



REPORT

ACTIVIST ACADEMY 2018

9 - 13 JULY 2018
PREDEAL, ROMANIA





Government of the Netherlands

The Activist Academy is designed and coordinated by IGLYO with logistical support from our member organisation Mosaiq

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IGLYO

IGLYO - The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Intersex (LGBTQI) Youth & Student Organisation - is the largest LGBTQI youth and student network in the world with over 95 member organisations in 40+ countries, with an estimated reach of over 3.000 youth activists.

As a youth development organisation, IGLYO builds the confidence, skills and experience of LGBTQI young people to become leaders within the LGBTQI and human rights sectors. Through cross-cultural exchange and peer learning, IGLYO also creates a powerful collective of youth activists across Europe and beyond, who can share strategies and visions, and foster values of international solidarity. Finally, IGLYO ensures the voices and experiences of LGBTQI young people are present and heard by decision-makers at European and international levels. IGLYO achieves these outcomes through international trainings and events, targeted capacity building programmes, inter-cultural exchanges and peer learning, online tools and resources, and digital story-telling and campaigning.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2018 -2020

Building young activists

To work directly with young people to build their confidence and abilities, and equip them with lifelong skills to become leaders within the LGBTQI and wider human rights movements

To widen young people's perspectives and build international solidarity through peer learning, cross-cultural exchange and intersectional approaches

To provide young people with opportunities to explore and express their individuality in a safe and supportive environment;

To grow a strong and diverse group of youth allies to support and advocate for the human rights of LGBTQI youth.

Increasing the visibility and highlighting the diversity of LGBTQI youth identities

To change attitudes in society and influence decision makers on all levels by ensuring LGBTQI young peoples' voices and experiences are present, heard and affirmed

To support and promote positive youth role models within the LGBTQI population and celebrate their diversity

To ensure youth perspectives are included within the wider LGBTQI movement and that LGBTQI perspectives are mainstreamed within the youth movement

To embed intersectional approaches throughout our own and our members' work to ensure diversity within our movement is visible and actively recognised

Making education safe and inclusive for all

To ensure safe and inclusive educational environments for all LGBTQI young people by working with our members, governments, experts, teachers, parents, and learners

To raise awareness of the issues faced by LGBTQI youth in education through innovative campaigns and resources

Developing and sustaining an engaged and connected network of member organisations

To support the work of IGLYO's members, especially around youth engagement and development

To encourage international co-operation and increased partnership work across the network through international meetings and online platforms

To support younger organisations and groups to develop through mentorship and advice



THE ACTIVIST ACADEMY

The Activist Academy is one of IGLYO's flagship projects and it directly works towards accomplishing its first strategic objective to build and empower young activists.



In 2017, following a thorough analysis, IGLYO concluded that many young people coming from IGLYO's membership often lacked practical skills and experience to affect change, so we created a new capacity building format, the Activist Academy- a five-day intensive training course, aimed at young people at the very start of their activist journey. Split into three distinct stages- team building, skills acquisition and action learning, the course not only teaches young people practical skills, but gives them opportunities to put their learning into practice straight away through a series of group challenges.

There are a series of elements that make this event a unique opportunity for introspection, personal development and empowerment of young LGBTQI people at the beginning of their activist careers. These elements will be highlighted further on in this report and IGLYO is keen on learning from previous editions and improving on how it implements these elements.

The programme consisted of group building activities, a menu of skills-based workshops led by experts from the international LGBTQI, the European student movement and IGLYO's own trainers (IGLYO, All Out, ESU and Roma and youth grassroot movement in Romania) and a series of group challenges to practise the skills they had learnt. Some of the significant elements that differentiate between the Academy format and other international youth conferences/trainings included:

- participants navigate throughout the event in smaller teams
- trained mentors to support the participant teams
- almost half of the event focused on practising skills
- relevant institutional partners as workshop facilitators
- structured learning tracking tools and strategies to help participants internalise the learning



2018: BUILDING ON LAST YEAR's SUCCESS



The second edition of the Activist Academy took place between 9-13 July 2018, in Predeal, Romania. This Academy had a new and distinct theme, focusing on the connection between the LGBTQI activist community and the European youth movement.

Improvements and additions for the second edition also included:

Online Orientation Meetings: two online meeting were held for the participants and mentors to get to know one another and discuss expectations before the event. This led to the participants setting up their own online discussion group to keep in touch during the run up to the Academy.

Increased Online Presence: IGLYO is committed to reaching more young people through its online work, so the impact of its events goes beyond those directly involved. In addition to an extensive social media campaign, facebook live interviews were recorded each day with the organisers, workshop experts, mentors, and participants to discuss the content of the programme, relevant issues and important learning points. Each group interview received around 3.000 views and several comments.

Online Workshops: IGLYO filmed key elements of two skills workshops and will edit the footage to create e-learning modules, again increasing the learning to young people who were not present. IGLYO is already exploring the possibility of live-streaming for 2019 to allow for greater online participation in the next Academy.

Increased Teambuilding: Following feedback from the 2017 evaluation, Day 1 of the 2018 Academy had increased teambuilding activities before the Initiation Challenge to allow the teams to get to know one another better before they started completing the activities. It also gave them more time to get to know their Mentor

Larger Groups: While some participants from 2018 also highlighted that the programme is very intensive, and that the Challenge Day, where they put their learning into action, resulted in a lot of pressure, the teams were increased from four to five participants for this edition in response to last year's evaluations. For 2019, IGLYO plans to extend the programme by one day to further reduce the pressure felt by some participants.

Participants as Mentors: Three of the four mentors for 2018 had been participants in 2017. Not only did this provide a further learning opportunity for previous participants, but provided positive role models for the Class of 2018. Having experienced the programme first hand, the mentors were also able to relate well to their teams' experiences and provide advice from their own involvement as participants.

PROMOTION & BRANDING

One of the aims of the Activist Academy project was to make it aspirational and appealing to young people. This was partly based on the professionally developed visual identity and branding from the previous edition of the Academy. In addition, a mini promotional film was also produced to grab young people's attention on social media. By adding photos and biographies of the Workshop Experts, then the Mentors and finally the participants to the website, we aimed to build suspense and make all involved feel like an integral part of the process. Once everyone was selected, private Facebook and Whatsapp groups were set up. Two online orientation meetings were setup where participants were presented with the concept and the content structure of the event, as well as logistical information. In the lead up to the event, photos and statements from the participants were released as a social media campaign, again to instil a sense of pride in the young people and make them feel part of something special. This process was also used to build greater interest in awareness in the Academy for future editions.

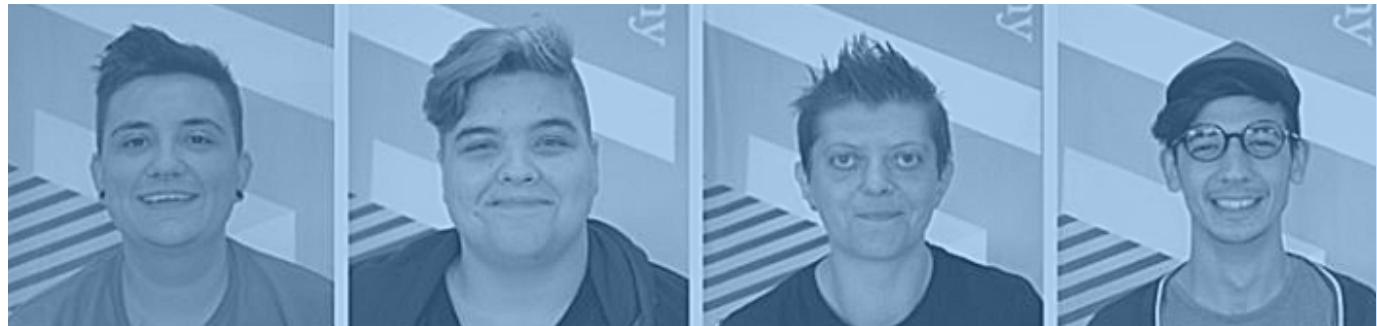
The image shows a screenshot of the Activist Academy website. At the top left is the logo /AA Activist Academy. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, About, The Course, Apply, Contact, About, Experts, Group Mentors, Participants, and IGLYO. Below the navigation is a large photo of a young woman, Paula Cerescu, with her name displayed below it. To the right of the photo is a text block about Paula. Further down the page is a grid of smaller photos with captions: "Believe in making a difference", "Believe in change", and "Believe in yourself". On the right side, there is a large promotional graphic for "#ActivistAcademy18 LIVE" featuring a video thumbnail with the text "All eyes on Youth Activism", the date "17:30 CET", and the days "Monday. 9 July", "Tuesday. 10 July", "Wednesday. 11 July", and "Friday. 13 July". The Activist Academy logo is at the bottom left of the main content area.

THE PEOPLE: PARTICIPANTS, MENTORS, EXPERTS & ORGANISERS

People who become part of the Activist Academy have the opportunity to go through different layers of transformative learning experiences: some of them participate in skills workshops and take part in practice challenges; others provide mentorship and support to the participants, and all learn from inspiring experts. This second edition of the Activist Academy brought together twenty participants, four mentors, five workshop experts, and four organisers. The people involved in the Academy have their bios on the Academy's website: www.activist-academy.org.

Participants

A call for applications to participate was launched on the Academy and IGLYO websites and on social media channels. At the same time, an email addressed to the leadership of IGLYO's member organisations was sent out, inviting them to start a process to identify key young people with potential for growth within the organisations and to ask them to apply to participate in the Academy. This participatory selection process was highlighted more in the application form compared to last year's edition and it became an important criterion in the final selection of participants to the Academy. The objective of this additional step is to ensure that the Academy provides a targeted capacity building service to IGLYO's member organisations that would mean a long-term positive change for the organisation. 20 participants were selected at the end of this process.



Mentors

IGLYO recruited a team of four mentors who took part in a two-day training prior to the Academy. Their role is similar to that of a camp counsellor. Each mentor had a team of five participants and their main role was to motivate and support their team as well as guiding the learning of individual participants. The mentors played an important role especially during the team challenges and activities. They were trained and instructed to not take a leadership role but rather observe and support the group process so that naturally occurring roles were able to emerge within each team. In order to build on the experience of the previous edition of the Academy, the mentors were recruited from among the last year's Academy graduates, which provided them with a significant follow-up experience and it also enriched the experience of participants being assisted by previous Academy participants. The mentors expressed that the training they were part of before the Academy was essential for them to be able to fulfil their roles effectively.

Workshop Experts

IGLYO designed the skills curriculum of the Academy based on direct observations during other IGLYO events, and on a thorough analysis of the applications for participation, including not just direct questions for relevant content but also looking at participants' plans for their professional future after the Academy.

After building the skills curriculum of the Academy, IGLYO began to search for workshop facilitators. The theme of this edition of the Academy - "A Brave Young World"- was about making connections between future leaders of the LGBTQI movement and key European youth networks. After a long process, IGLYO was able to secure the attendance of experts from: All OUT, European Student Union and a grassroots Roma and youth expert trainer, in addition to two of IGLYO's own staff people. They delivered workshops on the following topics: outreach and community building, project design and management, digital fundraising and campaigning, public speaking, video making and video communications and workshop design and facilitation

The collage consists of three main sections. On the left, a portrait of Matt Beard, Executive Director of All Out, with his quote: "We do this work because we want to help get a fair deal for LGBT people everywhere and end bigotry and discrimination." In the center, a portrait of Roxana Marin, Grassroots Activist, with her quote: "If one can be taught anything, one can also be untaught everything: rules, norms, definitions, recipes, fixed-form poetry and prayer, shame, fear. Whatever limits or takes away their freedom." On the right, there are two logos: 'Activist Academy' and 'iglyo'.

Matt Beard
Executive Director
All Out

Roxana Marin
Grassroots Activist

"We do this work because we want to help get a fair deal for LGBT people everywhere and end bigotry and discrimination."

"If one can be taught anything, one can also be untaught everything: rules, norms, definitions, recipes, fixed-form poetry and prayer, shame, fear. Whatever limits or takes away their freedom."

Organisers

The organising team was made up of three people and two local volunteers. IGLYO was represented by a board member and two staff members and the local hosting organisation, MozaiQ, was represented by two volunteers, who also had the chance to participate fully in the activities of the Academy. As well as overseeing the logistics of the event, the organising team was responsible for running daily check in sessions with the mentors to discuss any particular issues with participants and gather general feedback about the participants' experiences, devising and running the team challenges at the beginning and end of the event, and coordinating the awards ceremony.



THE PROGRAMME

Monday 9 July		Tuesday 10 July		Wednesday 11 July		Thursday 12 July		Friday 13 July		Saturday 14 July								
09:15 - 09:30	Welcome & Introductions	Activists Awake: Daily Introduction		Activists Awake: Daily introduction		Activists Awake: Daily Introduction		Activists Awake: Daily Introduction										
09:30 - 11:00	Activist Initiation Challenge	Online Campaigning Matt Beard, All Out	Film Making & Communications Catarina Santos, IGLYO	Public Speaking Roxana Marin	Workshop Design & Facilitation Chiara Patricolo, ESU	Introduction to the Activist Team Trials	Team Trials Presentations	Departures										
11:00 - 11:30	BREAK																	
11:30 - 13:00	Team Time & Challenge Presentations																	
13:00 - 14:30	LUNCH																	
14:30 - 16:00	Introducing the Academy Aims, objectives, expectations																	
16:00 - 16:30	BREAK																	
16:30 - 18:00	Building the Class of 2018																	
18:00 - 18:45	Team Talks																	
19:00 - 20:00	DINNER																	
20:00 - 22:00	Games	Karaoke		Visit to Brasov			Free Evening		Closing Party									



The program was designed to ensure the following outcomes:

- Increased skills
- Improved self-confidence
- Greater experience of team working and group processes
- Experience of behaviour enhancing processes, such as competition and collaboration
- Strengthened links between organisations and personal connections across the group
- Increased motivation to be engaged in the international LGBTQI movement



DAY 1

Activist Academy Initiation Challenge

The first half of Academy's first day was devoted to distributing participants into their smaller teams, assigning them to a mentor and have them complete exercises with the goal to create a sense of team identity and to facilitate participants getting to know each other.

After an initial introduction, the participants discovered their smaller teams and were given the Initiation Challenge, a list of tasks to accomplish within a set time. Unlike last year's edition, following feedback provided by the mentors, the team members introduced themselves to each other and created an identity for their team, as well as starting to discuss their individual and group expectations from the Academy and how they would each contribute to its success, before starting to go through the tasks. The tasks included, for example: making a short video about activism, becoming acquainted with the venue surroundings and the history of the city and others. At the end of the exercise, the teams met in plenary and presented some of their videos and their team identity to the others. Some of their outputs are included below:



Introducing the Academy

In the second half of Day 1, the organisers introduced the Academy agenda, its aim and objectives and the group ground-rules. The participants had the opportunity to express their expectations from the event and, using techniques typical of motivational interviewing, the participants made individual commitments and expressed personal barriers which would deter them from reaching their individual objectives, as well as identified group strategies that can help them overcome these barriers. This activity was the first from a series of exercises throughout the week with the higher goal to guide participants through a process of self-analysis and personal growth. This was almost immediately evidenced by participants relying on the help of their team members to be more effectively engaged in the Academy.

Team Talks

At the end of the day, the small teams met with their mentor for a small reflective activity. During this time, participants also completed their individual Learning Diary, a tool designed to help participants capture their development, focusing on desired behavioural changes post-Academy and track their personal progress throughout the week. Then, within their small teams, under the guidance of their mentors, participants share and discuss answers to the questions in the Learning Diary, collectively focusing on important highlights of the day and on positive changes resulting from the day's content. The Learning Diary was simplified to give the participants a stronger sense that it is indeed a diary rather than a data collection tool. This change from last year's edition was also decided based on the feedback received from the mentors.



Facebook Live Events

Another new element that was added to this year's edition was the Facebook Live sessions which were organised every evening of the Academy to highlight main elements of the event. The Live sessions were presented as interviews with the organisers, workshop experts, youth leaders and participants to promote the project and highlight the importance of training young people with activist skills. Each group interview reached around 3,000 people.



DAY 2 & 3

The second and third day of the Academy were dedicated to the skills workshops facilitated by the experts representing partner institutions. Each workshop lasted three hours, which allowed for detailed presentations, discussions and practice time, preparing the participants for the challenges they would take on during the following days. Participants had the possibility to choose between two or three different workshops every time, so that each participant attended a number of four workshops over the two days.

Workshop Design and Facilitation (European Student Union)

Chiara Patricolo, member of the Executive Committee of EUS, conducted a workshop on facilitation. Facilitation is the skill and, sometimes, the art of helping and guiding groups of people to reach a common goal. From presentations in schools to professional trainings, the workshop was meant to show participants how to design their session and facilitate the learning process in order to achieve maximum impact.

Online Campaigning & Fundraising (All Out)

Matt Beard, the Executive Director of All Out, delivered a workshop on online fundraising, communications and campaigning with the goal to provide participants some practical insights into current best practices around online fundraising, communications and campaigning. The workshop focused on digital fundraising and digital advocacy and used the global All Out platform as a practical example of how attention, interest, support and funding can be crowdsourced by LGBTQI activists from around the world.



Film Making (IGLYO)

Catarina Santos, IGLYO's Communications Officer, facilitated the workshop on film making and expressing oneself through video, guiding the participants through an exploratory journey of how to express oneself and how to change the world through sharing messages and campaigns using videos: from concept and emotions to framing, editing, and other video editing tools, in such a way that inspires the audience to click the “share” button.

Public Speaking (Grassroots Activist)

Roxana Marin, a well-known grassroots Roma and LGBTQI activist and a teacher, delivered a workshop meant to equip participants with techniques to deliver more effective public speeches. Participants practiced at constructing persuasive messages and delivering speeches so that they would become more effective activists in their communities.



Project design and management (IGLYO)

Tudor Kovacs, IGLYO's Capacity Building Manager, facilitated a workshop based on the logical framework matrix concept that guided the participants through a structured process to identify a project or initiative idea, especially in a context where there are too many issues and too few resources to bring to address all. The project management stages were presented as elements that collectively turn this concept into a reality for the LGBTQI young activist.

Outreach and community building (IGLYO)

Tudor Kovacs, IGLYO's Capacity Building Manager, showed the participants the stages of reaching out to individuals, building up their motivation and help them attain positive changes, then forming groups of like-minded people, that evolve from peer support to shared initiatives and finally, how to support and sustain groups that become strong advocating communities.

DAY 4

Activist Academy Team Trials

During Day 4, the participants went on to practising the skills they learned during the previous two days. The practice time was framed as a competition between teams. Each team had to complete four challenges over the course of the day to put all their learning into action. The challenges were designed to incorporate the application of skills into simulated real-life context. After working on the challenges, each team had to present and demonstrate it to the Academy panel of judges. If the Judges felt they had completed it to a high standard, the team could move on to working to the next challenge. If not, the team was required to work a little more on the task. The judges provided detailed feedback and encouragement on the teams' work on each of the challenges. As well as presenting the challenges to the judges, the teams were told that they had to plan how they would present each of the challenges to the full group on the final day.

The mentors took on a facilitation/co-ordination role to ensure the team effectively used its time and members well. Mentors were able to help with challenges, but had to step back until asked specifically by the team. They also provided feedback throughout the process on how the team was functioning and helped with the time management as the teams were working on the challenges through the day



DAY 5

Team Trials Presentations

During the morning of Day 5, all the Academy teams rotated to present their work on the challenges, from making a video campaign, to delivering a public speech, presenting a plan for a campaign project, and facilitating a workshop. The other participants and the judges scored the presentations and a winning team was awarded a prize during the Awards Ceremony.



Individual & Group Evaluations

Participants filled in an evaluation survey, as well as participated in a focus group with the goal to provide IGLYO a qualitative assessment on various elements of the Academy. Participants had to imagine that they would be in charge with organising the next year's edition of the Activist Academy and answered the following questions:

1. What do you do to build up interest and motivate people to apply?
2. What would put people off/what would motivate them to participate and stay engaged?
3. How would you decide the content?
4. How would you ensure the participants are having a good time?
5. How would you ensure participants stay engaged and connected with each other after the event?

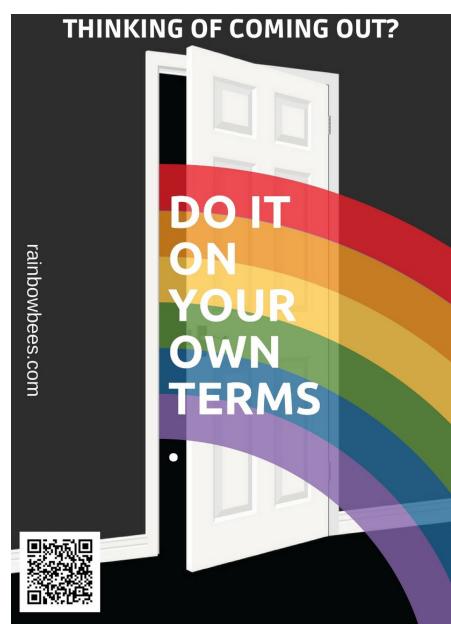
The Academy Awards Ceremony

An award was given to the team with the highest public score after the presentation of all challenges. Participants had the opportunity to say good bye to the Academy and each other in a ceremony of receiving awards and certificates and taking group photos.



TEAM TRIALS PRODUCTS

Each team of participants had to complete four tasks: produce a short film, create an online campaign, design and facilitate a 15 minute workshop activity, and write and deliver a public speech, all with themes relevant to LGBTQI youth issues and activism. Below are some examples of the products the participants made:



UNIQUENESS OF EVENT

External workshops experts from key institutions

Half of the total Academy time dedicated to practicing skills

Strong emphasis on working within smaller teams, from the beginning to the end of the Academy, with the exception of skills workshops, to foster team work, being able to negotiate, strategies in groups, provide peer support, explore self-improvement with the help of team mates, etc.

Focus on collaboration (within teams) and competition (between teams) to maximize individual commitment and performance

Thorough learning tracking, based on learning diary and group processing of learning, highlighting change triggering moments

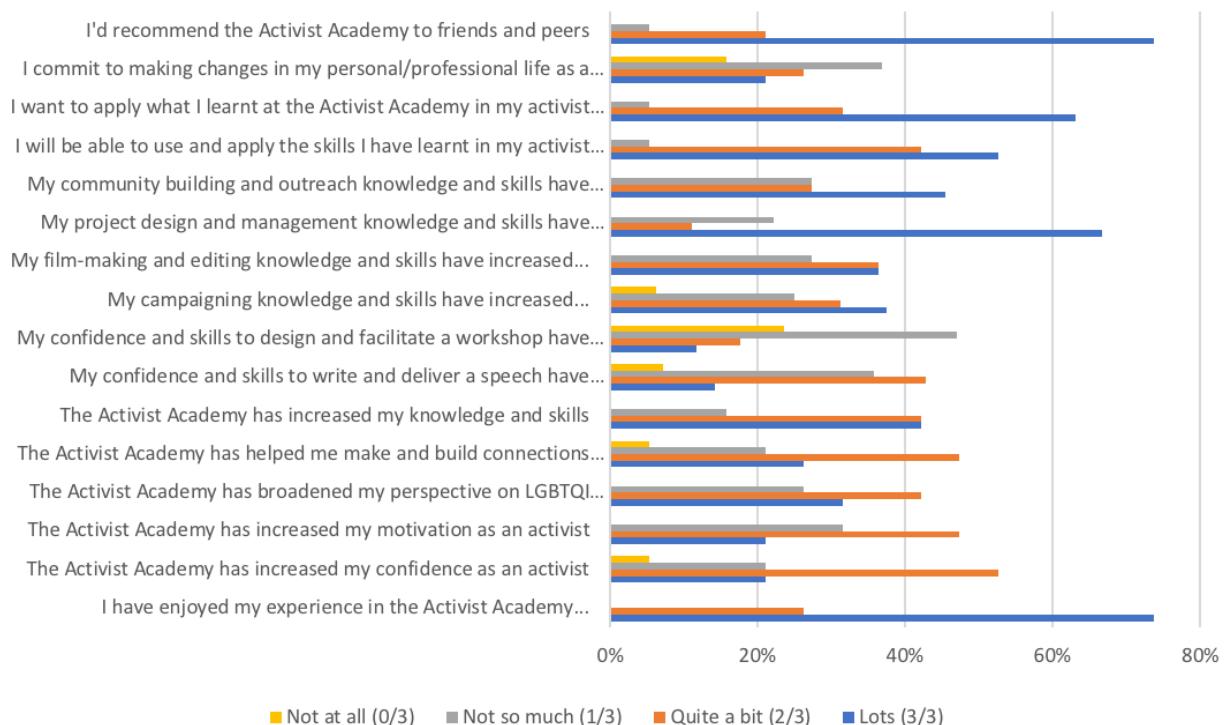
The element of fun competition: teams having to work on challenges and present them, scoring, panel of judges, awards



Participant Evaluations

19 of the 20 participants completed a real-time online self-assessment.

Activist Academy 2018 Participant Self-Assessment



EVALUATION: WORKSHOPS (EXPERTS AND CONTENT)

Tom is the best guy ever. Awesome content. Love cat

Too little content in the workshop design and facilitation session

Skills workshops were conducted in unique ways. They were informative and interactive. Project management and community organizing were very different from what I have done before. Experts were very friendly and fun.

Amazing, very informative but fun, got to actually practice

Really interesting! Roxana was my favourite facilitator but I loved Tudor and Cat and Matt, too!!

I loved the ones that gave us materials and stuff like that to keep and use further.

The workshops were super informative and motivating, I loved all of them!

I actually enjoyed all the workshops I've attended. The facilitators were kind and informed on the matter, and they really taught me well.

Very useful skills. Keep the workshop topics

Workshops were fine but wanted to learn more and more specific stuff

Video workshop so useful, more of that please

Workshops really well done

It might be more useful to allow more in-depth study/practice, rather than going through many skills. I know it's hard to do [organize], it's just a thought.

Public speaking 10/10; Community building 10/10; Facilitation 4/10, Campaigning 9/10

Maybe more detailed information about the content of workshops before sign-up process

Felt very comfortable during the film workshop – super motivated to explore more 😊

Tudor's workshops were AMAZING. He made analytics understandable and the cat references were great!

All were amazing although I feel that perhaps the workshop design/facilitation required more theoretical knowledge and it appeared as if the facilitator was not used to LGBTQI+ education

Some of it lacked practical things that you can apply like the one on workshops even if fun

Very useful and interesting; campaigning workshop

A bit too little time

I LOVE Roxana, she is the coolest and redefines lives!

Public speaking was a bit intimidating and rushed

Maybe use Monday afternoon for workshops too, or less challenges

Workshop facilitation could have been a lot better in terms of actually acquiring skills

Workshop facilitation lacked professional input

EVALUATION: MY MENTOR

They were really helpful and friendly, and they also helped me feel calm

Very friendly and open. Others could learn from him. Enthusiastic [Thomas]

Andela. Awesome. Really well put together. Clear goals. Kindness. Competence. Really smart. Will miss her. Dealt really well with more difficult team at times.

Andela. Our personal superhero

Love my GEORGIAN MOMMY

Helena was awesome, managing the team and guiding us through difficult moments. We became a team!

MY mentor Andela was very helpful and friendly as well. She let us take control but made sure we stayed on the right track. I'm very lucky to be in her team!

Patient

Helpful

Lovely and helpful😊

Lovely

Helena: best team mom ever! [HEART](#). (well structured, super nice and caring... recommend her dearly)

Thomas was lovely, with caring and worried. A good egg

Andela: good inputs, tried to help and did!

Yana: helpful and nice, did her job.

Honestly, Helena was really helpful always too even though she was not my mentor

Thank you for guiding the bee rainbow team so well!

Andela was so lovely – it felt as if she was just another participant rather than a mentor as such



My mentor was extremely nice and friendly, super calm and a good leader. You gotta love Swedish people

Very helping lovely person (addictive to Facebook and Instagram)

Helena reads social situations super well and knows how to get everyone included and engaged. Perfect balance between helping and staying as an observer

Helena. Love. Made for this jov. Smart and super kind. Able to assist the group to include everyone

EVALUATION: COMMUNICATIONS/INFORMATION

Great sources, links. VERY informative workshops BUT a lack of information on the workshop facilitation

We got the information really fast and in time. Also super clean and good messages. Good job!

I'd love if I had a chance to know program and workshops beforehand, like really earlier. Even though I've liked them, I'd be able to make an informed decision on participation and come prepared

Very informative

Great strategies with the whatsapp groups and google drive

Initial communication was informative and good! Just what was needed for potentially forgetful folks.

Just enough

Annoying gap between application and start of information. Schedule good to know what to expect

Detailed and well planned. Nice!

I was a bit worried about coming and felt that perhaps I wasn't fully prepared but the conference was very good

Very clear and efficient to me

Thank you for replying so fast to all the emails I sent. Thank you for making the conversation a little bit less formal in those emails

Enough information and early enough. Consistent and no weird changes to program – which is very professional

Good, responsive, approachable, little misunderstandings (but still surprisingly little for this scale of event)

Communication was easy and accessible, my questions were answered quickly. I like the idea of facebook group. Maybe improve how you warn participants about what they should prepare



EVALUATION: OVERALL PROGRAMME

Really good challenges, maybe allow more time for each

Interesting and indulging

Very informative; could have done another day of workshops (or Monday afternoon)

Very grateful for being here

Easier and lighter topics for the challenge (less personal)

Scheduled could be more relaxed, too many hours per day

I like the content of the overall program. The schedule was flexible. What we learned was very useful. Challenges were a lot for one day, maybe think of dividing them for 2 days and push some educational sessions on the first day

Overloaded; not enough time to discuss what we do as activists; a lot of time in teams (tough to bond with someone else)

It was very intensive and I really liked it all although the challenges were at times a bit too personal and perhaps a choice was required for more "easy" or "difficult" topics

I liked the idea of being divided in smaller teams, but I did not like the competition side that much. It would have been nice to re-mix the groups during the week to get to know other people better.

Very intense (especially on the 4th day) which was HARD but proved that we have some HUGE capacities

Didn't feel like we had enough actual time to sleep and work and get to know each other

Not enough bonding activities. Socializing was hard first few days and we ended up talking only to our team

Loved Tudor's and Matt's workshops

Good organization, very clear, program, bag, flight, hotel, etc

More interaction games before team work!!! We had to work together before we knew each other.

Wanted more workshops and having to choose is hard. I am sad I could not take some.

Workshops (input) should start on Monday afternoon already. Overall structure good

Too crowded – burn out

I think I'd prefer a 3-day workshop and one-day challenges program because there were some I wanted to attend but could not because of my time

Could not visit all the workshops I wanted to ☒

Good!! Stressful and a bit too intense at moments, but good!

Too full. The schedule was a bit harsh.

I met a lot of cool people. The workshops were awesome. The accommodation is cool.



EVALUATION: OTHER COMMENTS

I'm gonna remember this experience for ever with all my heart

Lovely team of facilitators HEART

I wish I had more social nights. Some people were only with their group so I would do more social stuff next year

Everyone was great though. I mean just the program and the people – just a great opportunity overall

Please do not make people compete

Thank you for having a day where we all get to meet each other

Awesome, motivational, interesting, fun, informative, thanks for the opportunity! Heart

As a mentally ill person especially I felt like this has been really really stressful, pressuring, just overall mentally exhausting and kinda made me get to some low points sometimes

Competition is not always most productive

Emphasise networking, maybe through a follow-up activity.

Thank you! HEART

I feel that a way for us to not become “grouped up” like middle schoolers could maybe be facilitated?

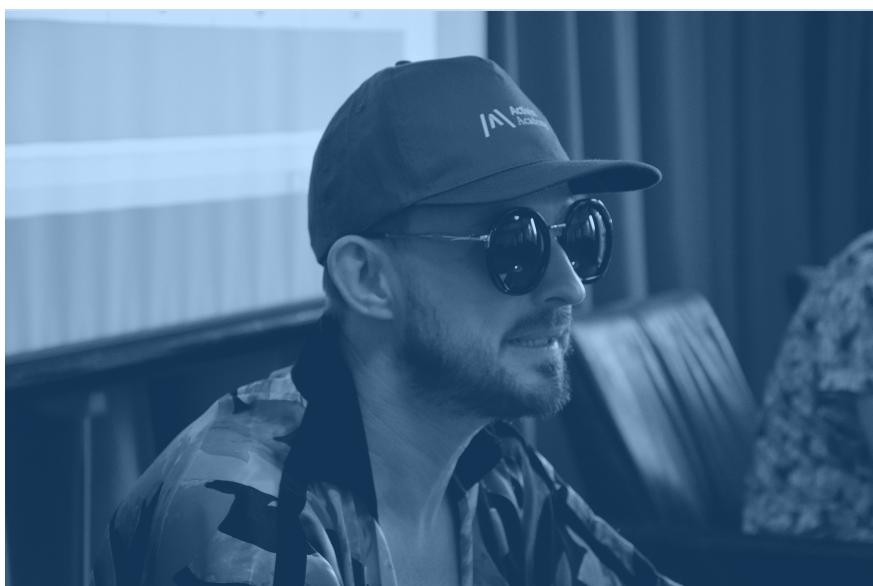
Overall great!

Challenges were OK but competition was some moments weird. Someone took it really seriously. Shouldn't we supposed to be a group?

Poor food. Far too serious topics for the facilitation challenges (if you know the structure, not the content matters), spotty wifi in the hotel was a bother.

Overwhelming

Not going/leaving the food at the same time isolated a few people.



I learned a lot this week. Thank you so much for this opportunity!

I just love Tudor's tshirt.

We never had a moment during the days to formally speak about our experience.

I don't feel that the Academy included POC activists and religious minorities with regards to LGBT.

Thank you for the vegan choices!

Food options could be better [poor vegans :]

In a moment we forgot that we are here to learn and began to compete with each other but we realized it in the end!

I am overwhelmed and overtired, but it's been lovely! V intense

Amazing people

Loved the fact that there were only two people in one room instead of a group. I slept well

Strong connections with people

Move towards environmental sustainability, please

Please be careful in respecting people's preferred names on name tags!!

What helped a lot was the amount of love from awesome participants and a mentor

Had a great time. I will remember this for a long time – LOVE Y'ALL PARTY ON!

How about more activities outside next year?

Monday morning: name games! Group/team work games not when we don't know each other!!!



CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the evaluation evidence, as well as on direct observations and a qualitative assessment with the participants themselves, the organisers of the Activist Academy would like to make the following observations:

The Academy seems to be a highly effective learning and motivational opportunity for young activists. Acquisition of skills is high, as evidenced by participants' self-assessment and the direct observation of their performance during the challenges. The format is also impactful at the level of personal development and motivation of participants, as evidenced by their statements, level of interaction post-event and direct observations of organisations.

The unique elements are essential to the high level of impact. However, to reduce the perceived intensity and psychological pressure on the participants, an additional day dedicated to networking and outdoor group building activities is recommended.

Simply asking for partner institutions to nominate experts to deliver skills workshops is not enough to ensure a high level of instructional quality. The organisers should attempt to work with experts that have been vetted prior to the Academy, in previous events or through individual professional connections.

Continue to use branded elements to ensure the perception of being part of an inspirational event on the side of participants; schedules, daily presentations, promotional items, prizes, flags and others should be branded and tied into the visual identity of the event

Approach the event rules, group processes and participants' individual commitments to making the event a successful one from a motivational perspective, rather than just something that is given. This will increase the likelihood of participants being punctual and participatory.

Continue to give a special attention to mentors recruitment, training, support and motivation. Mentors are a key factor of success for the Academy and their role is also a significant growth opportunity for the young people who act as mentors. Training the mentors effectively is essential for them to be able to fulfil their roles.

Continue to perform a thorough analysis of the participants needs for content and skills prior to the Academy to get to a high level of relevance of the skills workshops.



