

Information about organizing a Hackathon or a Paper-in-a-Day during the ESM Expert Network Meeting, 2-3 October 2025.

At this year's ESM Network Meeting, we will host both hackathons, and Paper-in-a-Day sessions. More information on what these formats entail can be found below.

If you wish to host either a hackathon or PiaD session, please [submit your session via this form](#).

What is a hackathon?

A hackathon is a fast-paced, collaborative event where participants from diverse backgrounds come together to rapidly design and develop innovative solutions, tools, or research concepts - often centered around a specific theme, or problem. Although initially developed within IT to work together on software problems, at the ESM Network Event, we use the hackathons to focus on common topics, issues, and solutions for all things daily life. A hackathon is something of a “**powered up brainstorm**”: Not only do we want to discuss the critical questions that we as ESM researchers deal with, we also aim to develop some concrete solutions.

Past hackathons have led to the development of, for example, the widely used ESM Item Repository (esमितemrepositoryinfo.com/), or the NWO-funded Mini Many Labs project. However, a hackathon could, for example, also lead to a list of methodological recommendations, overviews of the literature, or simply inspiring discussions amongst peers. **This goal should be explicit and known to all participants before the start of the hackathon.**

The hackathon takes place at the end of Day 1 and the beginning of Day 2, **totaling about three hours**. This is not a lot of time. Therefore, to make the most of the hackathon, some preparatory work by the hosts is needed, to ensure that you can effectively go to work when the group is together. Hackathons are ideal for generating early-stage projects, digital tools, or frameworks that can be refined and expanded beyond the network meeting itself.

Examples of previous hackathons can be found on the [ESM Network Meeting website](#).

What does "Paper-in-a-Day" mean?

In the PiaD format, the goal is more explicit: to write a paper. Although we understand that this sounds attractive, **please also keep in mind that it requires more work from both hosts and participants**, and that it is highly unlikely that you will write a full paper from scratch during the event (in parallel with the hackathon, you will also have about 3 hours of time for the PaiD session). Instead, consider the time allocated to these sessions as the ideal opportunity to discuss, brainstorm, conceptualize (i.e., all the fun parts about research), but also, to structure and distribute the different tasks.

The main benefit of PiaD is that it provides an excellent opportunity to foster new (interdisciplinary) collaborations, with people outside of your usual academic bubble. At the ESM Network Event, we all have a method in common, but we also come from different academic traditions. Coming together to share our expertise with each other, provides the

perfect opportunity to create impactful work across disciplines.

Some important considerations when hosting PiaD:

- While a traditional data paper can be suitable for PiaD, writing **a commentary, brief report, whitepaper, or even a blog** might be a more feasible alternative within the available time frame.
- Unlike for the hackathons, you can put **a maximum number of co-authors** on the PiaD session. Think closely about the ideal group size: In a co-author team of 20 people, it is unlikely that everyone can make a substantive contribution to the paper.
- Consider beforehand whether you require particular skills or expertise from your co-authors and **explicitly mention this in your proposal**.
- If more people end up indicating their interest in your PiaD session than you have space for, the selection of participants will be decided in conversation with other PiaD hosts, and with the organizing team.
- To give all participants an opportunity to contribute to your paper, **explicitly make space for co-authors with varying levels of seniority, skills and ESM expertise**.
- PiaD teams will be made well **in advance of the ESM Network Event**, giving you time to liaise with each other about expectation management, expected contributions, and sharing relevant literature.
- If, at any point before, during, or after the PiaD session, any participant does not wish to be a member of the co-author team anymore, they, as always, reserve the right to remove themselves as co-author.
- We understand that your ideas about the paper (and the associated roles, structure, focus, etc.) might shift between submitting the PiaD proposal and the actual ESM Network Event. Don't worry: Changing your mind is a natural occurrence for anyone, let alone for researchers. Still, it is helpful for potential co-authors to have an idea about what to expect. As such, do not consider the questions in the submission form as a straitjacket, but as a tool to help you set these expectations.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Robin Achterhof via achterhof@essb.eur.nl