Swiss Open Cultural Data Hackathon 2020 Results of the Participants’ Survey

Beat Estermann, 9 November 2020

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## Response Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hackathon Participants</th>
<th>Survey Sample</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>69</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Remarks

- The data was collected by means of an online survey between 28 September and 19 October 2020, i.e. approx. 4 months after the event; one invitation email and two reminders were sent out.
- The response rate of 38% is a bit lower than in earlier years (42-50%).
Composition of the Participants
Gender Distribution
(based on registration data)

Gender

- 55% female
- 45% male

N = 69
Participants’ Professional Background or Field of Study

Professional Background or Field of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information technology, engineering</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural heritage</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching, education</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media, journalism</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing, communication</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design, artistic profession</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social sciences, humanities</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 26
Several answers possible
Participants’ Previous Hackathon Experience

How many other hackathons had you attended before?

N = 26

- 0: 38%
- 1: 27%
- 2: 12%
- 3: 8%
- 4-5: 8%
- more than 10: 8%
In which role did you participate in the hackathon?

N = 26
Several answers possible
Remarks / Insights

- The hackathon has reached almost equal representation of men and women after women had been underrepresented in previous years (2015: 19%; 2016: 33%; 2017: 37%; 2018: 39%; 2019*: 12%).
- The hackathon attracted a substantial share of new hackathon-goers (38%); this number is similar to the ones in 2017 and 2018; before, it had been decreasing from year to year (2015: 61%; 2016: 53%; 2017: 37%; 2018: 41%).
- Software programmers (38%) and ideators (38%) made up the largest participants group, followed by designers (27%). For the first time, data providers (19%) are not among the most strongly represented groups.
- Almost half of the participants had an IT or engineering background (46%). The other two professional groups that were most strongly represented were people with a background in the social sciences or in the humanities (38%) and cultural heritage professionals (31%).

* Note that in 2019, the hackathon had a completely different format (3 days; mix’n’hack); due to the smaller number of participants (33) no survey data is available for 2019.
Communication Channels
How did you learn about the hackathon?

N = 26
Several answers possible

- 31% through social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- 19% through a mailing list or a newsletter
- 12% through news media (online, printed, radio or TV)
- 4% through a poster, flyer, etc.
- 31% through individual communication from the organizers
- 23% a teacher / professor of mine told me about the hackathon
- 23% a friend or colleague told me about the hackathon
- 15% I’m a member of the organizing team / organization
- 12% I just remembered from last year
- 8% other
Remarks / Insights

- The communication channels that worked best to attract participants were word of mouth, either directly from members of the organizing team (31%) or through friends or colleagues (23%) as well as mailing lists and newsletters (19%).
- One fifth of the participants said that they had just remembered the hackathon from the previous year.
Participants’ Activity During and After the Hackathon
Involvement in Hackathon Projects

How many projects did you work on during the hackathon?

N = 26

- 81% worked on one project
- 19% did not work on any project
Activity around Hackathon Projects after the Event

Have you further pursued the project(s) you worked on during the hackathon?

N = 21

- Yes: 57%
- No: 43%
Remarks / Insights

- **81% of hackathon participants took an active part** in one of the 15 hackathon projects. The remaining 19% acted as organizers or participated as “observers” or data providers.

- **43% of the participants** who had taken an active part in one of the hackathon projects further pursued their project after the event. This number is similar to the one in earlier years (2015: 50%; 2016: 40%; 2017: 50%; 2018: 35%). Note the varying time lag between the event and the survey (2015: 9 months; 2016: 5 months; 2017: 6 months; 2018: 6 months; 2020: 4 months).

- **About a third** of those who have not further pursued their project(s) have not done so due to a lack of time. Some of them are intending to take up the project later. Others pointed to issues related to group dynamics, lack of interest in the topic or difficulties with implementation. One respondent indicated that the project’s aim had already been reached during the hackathon.
Effectiveness of the Hackathon
Effectiveness of the Hackathon

N varies for the different items (indicated in brackets)
## Effectiveness scores over the years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>meeting interesting people / networking</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>getting new inspiration or ideas</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>getting / promoting access to cultural data</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finding out how the data/content of your institution can be used in new contexts</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharing skills and know-how</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>convincing decision-makers to make cultural data/content openly available for re-use</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquiring skills and know-how</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>getting a concrete project done</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finding funding opportunities for your project</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Remarks / Insights

- The hackathon has been **most effective** in terms of “getting new inspiration or ideas” (rated positively at 76%), of “finding out how data of one's institution can be used in new contexts” (72%), and of “meeting interesting people / networking” (62%), followed by “sharing skills and know-how” (56%), and “getting/promoting access to cultural data” (54%).

- The hackathon has been **somewhat effective** in acquiring new skills and know-how (48%), in convincing decision-makers to make cultural data/content openly available for re-use (46%), and in getting a concrete project done (42%).

- The hackathon has been **rather ineffective** in terms of finding funding opportunities for hackathon projects (13%).

- The reported **effectiveness of the online hackathon is the same as for earlier in-person hackathons**, maybe at the exception of «meeting interesting people / networking» where it scores equally low as the 2018 edition which featured a competition between hackathon projects.
Suggested Topics for the Side Programme
Participants were asked to indicate what topics should be covered as part of the (online) side programme of future hackathons. The results are shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Average score (1-5)</th>
<th>Percentage of “(very) interesting”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linked data use cases from the heritage field</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowdsourcing projects in the heritage field</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine learning applications in the heritage field</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From prototype to product – how hackathon projects made their way into productive systems</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to linked data</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of data cleansing tools and techniques</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands-on Wikidata introductory workshop</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands-on OpenRefine workshop</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the IIIF standard</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further mentions (“other topics”):
- Publishing linked data so that it is integrated in the LOD cloud, starting with a CSV and ending with federated SPARQL queries.
- “Introduction of the some web ontology schema” – unclear what is meant by that; most likely something related to semantics.
Participants’ Satisfaction
How did you like the hackathon in general?

N = 26

- 0% for 1 - I did not like it at all
- 0% for 2
- 12% for 3
- 48% for 4
- 40% for 5 - I liked it very much
Readiness to Participate in Another Cultural Hackathon

Would you participate in a cultural data hackathon again?

N = 26

- 0% (1 - No, not at all)
- 12% (3)
- 20% (4)
- 68% (5 - Yes, absolutely)
Readiness to Recommend the Hackathon

Would you recommend a friend/peer to participate in the upcoming hackathon?

N = 26

- 0% (No, not at all)
- 4%
- 8%
- 20%
- 68% (Yes, absolutely)
## Satisfaction scores over the years

### Percentages with scores 4 or 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General satisfaction</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness to participate again</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness to recommend</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percentages with score 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General satisfaction</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness to participate again</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness to recommend</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions
Conclusions

- From a participants’ perspective, **the hackathon has been a large success.** Satisfaction rates are among the highest in the history of the Swiss Open Cultural Data Hackathon.
- The hackathon continues to **attract a significant share of participants who hadn’t been involved in hackathons before.**
- The hackathon has been most effective in terms of **spurring and exchanging ideas, finding out how data can be used in new contexts, networking, sharing skills and know how, and promoting access to cultural data.**
- From a sustainability point of view, the survey results paint a mixed picture: **Only a third of the participants actively involved in one of the projects had further pursued their project(s) 4 months after the event.** As expected, the hackathon hardly improved the participants’ chances to get funding for their projects.
- The **online format has proven as effective in achieving the objectives of the hackathon** as the traditional in-person format. What participants missed most was the richness of social interactions typical for an in-person hackathon. In the online format, social interactions are mostly limited to one’s own team. Several respondents indicated that they would prefer an in-person hackathon if it were not for the pandemic.