



Online Brainstorming



Is a way for crowdsourcing ideas where participants can collectively generate ideas and solutions on specific questions, using a variety of techniques and tools.

Information
Ideation
Consultation
Co-Decision



<25 people
25-50 people
50-100 people
> 100 people
> 1000 people



Preparation:
From a couple of days to few weeks for questions and recruiting the participants



Implementation:
Couple of hours to 2-3 weeks

Evaluation:
3-4 days for reporting and follow-up



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At least one person for design, moderation and reporting the results

The Method: What is it, when to use it and what outcome to expect

Online brainstorming is a way of collectively generating ideas and sharing knowledge on specific problems using different techniques and technologies as an online whiteboard, video conferencing, and file sharing apps. Like in face-to-face brainstorming, participants are encouraged to think on and share ideas with other participants.

The moderator structures the questions, defines categories and frames the issues to help participants generate ideas. You can use various techniques that structure the process of online brainstorming, such as mind mapping, or brainwriting. Depending on the number of ideas generated during the process, the ideas can be clustered or prioritized. Brainstorming is a good technique to start a discussion on some of the various ideas generated.

The Process: How to conduct it in an in-person setting or online using a PC/laptop with video option

- 1. Goal Definition & Preparation:** Define the goal of the brainstorming and the target group. Select the appropriate technique and digital tool. Prepare and frame the questions and focus and afterwards invite your participants and facilitate their attendance
- 2. Brainstorming:** The moderator explains the topic and method and introduces the questions. He/she can provide some examples of ideas in order to help participants. The brainstorming session can be preceded by a brainwriting session so that participants can write down ideas before sharing them with the rest.
- 3. Evaluation:** In the end, you can cluster and summarize the ideas provided by the participants. You can use the generated ideas as a starting point for discussions with the participants or with further actors.

Blended participation

You can combine E-brainstorming with further online or offline formats. E-brainstorming can be used as the starting point of a broader participation process in order to collect a great variety of ideas which can be further discussed in, for example, a focus group.

Digital communication

- Adhocracy, CitizenOS and Consul offer a specific module to carry out online consultation
- There are also several stand-alone tools, such as miro-board, which enable the use of brainstorming online.

Good to know

- To support the participation of specific target group, you might need to rely on different communication channels (such as newspapers, advertisements on the street, mouth-to-ear...)
- To ease communication with specific target groups, you might need to rely on small and direct sentences that you can also translate via an online translation software
- The format is especially relevant for participants with little experience with (online) participation as it is relatively easy to use, or for participants who are generally not involved in more traditional participation processes. But participants need to have access to the internet.