How to organise a public science event – II part

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SISSA

EVENT ORGANISATION: FOUR STEPS

Initiation

Planning

Executing and controlling

Closure

INITIATION: GENERATING AND ORGANISING IDEAS

- **What**?

- **Who**?

- **Why?**

- When?

- Where?

PRACTICAL ACTIVITY:
PLAN YOUR PUBLIC SCIENCE EVENT - 1

Working in groups of 2-3 people, imagine a public science event which you would like to organize as part of the Brain Awareness Week 2021.

It should take place in Trieste and it should not last for more than two hours (less is fine too).

Start thinking about these issues:

Initiation
- What kind of event will you organize? What is the topic? What the format?
- Who is your target audience?
- Why are you organizing it? What is your aim? Why should people take part in it?
- When and where is it going to take place?

PLANNING

PLANNING

- Identify tasks

- Gather a team and identify responsibilities

- Set deadlines and outputs (deliverables)

- Sort out your budget

PLANNING

Potential tasks in event organisation:

- Content: theme, format, title, guests, event schedule, …
- Logistics: when, where, equipment, booking, security, transport, accommodation, …
- Management: human resources, monitoring, evaluation, …
- Communication
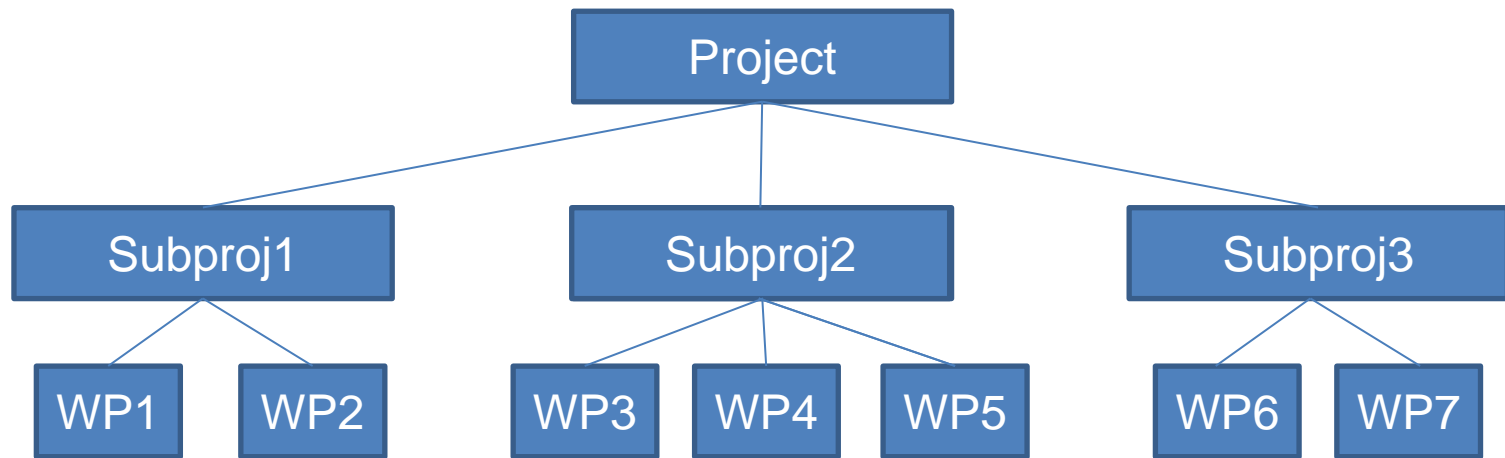- Fundraising
- Volunteers
- Gadgets
- Etc.

How many people are necessary?

Who is in charge of each task?

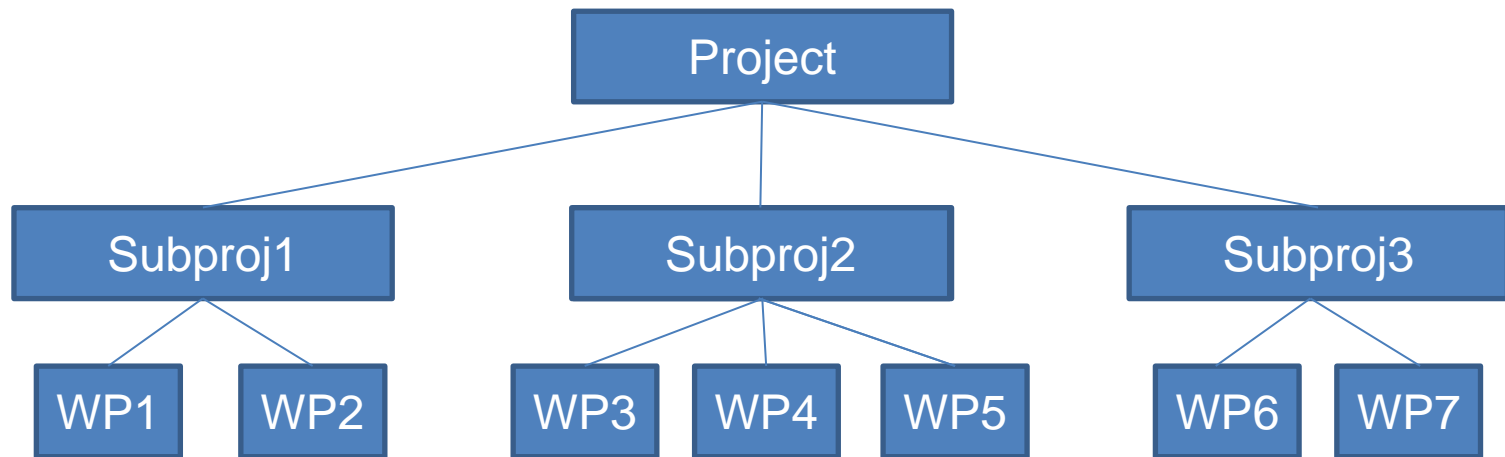When should each task be completed?

WORK BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE (WBS)

The WBS is a decomposition of the work to be carried out by the project team to accomplish the project objectives

The low level components are called **work packages** (WPs)
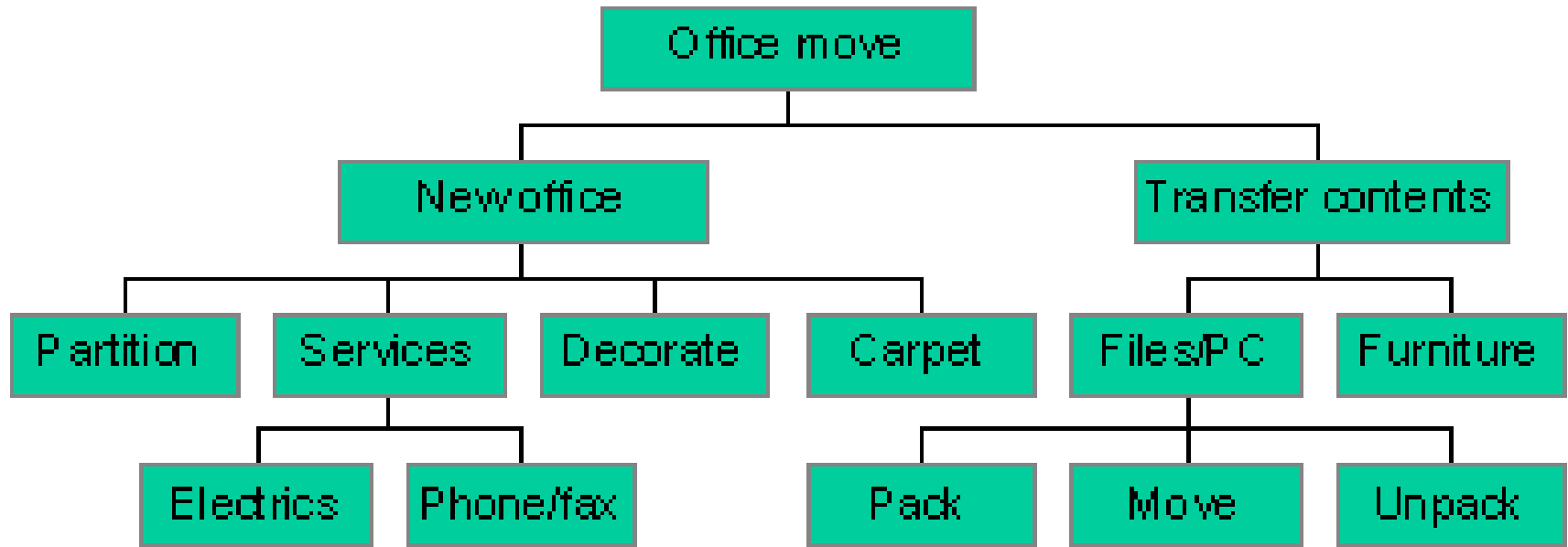
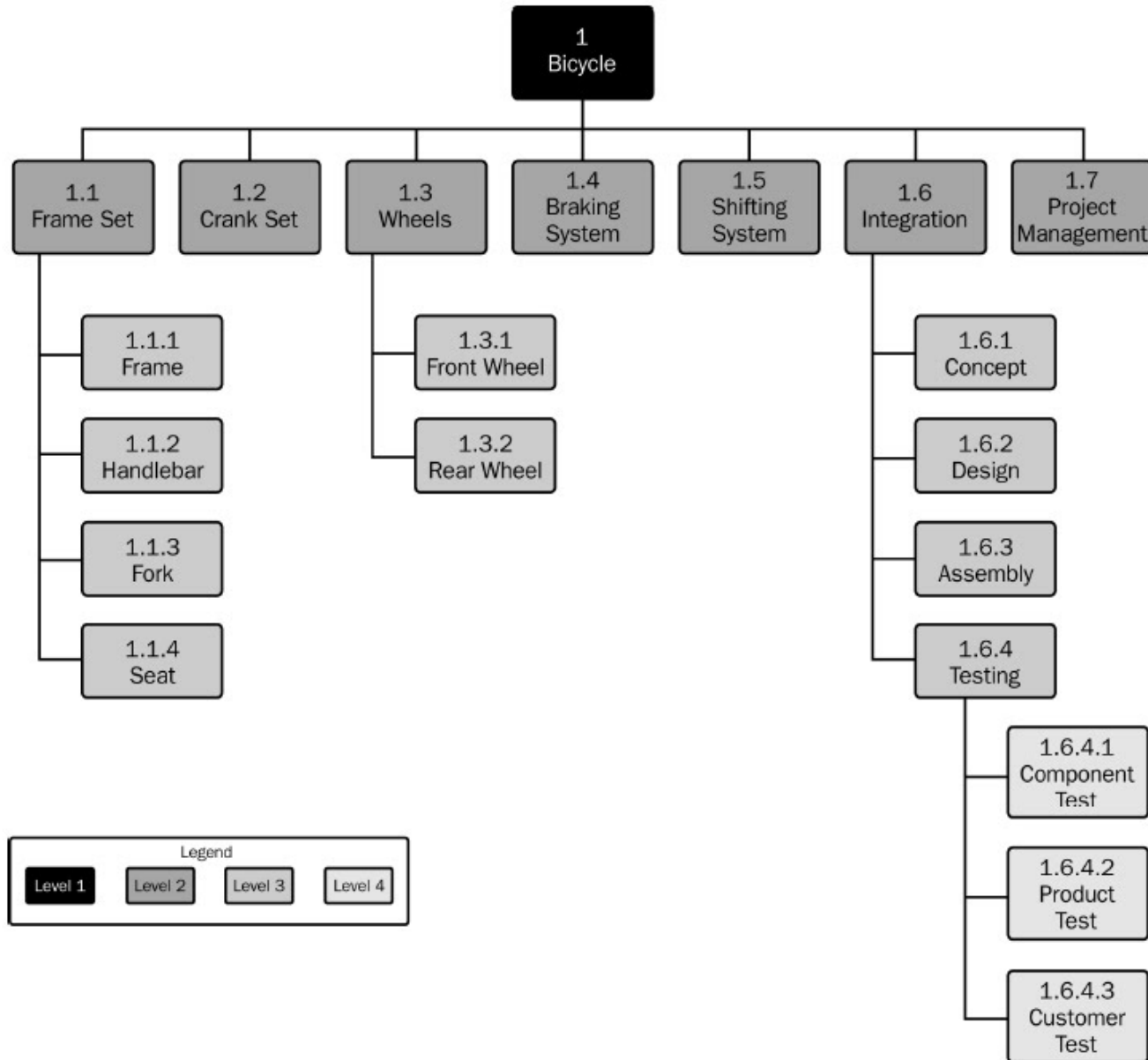# WORK BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE (WBS)

For each WP:
- the main tasks
- the main outputs (deliverables) and deadlines
- the budget
- who is in charge
- how many people are involved
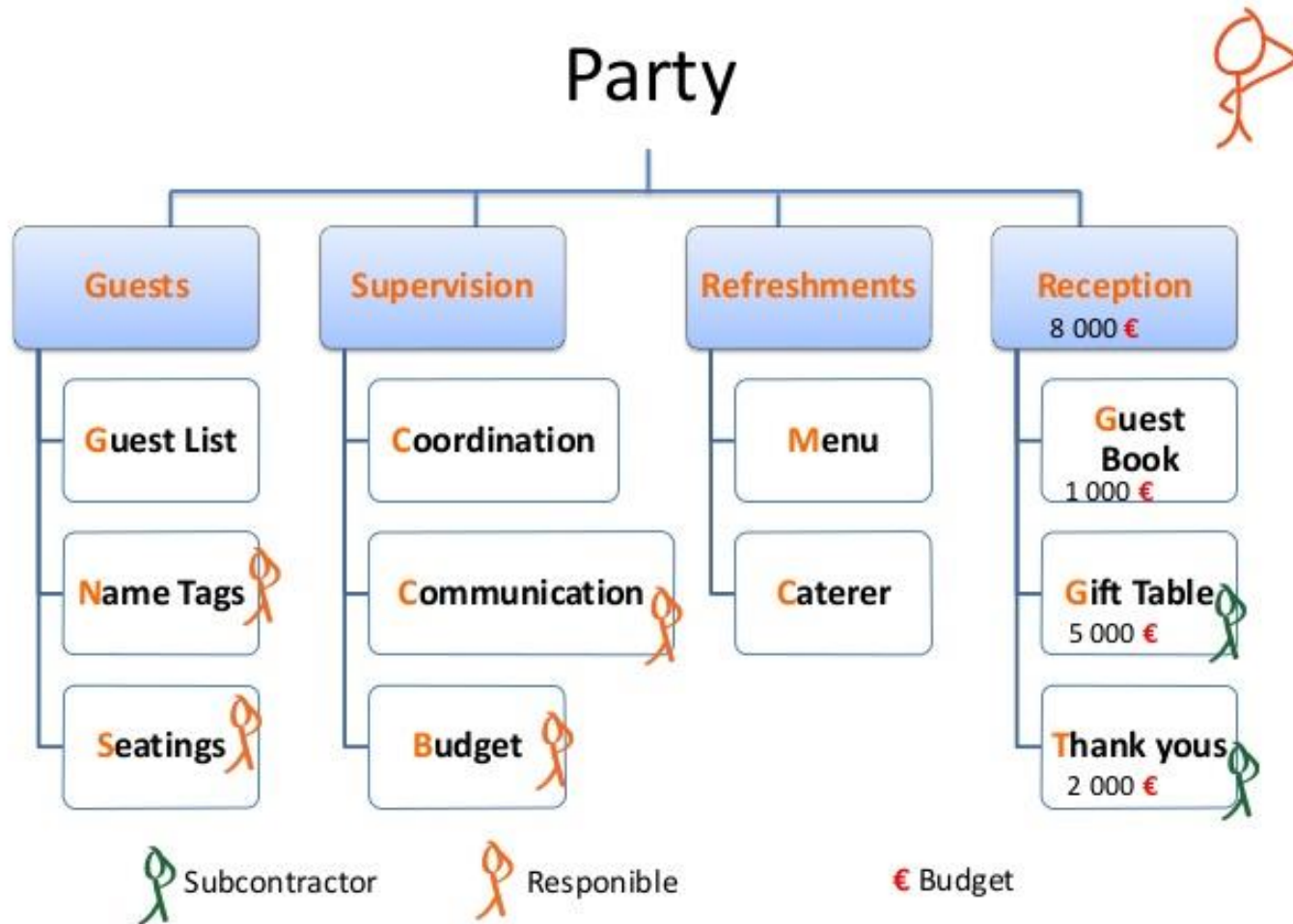
…

WBS SAMPLE: OFFICE MOVE

WBS SAMPLE: A BYCICLE

WBS SAMPLE: A PARTY

VISUAL TOOLS FOR SCHEDULING AND MONITORING

GANTT CHART
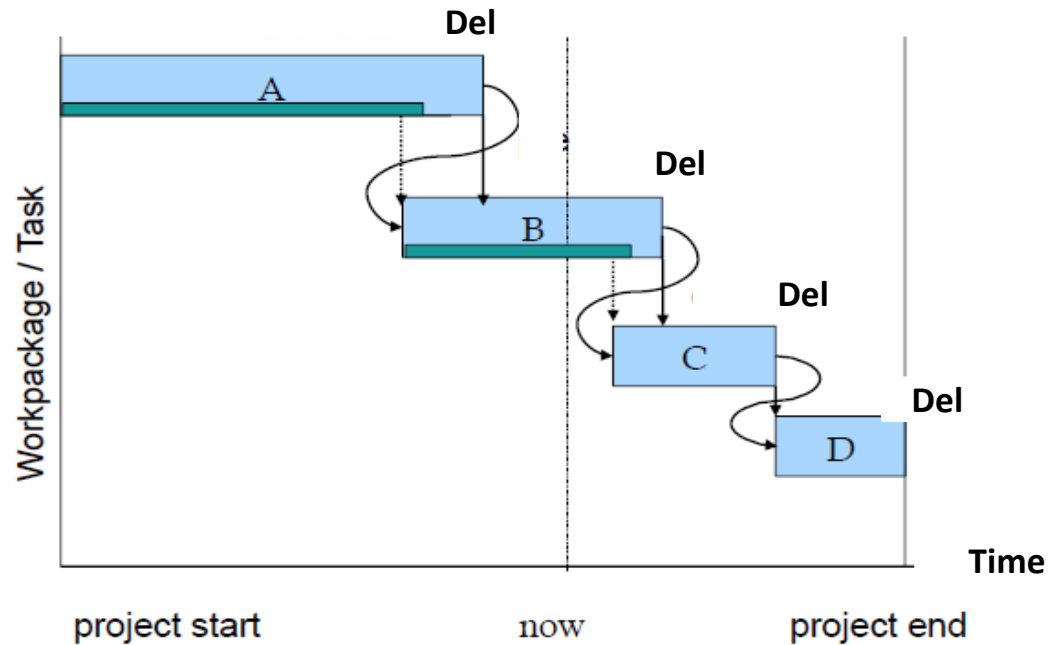
Helpful tool to schedule and coordinate tasks and check progress of the project

PRACTICAL ACTIVITY:
PLAN YOUR PUBLIC SCIENCE EVENT - 2

Working in the same groups of 2-3 people, think about the main tasks in event organization and build a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS).

How many workpackages can you identify? Which ones?

Prepare to share with the class afterwards.

PLANNING: SORT OUT YOUR BUDGET

Expenses:
- Guests travel and accommodation
- Guests fee
- Venue hire
- Equipment hire
- Technician support
- Licenses
- Promotion
- Security issues
- Catering
- Human resources
- Video and photo shooting
- …

Income:
- Institute
- Sponsorships
- Grants
- Donations
- Sales
- Admission fees
- …

Remember to leave a contingency (~10%)

THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRIANGLE: «PICK ANY TWO»

- Design something quickly and to a high standard, but then it will not be cheap
- Design something quickly and cheaply, but it will not be of high quality.
- Design something with high quality and cheaply, but it will take a relatively long time

Consider everything that could go wrong and think about a plan B!

EXECUTING AND CONTROLLING

EXECUTING AND CONTROLLING

- Execute the tasks of each workpackages checking out their progress through deliverables and deadlines

- Change your plans if necessary

EXECUTING ALL TASKS

- Content: theme, format, title, guests, event schedule, …

- Logistics: when, where, equipment, booking, security, transport, accommodation, …

- Management: human resources, monitoring, evaluation, …

- Communication

- Fundraising

- Volunteers

- Gadgets

- Etc.

DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION PLAN

Why do you want to communicate?

Who do you want to reach?

What is/are your key message/s?

DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION PLAN

Decide your communication activities **pre-event, at-event, post-event** using print and electronic media:

E.g.:

- Press releases and media relations

- Event website, mailing list, social network, etc.

- Newspapers or magazine ads, TV and radio ads

- Posters, banners, etc.

- Promotional material for the event or the institution, sponsors, etc.

- Event gadgets

- …

GETTING READY

- Prepare a schedule to share with your team

- Brief your staff on their roles and responsibilities

- Brief your guests on their roles and the time schedule

- Check travel arrangements for your guests

- Prepare all material and equipment needed (promotional material, name plates, audio-video equipment, feedback forms, etc.)

- …

ON THE DAY

Before the event:
- Arrive in plenty of time to set up signs, setting, check up equipment
- Meet your guests and remind them of the roles and the schedule
- Circulate a sign-in sheet to collect names and email addresses
- …

During the event:
- Keep hold of your schedule
- Monitor the event and be ready to activate your plan B
- Keep track of the number of attendees and their participation
- Take pictures or record a video
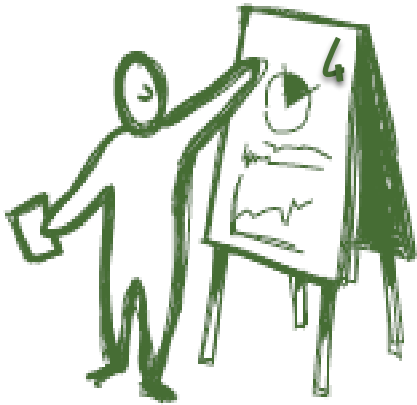- …

After the event:
- Thank all participants, guests and staff
- Collect feedback forms
- Clean up and rearrange the location
- Celebrate!

It is almost guaranteed that not everything will run to plan:
don't stress and
be ready to react

CLOSURE

EVALUATION

- **EVENT EVALUATION**

- **PROJECT EVALUATION**

EVALUATION TOOLS

- Survey (online or offline)

- Interview

- Observations

- Graffiti walls

- Feedback cards

- …

Do not forget to thank your audience for taking the time to fill in the form

EVALUATING A SCIENCE CAFE'

Demographics:
• Are you currently working in or studying a science-related field?
• Are you female or male?
• How old are you?

Café organization:
• What was the best part of tonight's event?
• What would you change to improve future events?
• How did you find out about this event?
• Have you been to science café events before? (Yes or No)
•If yes: Why have you continued to attend science cafés?
•If no: Why did you choose to attend this science café event?

EVALUATING A SCIENCE CAFE'

Impact of the event:
- Please list two things you learned today about science.
- Please rate the café's effectiveness in increasing your interest in science.
- After attending this café, do you expect to do any of the following?
  - Discuss the café topic with family, friends, or colleagues
  - Try to stay more up to date on cutting-edge science topics in general
  - Read news articles about the café's topic
  - Read a book about the café's topic

Follow-up:
- Name
- E-mail
- I am interested in receiving (Check all that apply):
  - Information about future cafés
  - Weekly updates about programming on your station

EVENT EVALUATION

- How many people attended?

- How many new contacts did you get?

- Which parts of the event were the most engaging ones?

- Was the audience comfortable, bored or active?

- How many people interacted?

- Did the speakers/chair/guests do a good job?

- Was there any technical problem?

- Was the location good for the format?

- …

Event evaluation should be done as soon as possible after the event

PROJECT EVALUATION

- Did you achieve your objectives?

- What worked and did not work throughout the whole process?

- What was the most challenging aspect?

- Was your budget right?

- Did you meet your deadlines?

…

CLOSURE

Find all possible mistakes to be more efficient and effective the next time

IN BRIEF

- **Know your audience**

- **Be creative but realistic**

- **Think about plan B**

- **Learn from previous experience**

- **Evaluate your own activities**

- **Enjoy it!**

PRACTICAL ACTIVITY:
PLAN YOUR PUBLIC SCIENCE EVENT - 3

Split in the same groups of 2-3 people and continue working on your event which will be part of the Brain Awareness Week 2021 (11-18 March).

It should take place in Trieste and it should not last for more than two hours (less is fine too).

Polish your ideas
- What kind of event will you organize? What is the topic? What the format?
- Who is your target audience?
- Why are you organizing it? What is your aim? Why should people take part in it?
- When and where is it going to take place?

Start planning it
- Build your WBS, including WP and tasks. Define the deadlines for each task.
- Think about some communication activities to promote your event
- How much is your event going to cost? Draft a budget.
- How many people are needed for the organisation?
- Think about a plan B where necessary

PRACTICAL ACTIVITY: PLAN YOUR PUBLIC SCIENCE EVENT - PROPOSAL

Split in the same groups of 2-3 people, finalise and write down your proposal for a science public event which will be part of the Brain Awareness Week 2021 (15-21 March).

It should take place in Trieste and it should not last for more than two hours (less is fine too).

By Thursday 3rd December 11.59 pm, please send to saviane@sissa.it a document with:

1. Group members
2. Event title
3. Brief description for the programme (max 500 characters, including spaces)
4. Dtailed description (What is the topic? What is the format? How many people are taking part and what is their role?)
5. Organisers (Who?)
6. Objectives (Why?)
7. Target (Who?)
8. Date and time (When?)
9. Location (Where?)
10. WBS with WPs
11. For each WP, list of **main** tasks with deadlines
12. Overall budget
13. Communication activities planned before, during and after the event
14. Project team (number of people involved in the organisation)

USEFUL LINKS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

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All drawings are from the "Handbook for science educators" (2007) by Latitude Science or "Here's a Guide to Organising Successful Virtual Events" by Pollicy (2020). Pictures and logos related to case studies are from the associated websites. Other pictures are related to our activities in Trieste and abroad.