your goal, it is important to get feedback from your participants. Their responses will tell you what worked well and what you should improve in the next action you organise. You might get ideas for further actions addressing the same or other local issues.

In the Attachments, you can find templates for a 10-minute questionnaire you can use to get feedback on the significance, relevance and usefulness of the action either from your associates (Attachment 7) or from participants (Attachment 8).

In addition, you can include questions to get feedback on some other aspects of your event, such as:

- food and drinks
- performances
- things people learned
- emotions
- expectations
- suggestions
- ideas for a new action

Besides evaluation forms, you can organise group discussions or interactive activities using movement, emotions or art to find out about people's thoughts and emotions related to the event.

If you are skilled in creating digital content, you can create videos of your participants answering a few questions related to the action.



If possible, prepare evaluation forms in a digital form (*e.g.* Google Forms, SurveyMonkey) and send them *via* email or social media. That way, you will reduce the usage and waste of paper.





Self-reflection

Apart from your participants' feedback, it is important to think about how satisfied you are with the action and how this journey has affected you:

- How satisfied am I with my action?
- Have I achieved my goal?
- How am I feeling right now?
- What have I learned during this process?
- What new skills have I acquired?
- Would I go through this process again?

After the reflection, *What else can I do?* might be the next question you will ask yourself that will bring you back to the first step of your action preparation to continue making positive changes for both the community and yourself.





Attachments

Attachment 1: My Action Checklist²



² Created in Canva:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAFyQHSITE8/95T1_PRRq9SiHeXDcDMCTg/view?utm_content=DAFyQHSITE8 &utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor.

Attachment 2: Materials and Budget Checklist

LOCATION	COSTS	SPONSORS	DUE DATE	X
Decoration				
Tables				
Chairs				
Lights				
Music				
Space rent				
FOOD AND DRINKS	COSTS	SPONSORS	DUE DATE	x
Catering				
Cutlery				
Drinks				
Snacks				
Sweets				
MATERIAL FOR THE ACTIVITY	COSTS	SPONSORS	DUE DATE	X
Paper				
Pens/Markers				
Flipchart				
Laptop				
Microphone				
PROMO MATERIALS	COSTS	SPONSORS	DUE DATE	X
Flyers				
Brochures				
Posters				
T-shirts				
Pens				
BUDGET				



Attachment 3: Email for associates/sponsors (template)

Dear Mr./Mrs. _____ (surname of the person),

I hope this email finds you well!

My name is (your	name and surname) and I am _	(shortly
write about who you are and wh	nat is your role). I am plannin	g and organising a local action
	(name of	<i>the action)</i> aimed at
	(describe your	goal and main results).
The action will take place on	(<i>date</i>) at/in	<i>(place),</i> where we
will	(describe the mair	activities of the action). You can
find the whole programme in the a	ttachment to this email.	
Considering the action's goal and the	he main activities, I think you m	ight find this action interesting
and could significantly contribute to	o it by participating and sharing	your expertise. For
(write	e about the activity where you r	<i>eed their help),</i> I would need
your support and help by	(explain how they can help you).
If have any averations for all free	to contract up a low where a st	han a han a

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by phone at ______ (your phone number) or this email.

Thank you for your consideration and your time.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Respectfully,

_____ (your name and surname)





Attachment 4: Action Programme (template)

Event title: Date, duration and location: Hosting organisation: Objectives of the session:

Agenda

Time	Name of the session Speakers
10:30am	
12:00noon	
ххх	
XXX	





Attachment 5: Examples of graphics to share digitally ^{3 4}



³ Example 1 - Created in Canva:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAFyXGuWmJI/cl44s1bCKL8S0UX3OfJtvA/view?utm_content=DAFyXGuWmJI &utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor.



https://www.canva.com/design/DAFyWZg0zdg/CyZBiYYeGqmgKysBOgwcXw/view?utm_content=DAFyWZg0zd g&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor.

⁴ Example 2 - Created in Canva:

Don't throw it, donate it!

You have so many clothes and shoes you don't need anymore and you are willing to get rid of them? Instead of throwing them away, you can visit our stand in the city centre where we will collect your clothes, reuse them and create a new pair of jeans or a T-shirt to give it to the ones in need.

In cooperation with associations in the City of Rijeka, we will donate newly created clothes to their members.

WHEN?

7. 10. - 4. 11. 2023. every Saturday 9 A.M. - 1 P.M.

WHERE?

DONATE

Rijeka, City Centre Korzo (below the Hotel Bonavia)

WHY?

We are aiming at reducing the waste by collecting old clothes and reusing them. Thus we will raise awareness of the amount of waste caused by the fast fashion.

In addition, our goal is to help the people in need who cannot afford themselves to buy new clothing items.





Attachment 6: Participation List (template)

Action/Activity Title

Location, Date

Time

	Name and Surname	Contact (e-mail/phone number)	Signature (participation)	Signature (consent*)
1.				
2.				
з.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				

* By entering the event grounds, the participant authorises the taking of photographs, audio and video recordings, etc. The images, photographs and/or videos may be used to highlight this event in the future. Your e-mail and/or any other personal information is confidential and is intended solely as evidence of your participation in this event.





Attachment 7: Evaluation Form (template for partners)

Name of your action Evaluation

Dear partners,

Thank you for your cooperation and support during *the name of your action*. It was a pleasure working with you and supporting each other in this dynamic and inspiring process.

To assess the achievement of this action's goals, improve our further work, and identify more challenges in our local community, we are asking you to fill out this five-minute evaluation form and give us your feedback on your satisfaction with this action and our cooperation.

Thank you in advance!

On a scale from 1 to 5, mark the extent to which you agree with the following statements (1 - strongly disagree; 5 - strongly agree).

This action is relevant to our local community.	1	2	3	4	5
This action can contribute to achieving its main objective.	1	2	3	4	5
This action is sustainable.	1	2	3	4	5
This action helps increase the quality of life in our local community.	1	2	3	4	5
The action activities were relevant to my organisation/me.	1	2	3	4	5
The action activities were meaningful for the people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5
The action was useful to me/my organisation.					
The action activities were innovative.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to continue our cooperation.	1	2	3	4	5

If you would like to continue our cooperation, on which activities/aspects of your own work would you like us to cooperate?

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What can we improve in any further work?

What were the most positive results of this action?





Are there other challenges you feel we should address in our local community?

Do you have any other comments/suggestions?

If you want to continue our cooperation or receive information about upcoming actions on this topic, please give us your email address so that we can contact you:

THANK YOU!





Attachment 8: Evaluation Form (template for participants)

Name of your action Evaluation

Dear Madam/Sir,

Thank you for participating in (the name of your action)!

To improve further activities and identify more challenges in our local community that we need to address, we ask you to fill out this 10-minute evaluation form and give us your feedback.

Thank you in advance!

Age:

- 18 25
- 26 35
- 36 45
- 46 55
- 56 65
- 65 +

Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Working Status:

- Employed
- Unemployed
- Student
- Retired

For the following questions, on a scale from 1 to 5, mark the extent to which you agree with the following statements (1 - strongly disagree; 5 - strongly agree).

This action is relevant to our local community.	1	2	3	4	5
This action can contribute to achieving its main objective.	1	2	3	4	5
This action is sustainable.	1	2	3	4	5
This action helps increase the life quality of our local community.	1	2	3	4	5
The action activities were relevant to my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The action activities were meaningful for me.	1	2	3	4	5





The action was useful to me.	1	2	3	4	5
The action activities were innovative.	1	2	3	4	5
My level of engagement in the action activities was high.	1	2	3	4	5
The action activities were well organised.	1	2	3	4	5

Why did you participate in this action?

What activities did you particularly like or dislike?

What can we improve in any further actions/activities?

What other challenges should we address in our local community?

Do you have any other comments/suggestions?

If you want to receive information about this or upcoming actions on this topic, please give us your email address so that we can contact you:

THANK YOU!





Annexes

Annexe 1: The (G)OLD! Action





CITIZENS ELERATOR

act:onaid

για έναν κόσμο πιο δίκαιο







dante

USTANOVA ZA OBRAZOVANJE ODRASLIH ADULT EDUCATION INSTITUTION





C C S 1 C



acefir

mentortec

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