

HELPATHON

ORGANIZING COINCIDENCE



An answer to complex questions

Mister Lion helps to find answers and solutions for complex issues. We have several ways to do this, of which the award winning Helpathon has more than proven its value in the fields of old age care, social inclusion and animal free innovation. The Helpathon is an action-oriented rapid prototyping working method derived from hackathons. A Helpathon revolves around an urgent, specific and open question. A Helpathon is based on taking ownership and being willing to act upon it. And the most important person in a Helpathon is the person asking for help.

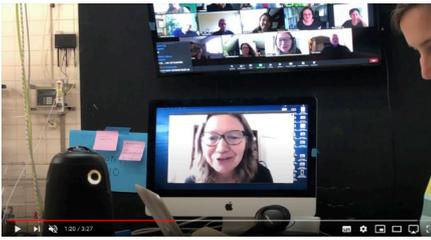
Looking for an urgent and authentic question

In the preparation phase of a Helpathon Mister Lion helps the person calling the Helpathon to formulate her or his question. A Helpathon question is personal and authentic. It reveals a sense of urgency. The question is clearly relevant from a societal or organizational point of view. Volunteers from different backgrounds and with different expertises feel drawn to join and help. It is a big commitment to join a Helpathon. In our practice a Helpathon lasts between two or three days.

Organizing coincidence

We kick off with a briefing contextualizing the questions. We use open space based working methods to allow the volunteering participants to take ownership of what should be discussed or explored next. Once the Helpathon teams have carefully listened to each other we explore and visualize emerging openings. We decide together what new possibilities are worthwhile developing together now. Back working in teams we look for energizing ways to present results to each other. In the past we have made theater performances, produced movies, designed escape rooms and written personal letters to communicate results.

Watch this video for impressions of our previous Helpathons



And then it starts

The results of previous Helpathons have been varying from new housing concepts, new research proposals, new tool design, to new organisations. The most important result always has been that the person calling the Helpathon knows what to do next and feels supported to do it. We have organized Helpathons to make new beginnings in very different fields. The first Helpathon ever (#Hackofacity) was organized to help citizens of Groningen to fight social inequality in their communities. In the North of Holland we organized a Helpathon to help citizens and healthcare professionals to take care of older members of their communities. We organized Helpathons to help homeowners with sustainable renovation. More recently we organized a series of international Helpathons to help researchers, policymakers and funders redesign their biomedical research practice in animal free ways.

Each Helpathon leads to new connections and insights for all volunteering participants. Each Helpathon helps the person (and their organization) calling for help in taking next steps towards new or revised directions.

Corona proof

Our latest Helpathons were corona proof. We hosted 15 people live in our studio and 65 people online in our hybride Helpathon House.