

How to facilitate a session

A guide to running a Hack the City walk-and-map session that ends with a shared spatial diagnosis.

Hack the City

labs4change.org · Methodology Toolkit

1 Prepare

- Invite 5–15 people and choose a safe, walkable area and a clear lens.
- Allow 2–3 hours including the walk. Bring phones/cameras, notebooks, a large printed map and coloured stickers.
- Check the route in advance, and consider accessibility for all participants.
- Agree a facilitator, and a photographer and note-taker per team.

2 Run the session

15 MIN Brief — the lens, the route, safety, and how to record observations.

45 MIN Walk — small teams explore, photographing and noting how places feel.

20 MIN Map — teams place their observations on the shared map and colour-code them.

25 MIN Read it — discuss the patterns: where is inclusion designed in, or out?

15 MIN Findings & asks — agree the key findings and who could act on them.

3 Follow up

- Turn the coded map into a short visual diagnosis with photos and findings.
- Share it with participants, the community and relevant authorities.
- Feed the findings into a prototyping session or an action plan.
- Invite feedback and note routes for a future walk.

4 Running it online

- Participants can walk their own local area and upload photos to a shared map.
- Use a collaborative map or whiteboard to place and cluster observations together.
- Meet by video to read the patterns and agree findings.
- Prefer privacy-respecting tools, and be mindful of photographing people.