

LDT4SSC Project Methodology

Step 1: EXPLORE (Ideation)

Workshop: Implementing Sustainable Digital Design: Assessing and Integrating Social, Environmental, and Economic Impacts in Digital Projects

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Document History

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Workshop Overview

Title	Implementing Sustainable Digital Design: Assessing and Integrating Social, Environmental, and Economic Impacts in Digital Projects
Methodological step	Step 1: EXPLORE (Ideation)
Duration	2 hours
Number of Facilitators	1 for each group of 4 to 5 people
Equipment Needed	- One big sheet of paper (1m/2m) or a large (digital) whiteboard - Printed matrix or digital template; - Sticky notes, pens and markers.
Expected Outputs	- A filled in matrix of the LDTs' impacts and a shared understanding of them across sustainable and responsible digital design dimensions. - An initial action plan highlighting areas for improvement and opportunities for positive change. A summary note produced after the workshop, outlining key findings and next steps.

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1. Context and objectives

The **Implementing Sustainable Digital Design** workshop is part of the **EXPLORE step (ideation)** which marks the launch of an LDT initiative. During this step, stakeholders should reach a common understanding of their use case outlining *expected processes, data flows, and challenges*.

More information on the objectives, prerequisites and stakeholders to involve in the EXPLORE step can be found on the LDT4SSC Knowledge Hub¹.

The workshop is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- Perform preliminary **comprehensive assessment** of the LDTs impacts (social, environmental, economic).
- Examine the digital project through the **lenses of sustainable and responsible digital design**.

This workshop can be an initial step towards **setting up an eco-design strategy or operating a more formal assessment** of the level of maturity in eco-design thanks to the [General policy framework for the ecodesign of digital services version 2024](#) which is recommended to pilots.

2. Workshop

2.1. Workshop phases overview

Time spent	Phase	Description
15 mins	0. Framing and Icebreaker	Participants revisit the selected use case and project objectives to keep discussions grounded.
1 hour	1. Exploring the Sustainable Design Matrix	Participants reflect on the LDTs' impacts using the sustainable and responsible digital design matrix.
30 mins	2. Consolidating Insights and Identifying Actions	Participants consolidate their insights and identify potential actions.
15 mins	3. Synthesising Outcomes and Defining Next Steps	The facilitator summarises the workshop key findings and defines follow-up actions.

2.2. Workshop step by step guide

Phase 0: Framing and Icebreaker (recommended allocated time: 15 mins)

The facilitator orients the participants **towards the selected use case** and the overarching project objectives. They list all **relevant project factors** such as: goals, stakeholders, budget. This initial phase ensures that the subsequent discussions remain grounded in a

¹ https://knowledgehub.ldt4ssc.eu/resources_content/methodology/

clear and concrete context. It also serves to **align all stakeholders** on the purpose, scope, and expected outcomes of the workshop, fostering a shared understanding before diving into deeper phases.

The facilitator also **organises an icebreaker** designed to foster mental and creative engagement by encouraging participants to adopt a playful, and open mindset. This initial interactive, game-like activity, stimulates imaginative thinking, reduces initial social tension, and prepares participants to engage fully in subsequent workshop phases.

Phase 1: Exploring the Sustainable Design Matrix (recommended allocated time: 1 hour)

This phase encourages participants to **collectively identify the LDT's and its digital services' positive and negative impacts** across the key dimensions of sustainable and responsible digital design and across all the lifecycle stages of their LDT and/or service they are developing. All elements of a digital service should be taken into account for this assessment : Strategy, Specification, Architecture, User Experience and Interface (UX/UI), Content, Frontend, Backend, Hosting and Algorithmics.

The session begins with an **introduction to the structured matrix** from the facilitator. The matrix outlines some sustainable and responsible digital design dimensions such as **social, environmental, economic, and governance.**

After this introduction, participants engage in a **guided group discussion**, exploring each dimension to identify both **potential benefits and risks** associated with the digital project. Depending on the number of participants, the group can be divided into sub-group that will each work on its own matrix. To facilitate the assessment, the following **questions** can be used to stimulate reflection:

Dimension	Example questions
Social dimension	How does the LDT influence social equity, inclusion, and community engagement?
Use and inclusion	Does the LDT project ensure accessibility for all users, including marginalised groups?
Environmental dimensions	What are the environmental impacts across different environmental indicators (energy, water, raw material, etc.) ?
Economic dimension	How does the project align with circular economy principles, public procurement policies, and value creation?
Environmental dimensions	What are the environmental impacts across different environmental indicators (energy, water, raw material, etc.) ?
Governance, ethics, and sovereignty	What measures ensure ethical data use, digital sovereignty, and compliance with regulations?

Are the different dimensions of my digital project responsible and sustainable ?		Lifecycle stages			Impacts		Next steps
		Conception (and distribution)	Usage	End of life (decommissioning, recycling, reuse...)	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	Actions ?
Dimensions of sustainable and responsible design for digital services (non-exhaustive)	Environmental (Energy consumption, raw material, water, waste, etc.)						
	Social (accessibility, end-user participation, inclusion, etc.)						
	Economic						
	Ethics (biases, etc.)						
	Other dimension						

Sustainable and Responsible digital design matrix.

Phase 2: Consolidating Insights and Identifying Actions (recommended allocated time: 30 mins)

The group begins by **reviewing and summarising** the key findings from the matrix discussion. Participants then **collectively identify the most critical areas** for intervention, highlighting opportunities for innovation and enhancing the positive impacts as well as identifying risk and ways to mitigate negative impacts.

Phase 3: Synthesising Outcomes and Defining Next steps (recommended allocated time: 15 mins)

The facilitator **synthesises the workshop's key findings**, addressing any outstanding questions from participants to ensure clarity and alignment on phases / next steps. Finally, the session concludes by **defining responsibilities, timelines, and follow-up actions**, ensuring accountability and momentum as the project progresses.

2.3. Recommendations for Workshop facilitation

To ensure the workshop's effectiveness, facilitators are advised to adopt the following approaches:

Prepare Thoroughly for Focused Discussions

To ensure that the workshop is productive, the facilitator should make sure to **dedicate time in advance to review the matrix and questions**, carefully tailoring each dimension to fit the **specific context and objectives** of the LDT project. This preparation will allow them to **guide discussions with precision**, ensuring that the conversation remains **relevant, structured, and aligned** with the goals they aim to achieve. By adapting the framework to the project's unique needs, it creates a foundation for **focused and meaningful exchanges** during the session.

Foster Inclusive Participation for Diverse Insights

The facilitator should create an environment that **encourages active participation** from all attendees by cultivating an **inclusive space** where every voice feels valued. The **smaller breakout groups** can help ensure that contributions are **balanced and comprehensive**, allowing introverted or less vocal participants to share their perspectives.

Ensure Continuity with Clear Follow-Up Actions

After the workshop, the facilitator should **consolidate the insights and decisions** into a **clear action plan**, and share it with all participants along with any additional resources or references discussed. This follow-up ensures **continuity** and **reinforces accountability**, providing everyone with a **concrete roadmap** for the next steps. By maintaining momentum and clarity, they as a result help the team **stay aligned and motivated**, ready to implement the project's goals with confidence and purpose.

3. Next steps

Once the use case is defined, it is time to explore it in greater depth. To achieve this, one may use workshops from this EXPLORE (ideation) step or move on to workshops from the next step.

You are done with the EXPLORE workshops. You may now start with the workshops for the VALIDATE step:

- *2.1 Co-Creating Effective Visualisation Dashboards: Translating User Needs into Functional Requirements, Indicators and Visual Prototypes*
- *2.2.1 Understanding Data Governance and Setting the Goal: From Vision to a First Actionable Roadmap*
- *2.2.2 Mapping Stakeholders' Legitimacy and Authority to act in Data Governance: Understand Roles, Responsibilities, and Hierarchical Influence*
- *2.2.3 Designing your Data Governance Roadmap: From Data Officer Mission Statement to Action*
- *2.2.4 Complementing your Data Governance Roadmap with a Legal Framework: From Mapping Legal Phases to Action*
- *2.2.5 Refining your Legal Framework for Data Governance: Deep dive into legal and contractual requirements*
- *2.3 Inventorying your LDT Projects' Data: Unlocking Interoperability, Listing and committing to share data among partners*
- *2.4 Identifying Levers, Obstacles and Objectives for Interoperability: From Awareness to Actionable Strategies for LDT Projects*
- *Bonus: Lego® Serious Play: A Transversal Tool to Unblock and Deepen Data Governance Challenges*

Next Methodology steps:

- *Done: Complete the EXPLORE workshops*
- Complete the VALIDATE workshops
- Complete the DEFINE workshops
- Complete the IMPLEMENT workshops

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