

**youth
part**



YouthBarCamp

A Guide for Practical Use



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Eisfeld-Reschke, Jörg/Peyer, Lisa/Seitz, Daniel:
YouthBarCamp. A Guide for Practical Use. Berlin. 2013.

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Prologue

Much is being said about e-participation of young people. But there are only a few projects and approaches that illuminate this young field and that can serve as models for further projects. Besides, only in very rare cases a pure “e-approach” will be applied. Youth work still mainly consists of a mixture of presence and online contacts. BarCamps bring the ideas of the web 2.0, of participation and contribution for everybody, to the offline world. That is why they are particularly suited for working with youth on (e)participation approaches.

In 2010 first innovators started to discover BarCamps as a format for youth work. However only a dozen actual YouthBarCamps have taken place within the last two years in German-speaking countries. One of the reasons for this is a lack of know-how about how the format BarCamp can be adapted to youth work.

YouthBarCamps offer great chances and challenges for young people. The present brochure draws these out and shows possible solutions.

We wish you a pleasant read and hope you have fun putting things into action.



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What is a BarCamp?

A BarCamp is a format for the moderation of large groups that delegates a great amount of responsibility to the participants. They suggest contents, decide about them, and are responsible for their realisation and the documentation of the BarCamp. The use of digital tools is a necessary part of a BarCamp.

This guide is about so-called YouthBarCamps, BarCamps that are organised with and for young people. They differ only little from the conceptual approach of classical BarCamps but partly require different pedagogic parameters.

Unlike in classical conferences the programme of the BarCamp (which means specific topics and speakers) is not fixed. Instead all participants decide together on the topics in the session planning. The subjects are then placed in a grid of multiple time slots and rooms. The discussions in the sessions take place on-site as well as online (e.g. via Twitter), and also the documentation (e.g. through Etherpads) is undertaken by the



The Process of Organising a BarCamp

participants. The hosts are in charge of the necessary infrastructure but do not exercise authority over the contents of the BarCamp.

In principle, the OpenSpace is very similar to the BarCamp format, which could be described as a “Digital OpenSpace”. The formats have in common that the participants carry responsibility for the joint shaping of the day and contribute their topics and skills. Yet the extensive integration of digital tools that characterises the BarCamp is not a basic pre-condition for an OpenSpace. The main differences include that BarCamps focus less on rules and more on self-organisation and self-moderation; that actors and discussions are connected between and among the sessions; and that interested external individuals can get involved.

The BarCamp format was first used in 2005 by IT developers. Since then it has experienced multiple adaptations and one can regularly observe hybrid forms of classical conferences and BarCamps taking place. In our opinion adaptations of the format are absolutely permissible and useful if the context requires so. What is important in such cases is that the participative approach and digital openness are kept up.

NOTE:

You can find a
glossary on page 56.
It lists and explains
all **terms marked
in blue.**

Phase 1: Identifying Format and Topic

The BarCamp format lends itself to many different situations and thematic complexes. In principle, it can be applied to any subject that is of interest to young people. In some ways it is similar to the **OpenSpace** – the difference lies in the high integration of digital tools. Already during the preparation phase there are plenty of possibilities for networking and exchange. During the BarCamp itself **Etherpad**, Twitter, Facebook and **GoogleDocs** figure as substantial elements of collaboration and documentation.

As in all participatory processes, building relations to the youth's lifeworld is imperative. It is the responsibility of the organisers to involve the young people adequately and as early as possible, and to agree with them on the overall theme of the BarCamp. Even though the BarCamp format was initially developed by IT people, not every BarCamp necessarily needs to relate to the internet. The method is equally suited to provide an inspiring setting for the discussion of classical offline-subjects such as youth protection, education, or philosophical discussions about happiness and prosperity.

The decision to implement a BarCamp can be taken for a variety of reasons. These are the ones that we have encountered most frequently:

- “At our classical conferences people sit and listen. We would like to have more activity and exchange. That is why we decided to go for this format.”
- “Our institution wants to break new ground. We can't keep the internet and social media away from our seminar work, therefore we want to apply them productively.”
- “We've already heard about the BarCamp format and would now like to try it out ourselves.”
- “We need to demonstrate to our financial supporters that we're open to new, innovative methods.”



All of the mentioned arguments are legitimate and we could enumerate many more such reasons. But the format is not only met with enthusiasm. The intensive usage of technology poses new challenges to pedagogic support. In addition, no scientific studies or evaluations exist so far that would prove a significantly higher contribution of the BarCamp format to personal development or learning when compared to traditional formats.

The high potential of developing self-efficacy and the great amount of participation are the crucial chances of the YouthBarCamp. Here young people can devise on their own. In doing so they connect and learn from each other. Applied digital media competence and collaboration are facilitated quasi as side effects.

Depending on the organisers and the subject area different young target groups are addressed for the BarCamp. A balanced mixture of younger and older adolescents as well as such with and without experience regarding the subject or the format ensures that they will be learning with and from each other.

Willingness to engage in open processes and to take on responsibility figures prominently among the demands on participants. The technical understanding of the digital tools, methods and processes of the BarCamp can be conveyed during the event.

A high diversity of groups will not cause problems if participants are provided with a framework for constructive cooperation and if adequate support measures are offered. Hence the format is ideal for intercultural and multilingual encounters. Here the simultaneous on- and offline discussions can facilitate communication and deepen knowledge and understanding.

INFO BOX: AGE OF YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

There is no minimum age level for YouthBarCamps. However it is obvious that the younger the participants the lower the threshold should be in terms of the digital tools to be applied. It is the responsibility of the organisers and pedagogic tutors to prepare respectively.



Phase 2: Concept and Planning

Once a topic has been found and the decision for a YouthBarCamp has been made it is necessary to clarify the conditions for participation and take conceptual decisions. The following conceptual questions should be answered in this phase:

- At which point do we want to involve the youth? From our point of view it is important to involve the young participants as early as possible. A high degree of participation will enable the youth to access new learning fields.
- What is the ideal duration of the YouthBarCamp? Which other measures and events will form the framework of the YouthBarCamp?
- How many participants should be addressed? What are the minimum and maximum numbers of participants, considering also financial and organisational points of view?
- How much support does the target group need in the run-up to the BarCamp, at the beginning of it and during the event?

- Who would we like to reach? Can we imagine including also young people outside of our actual target group?
- Where and how can we reach participants that so far we have not been able to reach?

Defining the target group and framework of the YouthBarCamp helps to become clear about the experiences and skills that can be expected from the participants. Subsequently, starting from the participants and the topic, one can think about necessary support measures and offers. These should be planned jointly with the young members of the concept team in order to avoid the establishment of unnecessary hierarchies.

INFO BOX: SUPPORT MEASURES AND OFFERS

YouthBarCamps are educational tools. You need to provide more support measures and offers than classical BarCamps would require. The aim is to enable every single participant to contribute to the BarCamp in an adequate and self-organised way. Tutors, experts or **Jokers** are examples for possible support measures and offers.

The format YouthBarCamp is known to only a few young people. This can have a negative effect on self-organisation. One way to deal with this potential problem is by training some of the young participants as tutors.

Issues to be dealt with in the tutor training include for example the introduction to the format, the accompanying digital tools, and the tasks of the participants. It is the tutors' task to act as active participants themselves and thus be a model for the other participants. At the same time they will motivate other participants to take an active part in the BarCamp or support them respectively.

The tutors' roles in a YouthBarCamp can be of differing prominence. Depending on the importance of support offers for the respective target groups the tutors can act as normal participants or be introduced and clearly identified as supporting contact persons at eye level with the participants. For this purpose, differently coloured name signs, a tutor shirt or similar identification marks can serve well. The technical and professional level of the event, too, depends on the participants' level of experience. As an organiser one

should not necessarily presume expert knowledge on the part of the youth but rather knowledge acquired through experience.

The concrete topics that are offered and the intensity and detail of discussion also depend on the atmosphere and participants' form on the day of the BarCamp. In order to make for an inspiring incentive, the organisers can invite experts who introduce the topic and pose inspiring questions. For example, such an input can be integrated into the course of a YouthBarCamp in the form of an expert impulse to kick off the day or the overall event.

Experts can also get involved through taking over the role of a joker. In this case they will be called by their specific expert topics during the session planning and will then be in charge of offering background support for specific sessions. In this way one can ensure that experts are assigned to the corresponding sessions dealing with their field of expertise – something that happens rather accidentally in the classical BarCamp. During the sessions the young participants can draw on the experts' knowledge to a greater or lesser extent, as and when they require it.

Phase 3: Planning a YouthBarCamp

It is recommendable to assemble a preparation team that jointly plans the event. At this stage, the youth should already be involved in order to create participatory structures right from the start. Together the team can answer the guiding questions on page 10 and derive consequences and tasks from them.

The preparation team can be divided into the following roles or sub-teams:

- Concept team
- Organisation team (room planning, catering)
- PR team (communication and advertisement)
- Hospitality team (attends to participants)
- Technical equipment team
- Finance team

Concept team:

The concept team should comprise all participating educators and youth representatives in order to maximise consent and decide together. The size of the other teams depends on the size of the overall group. In a first meeting the different phases of preparation should be defined. Together the group discusses what

needs to be done, who wants to get involved in which team, and what are the dates for each phase to be completed.

Conception-wise it is important to think about the ideal duration of the BarCamp. Positive experiences have been reported about one to three-day events. Mini BarCamps of three or four sessions are also imaginable but hardly convey the creative potential of “real” BarCamps. The more time you allow for, the more you can offer beyond the typical BarCamp session slots. The concept team should for example think about how to welcome the participants. It is often a good idea to have the organisers arrange the kick-off of the event in order not to demand too much of the young participants right at the beginning, especially if they do not know each other yet. The closer the introduction is to the overall topic of the BarCamp the better it will be (cf. the LAN party at the Games-Camp, page 46). The session matrix should already be prepared in advance. This means that the day is structured time-wise and in relation to the rooms that are available for the BarCamp (see the recommendations for room setup, page 14).

When creating the session matrix for a YouthBarCamp it is not recommendable to take over the schedule

grid from BarCamps for adults (60 to 90 minutes). Shorter session times (45 to 60 minutes) usually yield better results as they enforce more precise and less excessive discussions. However young people do not want to jump from one topic to the other during the whole day as they do in school but appreciate having the time to deal with particular subjects in a practice-oriented way or simply in more detail. For this purpose, the BarCamp could for example include a longer practice or outdoor slot during the afternoon in order to loosen up the day and allow for a change of method. Good experiences have also been reported about an extended first slot so that participants can get used to the format.

Regarding the maximum number of rooms, experiences suggest that a high quantity of sessions offered is not necessarily perceived as an advantage by the young people. A great range of options rather leads to dissatisfaction caused by the feeling of missing lots of interesting sessions. The line between the right and too high a number of sessions varies individually, which makes overall suggestions difficult. Running too many sessions simultaneously can also negatively impact participants' orientation during the event. Depending on the concept of the BarCamp it might be necessary to accept only a selection of applicants,

which can be justified by lack of space, lack of financial resources or by a deliberate decision to restrict the number of participants. Such a restriction should be clearly communicated from the very beginning, and the concept team should think about the selection criteria and process in advance. Much is possible in this regard, ranging from an application on a "first-come, first-served" basis through a substantial application and selection committee to segmentation (depending on geographic distribution, age, gender, diversity etc.) and drawing lots.

Organisation team:

It is important to find an appropriate location for the YouthBarCamp. This location should correspond to the available budget but first of all have enough separate rooms to hold sufficient sessions simultaneously. In addition, one big room is needed which accommodates all participants at once. Distances between individual rooms should be as short as possible so that room changes between sessions are easily possible and do not cost too much time. The matrix below gives a rough orientation for the room planning; however on-site there will often be a lot of room for improvisation. For example, a small seating area can easily be set up as a session room.

size of the group	size of the room						rooms total
	10 ppl	20 ppl	40 ppl	60 ppl	80 ppl	100 ppl	
20 – 40	2						
40 – 60	2		1				
60 – 80	1	1		1			3
80 – 100	2	2	1		1		4
100 – 150	2	3	2			1	5
							6
							8

matrix room plan

An important requirement for YouthBarCamps is internet access. The sessions are collaboratively documented online, open questions are often directly researched via the internet during a session, or participants communicate via twitter and other social networking services. Yet experience has shown that WLAN connections at many seminar institutions do not withstand the strain from the many technical devices. Therefore it is recommended to contact the technical staff of the respective institution in advance in order to ensure sufficient internet bandwidth. Also a charming, inspiring and open atmosphere as well as good catering contribute to good spirits and results of a YouthBarCamp. Depending on the kind of event “package solutions” may be suitable which combine joint catering and joint accommodation of all participants, thus facilitating group cohesion and creating a productive atmosphere.

PR team:

This team plays the special role of devising a strategy for reaching the envisioned young target groups, for shaping the public perception of the BarCamp, and for defining the official purpose and benefit of the Youth-BarCamp with regards to organiser and participants.

The target group analysis is the first step: Where and via which kinds of media can the target groups be reached? Who can serve as multipliers for the messages and invitations from the organisers, and how do these messages need to be phrased in order to be understood and have an impact? This defines the PR campaign. First, the texts need to be written; here, involving youth in the writing process prevents

the use of terms and formulations that will not be understood by the target group. Photo material and other images are chosen in compliance with legal rights and licences. It is best to use material published under a Creative Commons licence. Having devised flyers, banners and website, the team can realise them itself or commission (web)designers for their production. Certain style elements such as this flame have become typical for BarCamps and can equally be used under the Creative Commons licence CC BY.



barcamp.org/SpreadBarCamp

Besides the new communication channels of young people (and here especially the social media), traditional channels such as newspapers and the radio should not be left out as they still play an important role in drawing pupils' attention to offers from the area of youth work, often via their parents. Placing adverts on Facebook or Google Adwords can also be useful as they usually render good results at relatively small financial costs.

Hospitality team:

It is important to have a reliable team which serves as a contact point for the applying youth and which replies to their questions in a timely manner. At BarCamps which allow individual applications from youth with no previous connection to the organisers, conveying security and commitment is of particular importance. The first contact is often decisive for the question whether young participants, after signing in, will actually attend the BarCamp or not, which is why it should be dealt with particularly carefully. It is advisable not to underestimate the effort that may arise from numerous questions, individual organisational challenges and the frequent contact with the participants, their companions, tutors, and parents.

Standard emails formulated in advance, routine processes for the applications and the regular communication of current numbers of applications to the other teams can facilitate organisational processes: In this way the concept team stays on top of things and the organisation team can adapt the booking of accommodation and catering accordingly. Another important thing to think about are the ways of registration and response. Depending on the conceptual

decision on selection criteria for the participants of the YouthBarCamp it is recommendable to work out a transparent feedback procedure addressing all participants.

In the run-up to the BarCamp, participants should be supplied with information material concerning the format and the course of action of a YouthBarCamp. Ideally, this information will include guidance for preparing and devising sessions and for using the intended communication and documentation tools (e.g. Twitter, Etherpads etc.). An online overview of the most important links such as session proposals, directions, and the Twitter hashtag of the BarCamp is useful, too. Respective templates can be found in the attachment of this guide. Good contact should be made with the event locations as early as possible as many changes can be expected to come up during the run-up to the YouthBarCamp: Participants cancel their registration, others join, the room occupancy needs to be changed etc. A good contact with the event locations facilitates the successful start into the actual event.

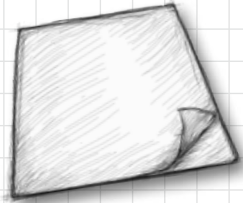
Technical equipment team:

This team's responsibility consists in planning the necessary technical equipment as early as possible. Since

this guide dedicates a whole chapter to this topic, only two special aspects should be mentioned here: At least one of the team members should have substantial knowledge in the areas of networks (LAN and WLAN) and event technology. Involving young people in this team can be an excellent opportunity for them to gain or enhance competences in this field.

Finance team:

Most BarCamps are free of charge for the participants, including also the catering during the day. This has also proven its worth for YouthBarCamps. Sometimes organisers even provide free accommodation and travel, which makes participation possible also for socially deprived young people. However this also increases effort and expenditure for the organisers as they need to reconcile financial resources, numbers of participants and fixed costs. Many BarCamps are financed through sponsoring, which means that the event locations and the catering are provided for free. No costs are incurred for speakers as there are no speakers in the classical sense. YouthBarCamps may intentionally deviate from the latter rule and thus need to budget respective resources. As with any other event it is recommended to apply for funding for youth events.



Phase 4: Announcement and Communication

YouthBarCamps need to be advertised in an adequate and target group oriented way. Whether communication measures need to be carried out on a local, regional or international level depends on the target groups defined. In principle, a mixture of online and offline measures is recommended that takes into account the varying media usage patterns of young people.

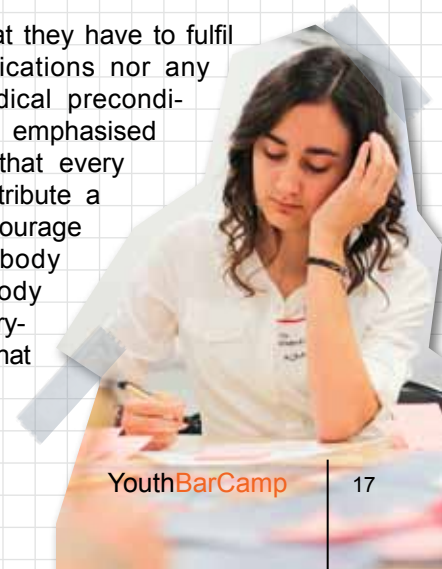
Essential information is ideally provided through either the organisers' own homepage or a website set up specifically for the YouthBarCamp, forming the basis of the online communication. Facebook lends itself as a central platform for the communication with young people. It is advisable to create a Facebook event specifically for the YouthBarCamp to which participants can be invited who in turn can share the event with their friends. Yet the analogue and classical channels of advertisement should not be neglected when announcing the BarCamp. Via a press release and the direct addressing of journalists the event can be advertised on the radio and in


print media. Flyers can be distributed in schools and youth clubs.

What to communicate?

When planning a YouthBarCamp it should generally be assumed that the format is still unknown. Therefore it is advisable to mention the distinctive features of the format already in the announcement and to give the participants an impression of what they can expect. Such a description should focus on the following two aspects: the openness and possibilities of participation the format has to offer.

The youth should learn that they have to fulfil neither any formal qualifications nor any content-related or methodical preconditions. Instead it should be emphasised right from the beginning that every single participant can contribute a topic. It is important to encourage the young people: Everybody knows something, everybody can do something and everybody has something to say that is interesting for the others.





The participation in a BarCamp is generally free of charge. However costs incur for travel and eventually accommodation.

In classical BarCamps these costs are usually borne by the participants while the organisers “only” provide the event location, the catering during the BarCamp and the technical infrastructure. For YouthBarCamps it should however be considered that incurring costs could be a major obstacle for the young people. If travel costs or

the accommodation in a youth hostel can be covered by the organisers this should be mentioned in the announcement. Early on, attention should also be drawn to the digital tools to be used in the BarCamp.

Up to now it is not very common for youth to be actively asked to bring their digital devices (such as tablets, laptops or smartphones) to a youth work format and to actively use them during the event. This is why participants need to be informed that they are responsible for bringing their own devices. Ideally the organisers can provide laptops, recorders etc. if needed.

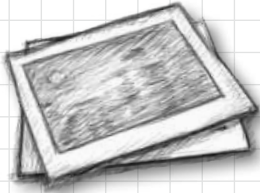
The announcement also serves to inquire information regarding the existing experiences of the applicants. Should there be any selection criteria for the BarCamp such as age, gender or regional origin they must be communicated transparently and comprehensibly. It is recommended to reduce the inquiry of information to a minimum and not to request any unnecessary data. With children and youth in particular it is important to observe the principle of data thrift and to handle the collected data carefully.



Phase 5: Pre-BarCamp-Communication, Session Proposals

Regular communication and early contact with the participants create commitment and reliability in the planning process. Good experiences have been made with Facebook groups, in which participants can connect and network early on. This can also work via Twitter where a hashtag for the BarCamp can be introduced early on. That way a community is initiated in the run-up to the BarCamp, which can be actively involved in the preparation and planning processes. Participants should in regular intervals be provided with new information and organisational details about the event, using either the Facebook group created for the YouthBarCamp or the BarCampTool (see pages 48-50). Direct communication in the run-up to the BarCamp should be used for jointly developing ideas and for collecting session proposals. As mentioned previously, pre-BarCamp communication can also focus on introducing the BarCamp format and the digital tools that will be used. By providing some links to tutorials or videos certain essential skills can be imparted in advance and participants can be encouraged to give it a try. Guides or info kits can equally be made available for download.

INFO BOX: HASHTAG
The microblogging service Twitter has established itself as an excellent communication tool during BarCamps. The service is proper for answering detailed organisational questions and for pointing to specific contents and content-related discussions among the participants. Impressions, questions or particularly noteworthy insights from a session can be shared via Twitter with participants and the public. Twitter is based on a tagging system using so-called “hashtags”. Hashtags allow finding all entries related to the BarCamp or its topic. For example, the entries about the First German-French YouthBarCamp were tagged with the hashtag #bcdfw. The GamesCamp uses the hashtag #gamescamp.



Collecting Session Proposals

Right at the beginning of the session collection it should be explained again what a **Session** is and what it can look like. A session is neither a presentation nor a workshop nor a speech by someone. In the context of BarCamps sessions could best be compared with casual working meetings or discussion groups. There are as many simultaneous sessions as provided for in the time and room plan or session matrix of the BarCamp.

The choice of topics is open and is roughly oriented towards the title or overall topic of the YouthBarCamp. Unexpected or supposedly topic-unrelated session proposals should not be declined across-the-board. Shaping the content of the BarCamp lies in the responsibility of the participants. They have the right and freedom to interpret the title or to put new topics on the agenda.

How to prepare a session is a regularly recurring question from the participants. Also in this case there are no

fixed rules; yet some recommendations can be given. Sessions are as versatile as their initiators and can:

- introduce projects, project ideas or initiatives
- collect feedback and suggestions for ideas or projects
- make propositions and discuss them
- aim at mutual exchange of information
- search together for solutions of a problem or a conflict
- offer a short presentation about a specific topic

It is up to the session initiators whether they prepare a (digital) presentation or not. Ideally however a session usually starts with a short input from the session initiators. It is followed by the discussion with the session participants which is to take the main part of the session time. Especially for inexperienced participants it is important to know that sessions can also be prepared and offered in pairs or groups.

In any case a call for session proposals should be published in the run-up to the BarCamp. It is recommendable to start this call in one group or a forum rather than publishing it on multiple platforms in order to enable participants to identify thematic similarities and

synergies early on. Dealing with session proposals at an early stage is an important part of the preparation process. At the same time it should be kept in mind that these suggestions come in the first instance without any obligation and that no one is forced to offer exactly the proposed session at the BarCamp itself.

Organisational Details

In the run-up to a BarCamp, organisational details such as itineraries, accommodation, and catering require communication efforts that are not to be underestimated. Thus, one person should be assigned the role of an organisational contact person and be approachable with questions before, during and after the event.

Moreover, good communication with the parents of underaged children and youth should be ensured. Furthermore, things such as the permission for

participation signed by the parents, and the permission to publish photos of the participants, if applicable, should not be forgotten.



Practical Example:

Interview with Béatrice Angrand (German-French YouthBarCamp)

In November 2011 the German-French Youth Office organised the First German-French YouthBarCamp. The intensive integration of social media in the preparation and realisation processes of the event as well as the BarCamp format as such presented an enormous challenge for the Youth Office. Jörg Eisfeld-Reschke talked to the general secretary Béatrice Angrand about the concept of the YouthBarCamp, her assessment of content and pedagogic characteristics of the format, and about what the German-French Youth Office has learned.

How did the German-French Youth Office come to organise a BarCamp?

There were several reasons. First of all the German-French Youth Office understands itself as an experimental laboratory for the German-French relationships of tomorrow, which is why we always think about what we can invent or try out. New Media are of course a topic that is very important to us as it is obvious that young people nowadays encounter each other in a completely different way.

What is your impression of the BarCamp?

I have once again been reassured in my conviction that one should have confidence in people. The young people arrived and, in a casual setting, managed to work everything out by themselves: organisation, division into smaller groups, and selection of topics. They did all this by themselves without us having to interfere much.

Were you worried or sceptical towards the format in certain ways?

There was more of a discussion about the pedagogy and the question: How can we be sure that a real encounter, a real meeting will take place between the young people and not just a nice gathering. The apprehension was that without accompanying instruments, without teamers and without time for reflection in the time table there might not be a lot of output arising from the encounter. But we realised that thanks to the New Media the encounter turned out to be very sustainable. For example, the Facebook page is still being filled with contents and the participants are keeping in touch, not just through superficial discussions but through interesting conversations.

Is the topic “happiness and prosperity” suitable for a BarCamp?

The only thing we wanted to preset was an overall topic. The question was: Does today’s youth have more prospects and chances than older or other generations?

With this choice of topic we broke new ground. In contrast to other BarCamps that usually focus on internet and technological questions the German-French Youth Office deliberately let a more philosophical subject define the frame of the BarCamp. As it turned out, such a topic is particularly well-suited for a BarCamp as it offers particularly much room for open discussions.

What did the German-French Youth Office get out of the experience of the BarCamp?

The German-French Youth Office got a lot out of it: First of all the profound determination and the mind to organise a second German-French YouthBarCamp. Next to that, something that is particularly important for our institution is the conviction that New Media are a plus and not only a danger for the exchange between young people. The dialogue at eye level is big fun, especially if it takes place simultaneously online and offline.

(interview translated from German)



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5OWcl6TOXY>
Interview with Béatrice Angrand in German language

Phase 6: Preparation of Technical Equipment and Material



An occasional overstressing of the internet connection is part of every proper BarCamp. At that very moment this is frustrating for the participants, but a positive sign for the organisers: there is intense digital collaboration! However a good internet connection is something that should be dealt with in advance. You can hardly rely on statements such as “Sure, we got internet at our seminar institution” as a BarCamp does not only require a high bandwidth but also needs to provide access for several dozens of digital devices. Every participant might bring at least one device, if not two (laptop and smartphone).

A personal conversation with the house technician is the best way to deal with the following questions:

- How high is the actual bandwidth of the internet connection?
- Can the bandwidth be upgraded for the duration of the event?
- How many devices can be connected via the routers?

- Is the Wi-Fi available in all rooms?
- Can LAN cables additionally be connected in the rooms?

Availability of fast internet is crucial for the success of a BarCamp and just as important for a good atmosphere as is the catering. There needs to be access to shared documents and platforms in order to digitally document and complement the joint working processes. A bandwidth of 6 Mbit is thus desirable. As a kind of emergency alternative the availability of UMTS reception in all rooms should be checked. If this is the case the organisers can ensure an emergency supply via UMTS and substitutional routers.

According to youth protection certain internet contents may not be made accessible for youth and the organisers are in charge of this. The situation at a YouthBarCamp is such that most of the youth will be bringing their own devices. Therefore pre-installed filters are not an option. A more adequate procedure would be the joint development of rules together with the young people or the arrangement of a supervision which can be complemented by voluntary self-regulation of the youth. Most of the time a reference to the established law is sufficient to sharpen the awareness of all present.

The actual technical requirements of a YouthBarCamp depend on the size of the event, the extent to which digital tools are applied and the devices brought by the participants. Thus, in the following list we make a distinction between the minimum technical requirements and the desirable technical infrastructure. The additional technical equipment refers particularly to an extended documentation of the event.

Minimum Technical Infrastructure

- at least one LAN cable for the presentation laptop
- sockets in all rooms (for every 4th participant)
- several projectors (if applicable TVs as alternative screens)
- laptops for the documentation in the rooms
- sound system (necessary for a group of 50 or more people)
- emergency set for UMTS supply (UMTS sticks, router, bridge)

Desirable Technical Infrastructure

- multiple LAN cables in all rooms
- lendable devices (laptop, tablet) for the participants
- stage with lighting equipment for the plenum
- additional screens showing the session plan and other information



Additional Technical Equipment

- audio recorders (for the documentation)
- video recorders (for the documentation)

Nowadays one does not need an outside broadcast van anymore to live-broadcast an event. A web-enabled smartphone is already sufficient. In the case that some sessions should be broadcasted and recorded the appropriate hardware needs to be provided (at least one laptop, camera, tripod, and microphone). The broadcast can take place via free live streaming services such as www.ustream.tv and www.make.tv.

The use of digital tools is of great importance to a BarCamp. Yet technology is not everything. Depending on the situation and the session the young people might want to revert to materials such as pin boards or flipcharts. At least one of these two should be available in every room. It is also advisable to provide the rooms or info tables with writing pads and pens. How much technical equipment can be provided and used is most of all a question of financial resources. If the conference centre does not provide the entire equipment required one can draw on external service providers. Not least, also the staff in charge of the hardware is another limited resource that needs to be calculated.



Phase 7: Defining and Preparing the Tools for Online Collaboration

The linchpin of the participants' self-organisation during a YouthBarCamp is the session planning. Using a freely chosen tool (e.g. GoogleDoc, Etherpad, Wiki, Timetabler, BarCamp-Tool) a time and room plan is created into which the individual suggestions are entered during the session planning. It is important that the session plan can be edited easily and quickly and that the results can be accessed online via all devices (laptop, tablet, smartphone).

Commonly the participants of a BarCamp take care of the session documentation on their own. The organisers can aid this process by giving some direction in advance. This includes the decision on the tool to be used for the documentation. Usually GoogleDocs or Etherpads are used for this purpose.

Furthermore the digital rooms should be adequately prepared for a YouthBarCamp: setting up documents, linking documents to each other, and posting a short

introductory text on the start page that explains its use and purpose (see attached template). Etherpad can be hosted on one's own server. Alternatively the project "youthpart" provides this service on its website <http://www.yourpart.eu/> for free.

Twitter is the digital all-round tool for BarCamps. It serves the documentation and communication during and between the sessions as well as the self-organisation of the participants. Additionally it is a great indicator for the mood and feelings of the youth



INFO BOX: ETHERPAD

Etherpad is a tool for collaborative writing. It enables multiple authors to simultaneously work on one text document. Etherpads are particularly suitable for BarCamps as they allow working on them in real-time which means that changes will be visible for everyone right away. With the help of Etherpads participants document their sessions on their own, with the different authors being highlighted through differing font colours in the text. In addition, the state of work at a particular point in time can also be consulted after the event which means that it is possible to track the working process and its documentation both chronologically and content-wise.

as it catches these through their comments. In order to encourage the greatest possible usage Twitter can be explained already in the Pre-BarCamp communication (chapter 5) whereas on site leaflets can be provided which explain the use of the tool.

Technical preparations include installing a **Twitter wall** for the hashtag of the event and to visualise it on (TV or other) screens. Considerations of a moderated Twitter wall are obsolete as control is only pretended (yet sometimes necessary due to spam). All participants holding their own devices will use the open search function if in doubt. Trust and educational care are more appropriate concerning the usage of Twitter and the public comments. Another argument for the provision of such live streams is that it allows the involvement of interested people from outside the event. Depending on the topic these can for example be experts or young people who cannot be there in person. In the context of a YouthBarCamp opening the event for virtual participants should be discussed beforehand and introduced by the presenter. The opening can mean opportunities (such as feedback, acknowledgement, and external expertise) and risks (public audience) at the same time.

When planning the tools for online collaboration one needs to bear in mind that most young people will not be used to them. However by way of curiosity, some guidance, and mutual support they will learn quasi on the side how to use the tools for their own purposes and are thus enabled to use these skills in the future.

Practical Example:

Interview with Chris Seitz (mobilegamingCamp)

The mobilegamingCamp (formerly known as Geocaching-Camp) was already organised in 2009 and 2010 by Mediale Pfade and changing partners. The aim was to bring together both young people and multipliers for an intensive exchange and to draw out everybody's competences. Very early on, methods were tried out that broke the purist format and offered support for the youth.

How did you come to organise a BarCamp for young people?

In 2009 we went to the EduCamp in Hamburg for the first time and quickly became very enthusiastic about the dynamic atmosphere of BarCamps. Young people are experts in their area and experts always have valuable knowledge to offer. This knowledge comes to light at a BarCamp instead of dozing in the classroom. The idea of transferring the Geocaching-Camp (as it was called back then) into a BarCamp was self-evident. Geocaching or Mobile Gaming is after all heavily characterised by motion. In my mind, creating a dynamic learning environment suited the topic very well.

What is your impression of YouthBarCamps as a new format?

A YouthBarCamp to me is far more intense than a normal workshop. You can experience and get to know the young people far better as they determine the subjects that are currently important to them. Interaction happens much quicker, people get to know each other much more quickly and one easily finds people to interact with also between the sessions. In my opinion YouthBarCamps are an essential component for the work with young people that I don't want to do without anymore.

Has the format developed further since 2009? What would you do differently today?

By now participants of BarCamps are much more than participants. They are "part-givers" rather than just "part-takers". This is not just a different term but it also reflects the culture that prevails at the Camps in a much better way. To me the BarCamp format has absolutely proven its worth, while it still needs to be emphasised that a structured framework is absolutely essential. The time and room plan should by all means be ready before the Camp, whereas contents arise and room allocation is planned in the course of the BarCamp.

What surprised you most?

Where are the greatest potentials?

Young people who are otherwise more reserved or tend to fool around in classical school situations were perceived differently at the BarCamp. They were focused and surprised us with substantial sessions. They suddenly became self-confident lecturers and afterwards were proud of their achievements, and with a reason. By breaking the classical structure of lecturer and participant, and by allowing everyone to act as a “teacher”, an old school scheme disappears, and with it also certain relations of power and powerlessness.

Back then you already used Twitter (or rather a clone by netcheckers.net) for the documentation. What are your experiences using digital tools at YouthBarCamps?

Young people are happy to try out new things but according to experience are very critical with things that they perceive as unnecessary or unhelpful. Several separate groups of young people went on a geocaching tour during our Camp. Via a Twitter wall and the respective hashtag their routes were visualized and in this way also the people who stayed at the Camp got very good insights into the

activities of the groups. Even interested people who did not directly take part in the Camp got involved. The young people used this tool with a lot of enthusiasm because it definitely added value.

(interview translated from German)





Phase 8: On-Site Preparation

A general advice for BarCamps is: Prepare as much as necessary but as little as possible. „Necessary“ here means in particular everything that is pedagogically necessary in order to make all participants feel comfortable since BarCamps and also YouthBarCamps rely on the potential of participants' self-development. This concerns the rooms in particular: The more they have been prepared in advance, the less responsible people will feel for them. What is definitely needed is an information table which should be located as centrally as possible and be permanently manned during the event in order to respond to all questions that the participants may have. Depending on the event location signs should be posted leading participants to the individual rooms, the toilets, the dining room etc. The more self-explanatory the signage of the rooms the better it is.

By default the rooms should be equipped with a projector /flat screen and sound. Also Wi-Fi should be available in all rooms (installing additional lines and putting up additional Wi-Fi routers might be necessary), as well

as sufficient sockets for the seating area. The setup of chairs and tables should be as flexible as possible so that they can be rearranged for every new session.

A big pin board should be prepared for the creation and presentation of the session planning. A matrix of times (vertical) and rooms (horizontal) can be prepared so that the cards with the session proposals just need to be pinned to the matrix during the session planning.

INFO BOX: GUIDING SYSTEM

In order to ensure that all participants can orient themselves as autonomously as possible a guiding system is advisable that leads everybody to the right rooms. Depending on local conditions this can be a colour system, a guiding system on the floor, or logical denominations (e.g. floor 2, cardinal directions, descriptive names such as tower room etc.).

Depending on preparation and local conditions additional locations such as a chill out area, a play corner or a feedback area can be set up. If applicable it should be remembered to visualise donors, partners and sponsors, for example via a flyer table with information material, self-presentations, or give-aways. If Twitter is used the Twitter walls should be mounted and tested if possible in a central place which is also used between the different sessions or other programme items.

Phase 9: Implementation of a BarCamp

The implementation of a YouthBarCamp is subject to certain dynamics and uncertainties, just as any other event and format. This is even more so as the BarCamp format relies on the active participation and content definition of the participants more than other formats. However the organisers of a YouthBarCamp can draw on previous practices and the experiences made by others. The authors have identified seven phases which can be regarded as typical for BarCamps and which will be introduced and described in the following.

Against the background of our experiences these are helpful categorical classifications that in practice have proven successful. The concrete realisation of a YouthBarCamp can by nature be influenced by the specific topic and objective of the YouthBarCamp, the number of participants, the local conditions, or process-related developments. Our suggested phases should thus be understood as an experience-based model classification that can be adjusted and extended as necessary.





Phase 9.1: Arrival

Next to organising the arrival of the youth, for example by providing a shuttle service from the train station, it is important to make for a warm welcome. A well-chosen place for the check-in can provide security and structure. At the check-in formalities such as room allocation/accommodation, signing in, handing in of parental/guardian consent forms and permissions to publish photos, legal notes about youth protection, internet access and contact persons in case of emergency should be dealt with. Indications for orientation at the location, about the roughly defined schedule and the start of the event should also be given.

In order to make sure that all participants can address each other it is helpful to equip everyone with a name badge. These can be prepared in advance by the organisers or designed by the participants themselves, for example by using a button machine. Depending on the size of the event it might make sense to staff an info table with a person who is constantly there to answer organisational questions and help solve problems.

Yet the guests should also feel welcome in an informal way. Ideally, rooms are nicely decorated and everything is already set up so that the team can take some time to have first conversations with the arriving participants. Fruits and drinks are always welcome and should be displayed at a central place. The overall topic of the event can already appear latently through topic-stations, Twitter walls, or information and book tables.

Phase 9.2: Introducing the Format

The presentation of a BarCamp has a clear mission: spreading motivation and offering orientation. Usually there is one person who presents the entire event and is therefore introduced as a contact person for participants' questions. An introduction to the BarCamp format goes far beyond explaining the time and room plan. Rather, emphasis should be placed on conveying the ideal attitude on which the BarCamp approach relies: taking responsibility and participating actively.

The participants are introduced to the responsibility that they bear for the success of the event. It is them who propose sessions, vote on them, present and moderate

them, and actively shape them. Also the digital tools for documentation and linking the sessions will only then be of added value for the participants if they accept and jointly use them.

The presenter can give some advice on how participants can organise themselves for their own sessions. For this role it is recommendable to choose someone who has already participated in a BarCamp and thus can give experience-based and authentic explanations. This way, requests about feasibility and potential difficulties can be answered more easily and by way of examples.

The preparation for one's own active role also includes the introduction round with all participants. Each person states their name along with three hashtags that describe her-/himself and their topics. Even so, with a hundred or more people it will still be hardly possible for people to remember each other's names afterwards. Thanks to the name badges this is not even necessary. Yet what the introduction round achieves is that it allows

everyone to find the five to ten persons who have similar hashtags or who cover the topics that interest him or her in particular.

Apart from that one should not underestimate the positive effect that results if during the first hours of the event everyone has already said something, has had the opportunity to present themselves to the group, and this way has already contributed something to the BarCamp and overcome the first shyness.



INFO BOX: INTRODUCTION ROUND

During the introduction round all participants get to have their say and state their name as well as three hashtags. There is no need to worry about the duration of the introduction. If one ensures that the first people stick to the structure of stating their name and three hashtags, the group will quickly learn and take approximately about ten seconds per person. Accordingly, an introduction round of 100 people will take about 15 minutes.

**Phase 9.3:
Session Planning**

The session plan can be created in a digital or analogue way but should definitely be flexible in order to accommodate eventual changes later on. Both versions have

their specific advantages. Digital session plans are easier to communicate online but pose a higher risk if technical problems occur. An established method is writing the sessions on separate cards/A4 sheets that can then be flexibly pinned to the time/room grid of the session plan. Session plans are often rearranged during their creation process and should thus be easily changeable.

In a first step the meaning of a “session” should be explained again to all participants. Sessions are not presentations or lectures but aim at initiating a common exchange of experiences as well as discussions. Even though the topic is suggested by the session initiator, both parties – session initiator and session participants – create their session together.

The casual character of a session should encourage the participants to offer their own session, even without having any experiences, topic-related knowledge or without having explicitly prepared for it. The sessions are proposed in the plenum: The participants who want to offer a session briefly introduce the topic and aim of their session for the others. After that the interest of the participants in the respective session is assessed.



What needs to be explicitly emphasised regarding the assessment of participants' interest in a session is that all participants can raise their hands as often as they want; by putting their hands up they do not enter a binding commitment to participate in the respective session. What is assessed is merely the general interest, not the actual participation. This ensures participants' flexibility and does not oblige them to participate in a particular session.

After the interest has been scanned, the session initiators write the title of their suggested session on a prepared card/DIN A4 sheet (if not in the digital form/table) and place them on the session plan. Already during the stage of the session planning the self-organisation of the participants is one of the most important principles. The different session initiators negotiate among each other which rooms will be used by whom at what times. Ideally the participants thus design the session plan single-handedly.

Subsequent changes to the session plan are in principle possible but should be agreed on with the persons in charge. For such changes (e.g. time, room, or merging sessions due to similar topics) a time limit should be set so that the participants do not have to re-orient themselves too often.

Also participants can be given the opportunity to re-arrange or redesign the session plan on their own responsibility. Here, too, a deadline should be set for such changes. Updates and additional changes should also be communicated relatively quickly via the available online channels (Twitter, Twitter wall, central documents). The complete session plan should always be visible for everyone at central locations, even during the sessions. It is also advisable to print the completed session plan and post it up.

For those who are interested in the BarCamp but cannot be there in person the session plan is made available in a digital version which is accessible on mobile devices. The publishing of the session plan also happens via the available digital tools.

Phase 9.4: Course of a Session

Sessions can have completely different characteristics and qualities – this is what makes them unique. For example, a session can be started with the intention to share one's own knowledge with the group and subsequently discuss and enhance it. In this case the session initiator (who proposed the session) starts off with a short introductory presentation – experience suggests that this should not exceed one third of the available time. The rest of the time is reserved for discussion. Most of the time the session initiator takes over the role of the moderator, but this rule can also be changed at the beginning of the session.

The session initiator can also introduce the session by starting a question. In this case he or she usually takes over the role of the moderator. Yet from the beginning to the end of the session everyone is called to actively involve.

Apart from these two very common procedures sessions can also be very practical. It is possible to test a tool, offer a Youtube session on the topic, try out or even produce a (computer) game – there are no restrictions

to the fantasy of the session initiators as long as they actively deal with the topic proposed.

Experienced BarCampers organise themselves in their group. Some for example start to write the minutes together. The session initiator provides input, clarifies the role of moderator or takes it over her-/himself. Communication to the public takes place and even a video might be streamed (spontaneously).

There are different ways to make sure that the sessions are moderated and documented well. If young people are trained as tutors in advance (see Phase 2: Conception) they can split in order to cover all sessions, have an eye on the documentation and eventually aid the moderator.

Another possibility is to assign one person each to the individual rooms, who ensures that the technical equipment is working and that the roles of moderator and note-takers are decided on at the beginning of each session. During the course of the BarCamp these support measures should decrease so that the organisation of the BarCamp is passed over more and more to the participants' self-organisation.



Phase 9.5: Course of the Sessions (Application of the Tools)

There is a range of digital tools which can support the collaboration at BarCamps. Here is an overview of the most important ones:

Text-Based Documentation through Etherpads or GoogleDocs

In order to enable everyone to contribute to the content of a session the joint writing of minutes involving several participants has proven successful. Etherpads as well as GoogleDocs allow the joint and simultaneous working on text documents. The latter are similar to classical Word documents, whereas Etherpads highlight the different authors with different colours and provide a structured overview of the genesis of the session. Both tools automatically save the documents.

Via a specific link they can easily be shared with interested external persons who can even contribute questions and knowledge via the live documentation and by doing so enrich the session from afar.

Twitter, Facebook, and Web-Publicity

The constant communication by the participants towards the web attracts increased attention and allows reaching a broader audience. Since discussions already start before the event by way of the BarCamp-specific hashtag and can carry on afterwards for considerable amounts of time it is easy for external people to get involved from afar. Whether it is via Twitter, Facebook, or other social media channels – one should use what works well for communication.

BarCampTool

The BarCampTool offers the possibility to take care of the communication and application process of a BarCamp by just a few clicks and adjustment of some settings. The application process including the list of participants and newsletters is displayed and carried out via the tool, and even session proposals can be collected and voted on via the tool. Additional functions such as a Twitter wall and the integration of Etherpads for the documentation are to come soon (see also pages 48-50).

Paper

Proven methods of moderation and documentation such as flipchart or cards are useful, too. At the end they can be digitalised by camera and this way also be distributed virtually.



Video Live Streams

Video live streams can directly involve external persons in what is happening in the session. Very often simple technical solutions suffice to expand the group on site by the web guests. The easiest version consists of a laptop with integrated webcam, microphone and streaming service – something that is particularly suitable for very small sessions.

In this way the discussion is enriched via the live stream and can be permanently documented in the web if desired. Another advantage of this is that participants can recap missed sessions after the event.

Phase 9.6: Merging Results and Concluding the BarCamp

The conclusion of the BarCamp and the way in which this takes place is another important component of a YouthBarCamp as it is the moment in which all participants finally come together again. Naturally each participant undergoes different experiences at a BarCamp because he/she has compiled his/her own agenda and has attended only a selection of the sessions. A wrap-up of all sessions and results at the end of the BarCamp is therefore beneficial for the participants and the organisers.

Regarding the form of the conclusion several variants and methods are possible depending on the aim of the YouthBarCamp and the needs of the participants. A common method consists in the catching of individual impressions in the form of “flashlights”. The presenter or organiser can either randomly select participants and ask them to give some impressions or deliberately approach participants of specific sessions. Alternatively a final session slot can be scheduled in which the individual sessions and their results are presented.

If this method is chosen it may be useful to ask the session initiators to summarise the contents and discussions of “their” sessions. As the individual sessions are documented in detail in the Etherpads these summaries or extracts of them can be used for summarising the results. Creative forms of visualisation have a supportive effect and can appear for example in form of poster presentations, tag clouds created live during the sessions, or photo documentations of the sessions.



Apart from that, the presenters should utilise the conclusion or wrap-up to point to the documentations (Etherpads, live streams) which usually serve to recap the sessions at a later point.

The Etherpads are an important and sustainable archive of the results and should be linked together in one central document at the end of the BarCamp if this has not been done in advance. This way they figure not only as a vital source of information for those who were interested in the BarCamp but could not be present on-site, but they also function as the memory of the BarCamp participants.

If one aspires to document the results in a (text) form other than the Etherpads this either has to be taken care of by the organisers, which means that the BarCamp needs to receive editorial coverage, or such documentation needs to be agreed on in advance with the participants. In this context it should however be kept in mind that it is not so much the aim of a BarCamp to generate well-worded (text) products but rather to initiate mutual exchange of experiences and knowledge among the participants and to develop ideas.

If conclusive theses or statements are sought additional time should be scheduled for them. A feedback phase can also be part of the wrap-up in order to have participants reflect on their hopes and expectations from the BarCamp. Depending on the number of participants this can happen live and individually or, in the case of larger groups, via the available digital platforms.

If the YouthBarCamp is geared towards a particular output or aims for specific follow-up activities the conclusion is also the moment for making arrangements and agreements. Even if no direct follow-up events or the like are planned it is advisable to ask for project ideas or follow-ups that might have emerged during the BarCamp.

Experience has shown that free and casual formats such as BarCamps are sources of many creative ideas. In this respect, the targeted inquiry into possible project ideas by the presenters can highlight potential synergy effects.



Phase 10: Documentation

A great thing about BarCamps is: All participants are actively involved in the documentation of the contents that have been created and the subjects that have been worked on. In this way joint records are created, as explained in Phase 8.5. Also the reporting and reflection that take place after the meeting on site are typical features of BarCamps. In the case of YouthBarCamps this will certainly take place in an attenuated way; however it is worth encouraging the integration of this feature into the culture of YouthBarCamps, too. Here, again, the coordinating role is with the organisers.

Both during the BarCamp and its aftermath it is helpful for documentation purposes to link up all Etherpads/GoogleDocs (or other forms of documentation) used and provide an overview. Also an overview of online articles should be created that brings the different views together. A prompt conclusion by the organisers in form of a blog article is also helpful for public reflection and further development of the format.

INFO BOX: DOCUMENTATION VIDEO STATEMENTS

In order to provide a short and appealing insight into the sessions it is possible to sketch out all sessions by way of a short video statement. This needs relatively little time and effort if one works with tablet or smartphone and a good microphone and skips the cutting.

It is recommendable to create a local backup of all Etherpads and GoogleDocs as there will always be adjustments or deactivations of particular servers which can cause the loss of data.

If photographers and video teams were present during the BarCamp participants and absent persons will always welcome compilations of visual impressions. The website of the BarCamp (whether mixt community, blog, Facebook etc., see Phase 3) and all channels which have been established for communication during the BarCamp (whether planned or unplanned) can serve as locations for the presentation of such impressions.

Besides all public reflections it certainly makes sense to jointly evaluate and document the event and process in the team. On the basis of all collected information and numerous statements by the participants it should be easy to develop a comprehensive report for employers, donors and partners. The different phases described in the present guide can serve as an orientation in this regard.



Phase 11: (Post-)Community Management

The active integration of social media into youth education leads to an expansion of consultation space in two ways: location-wise and time-wise. By integrating digital possibilities of participation voice and contribution are no longer bound to constant physical presence. Time-wise expansion means that an event is not at all over when the participants depart from the location. It is over only when the last pictures are tagged, discussions in the groups discontinue, and the young people no longer maintain their new contacts online. From experience the activity time span of a weekend event extends over three to five months.

Let us not fool ourselves: Events and seminars offer young people occasions for learning and trying out new things. However, sustainable learning and implementing only takes place when a permanent transfer into daily life is achieved.

Groups in social networks lend themselves as places for exchange and discussions among the

participants of a YouthBarCamp. Usually the young people will in any case organise themselves this way. For an institution and educators to be able to participate in the discussions it is necessary to be present on these platforms with one's own profile.

What is valid for actual event locations applies also to digital locations: they should be creatively designed. Starting with the name of the group, a profile picture, the group description



(eventually pointing out the [netiquette](#)) and settings for public visibility there are several substantial directions that can mostly be set only by the administrators. It is thus recommended to create and administer the groups as early as possible and offer them to the youth for their utilisation.

Pointing to the documentation of the event is the minimum in terms of contents that should be offered during the aftermath of the event. More content-related efforts are desirable. Besides tips for similar events or projects of participants providing links to interesting contents that relate to the topic of the YouthBarCamp could be considered.

By way of asking questions people can be encouraged to deal with the posts and inputs. Ideally the young people will react to these impulses and use the infrastructure of the group to share their own or otherwise encountered contents.



Practical Example: GamesCamp

Interview with Sebastian Ring (GamesCamp)

Since 2011 the GamesCamp is organised annually by eleven institutions throughout Germany. The aim is to create a common platform for young gamers which is as close to the topic and the young people as possible and thus offers discussions far-off the typical defensive stance towards games. For this purpose the BarCamp format was further developed in some regards to satisfy the special needs of the youth.

How did you come to organise a BarCamp for young people?

The starting point was the astonishment of a teacher about a very comprehensive and well-done work of a pupil on the topic Super Mario. This demonstrated very well how much knowledge and know-how gamers have and what a pity it is that this is hardly recognised, at least in formal and non-formal educational contexts. Gamers are often stuck in a niche (“ludic gap”), they have a lot to say but

very few discursive platforms. This is why in talks during the Gamescom 2010 a nationwide network of institutions for media education has agreed to organise a BarCamp on the topic. What fascinated us about the BarCamp format was the high degree of participation and the low hierarchies between organisers and participants with different backgrounds. The fact that gamers are a technophile target group supported our intention. The fact that the GamesCamp could happen at all is owed not least to the commitment of the German Federal Agency for Civic Education which supported the project from its beginnings.

What is your impression of YouthBarCamps as a new format?

The BarCamp format has proven very successful for games as a topic. Generally this is an exciting approach as it allows reaching many pedagogical aims, and in a way that would not be as easy to realise in other contexts (e.g. in a school environment). One of the participants of the first GamesCamp summarised this very nicely with the statement “unique educational leave for gamers”. Discussing, learning with and from each other, and of course playing with each other – this

was all easy to implement in this framework. What was surprising was the diversity of formats and contents contributed, such as presentations, discussion rounds, or coding sessions in which social, economic, philosophical, or game-related questions came up.

In particular, the participative element, the discussion at eye level even among young people from different social background or between the organisers and participants, is to be emphasised.

Were you worried or sceptical towards the format in certain ways?

The GamesCamp is a model project. In so far many things are allowed to happen differently from what was expected. One difficulty was for sure the fact that the BarCamp format was hardly known among the youth. Through a good and engaged communication in advance and sufficient local support this problem could be solved easily. Concerning the participants it is unfortunate that obviously the subject gaming still does not appeal to girls or young women as much as it does to boys or young men. We were at least able to considerably increase the number of female participants



and we will continue working on this. One of our aims is to also involve underprivileged and apolitical youth. It became obvious at the GamesCamp that a good mix is very beneficial; and when participants have a common focus – in this case games and gaming – hierarchies take a back seat. In order to make up for a potential lack of expertise we invited adult experts such as lawyers, game designers, and journalists who could flexibly be consulted by the young people as jokers for individual sessions.

What surprised you most? Where are the greatest potentials?

The greatest potentials in my opinion are in the flexibility of the format. Given the freedom of content creation the young participants are called to actively involve and can act according to their interests. At the same time the organisers can – and should – set priorities and provide impulses. For example, at the GamesCamp the LAN party on the first night is a valuable element for team-building and getting to know each other which was in fact set by the organisers. However the self-will but also devotion of the participants should not be underestimated.

What would you do differently in the future?

During the „Closing Rants“, the concluding session of the GamesCamps, the participants have always provided great feedback which is very valuable for further planning and for understanding the participants.

One impulse was for example to better convey in the run-up to the event what a BarCamp is and how it works, and to provide information packages for parents and youth workers so that they know what to expect. Other than that I think that the BarCamp can perfectly be combined with other formats.

Checklist Technical Equipment

- bandwidth of at least 6MBit (ideally 150MBit)
- router can connect a maximum number of devices (app. 1.5 per participant)
- replacement if Wi-Fi does not work: LAN cables or UMTS router
- rooms are equipped with projectors
- rooms are equipped with a flipchart, paper and pens
- rooms have enough sockets (app. 3 per 10 participants)
- at least one device is available in each room for the documentation



BarCampTool

By way of the BarCampTool youthpart provides the digital infrastructure for the organisation of YouthBarCamps.

Thus, interested organisers of a YouthBarCamp no longer need to create an own website for the event. Instead they can use the BarCampTool for the application process and the communication with the participants.

<http://barcamptools.eu>



Setting up a BarCamp

After the registration as a user it is possible to set up one's own BarCamp. The information requested includes basic information about the event as well as already opened social media channels (Twitter, hash-tags, Facebook page etc).

Permissions

It is possible to administer a BarCamp among different administrators. They have the right to change information about the event, administer participants, and access all other administration settings. In order to add a person as administrator one needs to send an invitation to the email by which the person is registered at the BarCampTool.

Profile

All registered users have the possibility to describe themselves in their profile. Possible details include their full name, a profile photo, a free text box, organisation, Twitter name, Facebook profile, and T-shirt size.

Administration of Participants

The list of participants shows all users who have indicated their interest in the BarCamp. They appear in the list with their name, name of the organisation and the link to their profile. The BarCampTool differentiates between the three categories interested persons, participants, and waiting list. The administrators can preset the time frame for application/registration and a maximum of possible participants.

Design of the Page

BarCamps can be individually adapted both optically and content-wise. A picture can be uploaded as header image. The main page is intended to display all the essential information about the event. It is also possible to embed the logos of sponsors and to link them to web pages. Up to three sub pages can be created that appear in the top navigation. On each page one can add a title, an image, and text.

Session Proposals

All users who are interested in the BarCamp can register with a session proposal. For this purpose they enter a title and short description of their proposal. Subsequently all users have the opportunity to indicate their interest in the session. The sessions are sorted either by date or by number of interested persons.

Documentation

An Etherpad is available for the documentation of the BarCamp which is directly linked to the navigation menu.

Twitter wall

If a Twitter wall was created for the BarCamp it can be directly linked to the BarCampTool. The advantage is that the participants only need to remember one web address.

Prospect

The first version of the BarCampTool was launched in the first quarter of 2013. There are plans to expand the tool by further functionalities. Among other things a blog for the events, an online presentation of the session plan and a newsletter function for the direct targeting of interested persons and participants of the BarCamp are intended.



Template Session Preparation

“How do I prepare for a session?” is a question that is frequently asked by young participants. In order to make preparation easier for them, this template can already be sent out in the run-up to the BarCamp – and can thus contribute to greater diversity of the sessions and, most importantly, to higher confidence among the session initiators.

The **template** is made available by Birte Frische and Daniel Seitz under CC BY-SA.

It has first been used at the YouthPolit-Camp and at the GamesCamp and has proven its worth in these contexts.



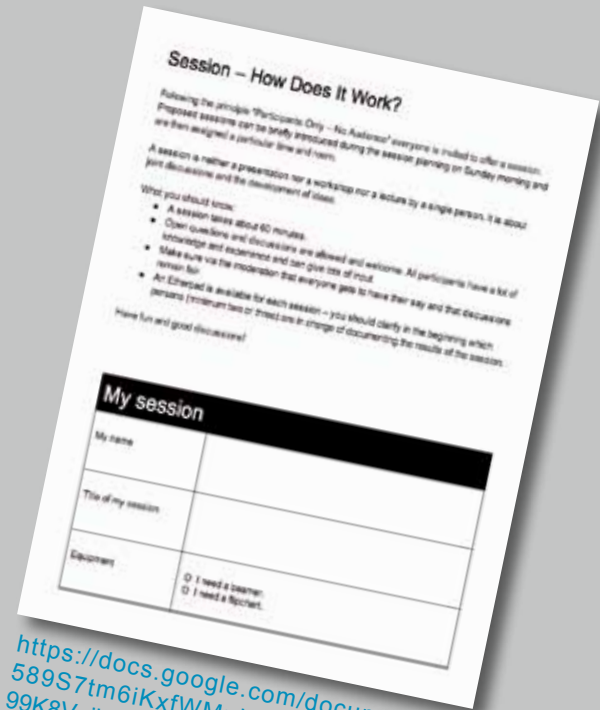
<http://pad.medialepfade.de/p/sessionvorbereitung-feedback>

Template Session Proposal

Participants should write their suggestion legibly on a piece of paper. The template can already be distributed at the check-in or together with the pre-BarCamp information. It contains the most important information about the parameters and checks whether a projector is needed for the session.

This basic template is made available under [this link](#) by ikosom (www.ikosom.de) under the Creative Commons licence CC BY-SA 3.0 DE.

The template was used at the YouthBarCamp Forum of the German-French Youth Office in the context of the Youth Forum.



<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1589S7tm6iKxfWMuHhHzHXjSxMjaqk-99K8VqjhRWRQq/edit>

Template Session Plan

The first session plan of a BarCamp is mostly created on a pin board. For quick access it is advisable to make the session plan digitally accessible as soon as possible.

Based on the German template from Jöran Muuß-Merholz, a **template** of a session plan in form of a GoogleTable is provided by Mediale Pfade under the Creative Commons licence CC BY-SA 3.0 DE Mediale Pfade, Jöran Muuß-Merholz.

It was used for example at a BarCamp on open educational resources (OER Camp).

BarCamp	room 1	room 2	room 3	room 4	room 5	somewhere else
BarCamp Friday	arrival, registration					
2pm	Introduction, organizational things and session planning					
3pm						
4pm	session name is or a?					
	name of session initials, better name (if applicable)					
5pm	session name is or a?					
	name of session initials, better name (if applicable)					
6pm	session name is or a?					
	name of session initials, better name (if applicable)					
7pm	get together					
8pm	Lights off, close doors!					
9pm						
10pm						
11pm						

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/ccc?key=0ArSzNwjRxW9XdHI3eG14Zy1VQmdRaTU2Smk0MWR3Y3c#gid=2>

Template Etherpad Basic Structure

An Etherpad is a helpful tool for the documentation of sessions. For YouthBarCamps Etherpads should be pre-structured in order to simplify the start for all participants.

The template with a basic structure displayed here is made available by ikosom (www.ikosom.de) under the Creative Commons licence CC BY-SA 3.0. It was used at the YouthBarCamp of the German-French Youth Office in the context of the Youth Forum.



http://www.yourpart.eu/p/elysee50_vorlage

Further Reading and Information

This guide is a snap-shot of what can be recommended on the basis of practical experiences made at numerous YouthBarCamps. Apart from the authors numerous experts have contributed to this guide through conversations and online discussions. We would like to offer you the possibility to take part in the continuing discussions and thus keep yourself up-to-date.

Links and more

We keep you updated about new templates, videos and reports from the practice of different YouthBarCamps:

<http://jbc.medialepfade.de>

Facebook group

Via this Facebook group you can take part in the exchange among colleagues about ways of using and implementing YouthBarCamps:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/497967916888794/>



ePartizipation: e-participation comprises all web-based procedures that enable citizens to participate in political decision-making processes (translation of Wikipedia entry in German)

Netiquette: In order to ensure the respectful and constructive interaction of users rules can be agreed on or defined by the host. They serve as guidelines for a pleasant cooperation in the context of the YouthBarCamp or the online communication in general.

GoogleDocs: A web service that is similar to Word and Excel but allows joint and simultaneous working on word documents and spreadsheets.

Joker: At the GamesCamp (adult) experts were involved as a support measure in order to provide their expertise for particular sessions on demand.

OpenSpace: OpenSpace is a participative method for large groups. Topics are spontaneously suggested, moderated and documented by the participants. OpenSpace is the analogue “sister format” of the BarCamp.

Open Source: Open Source is a term for software that is free of rights so that anyone can use it, modify it for his or her own purposes or develop it further.

Session: Session is the term for the individual units resulting from the combination of space and time. Sessions can have completely different characteristics and qualities – this is what makes them unique. For example, a session can be started with the intention to share one’s own knowledge with the group and subsequently discuss and enhance it.

Session Planning: During the session planning the participants briefly introduce their session proposals in the plenum. Subsequently the interest in the different sessions is scanned and the session is assigned a time and room.

Twitter wall: A Twitter wall displays a collection of tweets – messages sent via the short messaging service Twitter – with a particular hashtag. This allows for text contributions from inside and outside the BarCamp.



ikosom

Experts from different areas of digital communication work at the Institute for Communication in Social Media (Institut für Kommunikation in sozialen Medien – ikosom). ikosom deals with subjects such as community management, digital fundraising, government 2.0, e-participation and copyright law.

Mediale Pfade

The agency for media education Mediale Pfade offers consultation, conception and implementation of activities and workshops. Focussing on political education it develops innovative concepts particularly in the fields of “mobile learning” and “e-participation” in order to break new ground for learning and participation. Moreover its experts work in the areas “games/game design” and “media arts”.

Jörg Eisfeld-Reschke founded the Institute for Communication in Social Media (Institut für Kommunikation in sozialen Medien - ikosom). For many years he has been working as a trainer and moderator especially in the context of large group formats. Among other things he organised BarCamps on fundraising and local politics.

Lisa Peyer studied political science at the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena where she is currently doing her PhD. For many years she worked as a trainer for youth workshops and international exchange projects. Since 2011 she is working as a project manager for ikosom and is responsible for the fields of youth and adult work as well as political communication.

Daniel Seitz develops projects in the area of media education with a focus on mobile gaming and learning, interaction, and participation in and through social media. Based on his earlier career as a remedial teacher he focuses on resource-oriented, innovative offers that are as inclusive and low-threshold as possible. He likes to share and reflect his knowledge in workshops, presentations and publications on the topics mentioned above.

- Text:** This is a publication created by the Institute for Communication in Social Media (Institut für Kommunikation in sozialen Medien, www.ikosom.de) and Mediale Pfade – Agency for Media Education (www.medialepfade.de) on behalf of the project youthpart. Youthpart is a project by IJAB – International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany (Fachstelle für Internationale Jugendarbeit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland e.V.). The publication is funded by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend).
- Authors:** Jörg Eisfeld-Reschke, Lisa Peyer, Daniel Seitz
- Photos:** Pages 2, 6, 8, 17, 18, 21, 26, 31, 33, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 60: Photos by Edith Valle for CEDIM (www.cedim.edu.mx) under licence CC BY-NC 2.0
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- Illustrations:** Pages 10, 17, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 30, 32, 35, 37, 40: Illustrations by J-Design (www.doublejdesign.co.uk), published at icondock.com under licence CC BY 3.0
Page 15: Barcamp flame under licence CC NC-sampling+
- Peer-Review:** Rüdiger Fries, Birte Frische, Jasmin Jodlauk, Jöran Muuß-Merholz, Sebastian Ring

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This translation is based on the second revised German edition, October 2013.

Editor:

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Printed by:

ESTA Druck GmbH (www.esta-druck.de)

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A brochure by

 **ikosom**
Institut für Kommunikation
in sozialen Medien

 **mediale pfade**
Agentur für Medienbildung

On behalf of

**youth
part**

ijAB

Funded by



Federal Ministry for
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth