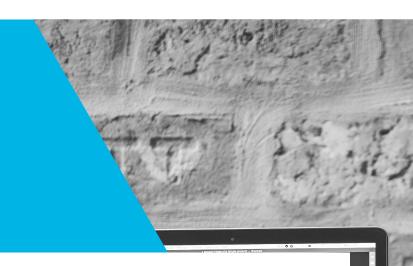# code4sp
coding for social promotion

Good Practice Brochure

CodeDoor's overview

HOW ALL STARTED

In 2015, one of the largest first admission facilities for new arrivals in Germany was built in the German city of Giessen. Tens of thousands of people hoping for a new start in Europe were waiting here to begin their new lives in a foreign country.

Karan Dehghani lives in Giessen. When he became aware of the situation, he started to reflect on the difficulty for young people in particular to pursue their studies and education in a new country. Obviously, there would be all the legal and administrative barriers to migrants and refugees. But there was also the wider issue of integration into the new educational system. Emerging from a serious illness and ready to get his life back on track, Karan originally planned to launch a technology start-up with a totally different idea. While thinking about it, the Hamming question occurred to him: Mathematician Richard Hamming was known to approach experts from other fields and ask "what are the important problems in your field, and why aren't you working on them?". The problem of thousands of young people without access to education seemed to be the largest problem in Karan's field of work. He had no choice but to work on it.

Karan's first idea was to teach refugees what they would need most, using the resources available on the Internet. He wanted to distribute Ipads and connect learners with educational resources online. In order to do so, he approached Melissa Flemmig, then UN spokesperson on refugee issues. She responded and encouraged him to publish his project on a project website, where people could vote on projects to be supported.
In order to solve the matter of education, Karan had to start a pilot project on his own.

To focus on one function only, he decided to only teach how to learn how to code via Internet courses, such as CodeCademy. Now all that was needed was a company that was looking for a developer. A friend of Karans is CEO of "SwissCommerce Germany", and had been looking for a PHP developer for a while. They agreed on a pilot project where the company would provide a desk, Internet connection and friendly colleagues.

In July 2015 a local NGO introduced one refugee to the project and he started working and learning at the same time. That was the beginning of CodeDoor.

CODEDOOR AS AN INFRASTRUCTURE

CodeDoor's goal is to scale the support to NGOs and other charitable organisations that either already offers IT-training (such as refugee coding courses) or are working towards implementing such a solution into their curriculum.

Methodology:

- CodeDoor has created a software-driven platform that empowers beneficiaries to learn coding in a network of NGOs, companies, individual developers and aspiring coders. Through the platform, CodeDoor provides advanced coding training, group learning environments and access to expert support.
- **The platform** is guiding learners to learn how to act like a real programmer from day one. They build projects that get more complex with each step.
- With the **support of tutors**, trainees build a portfolio of individual projects reflected on their profile.
- The platform can be used in English, French, Spanish, Japanese and German.
- **Duration:** This process can take up to 12 months (most participants need at least 1500 hours of programming).

- If students are no longer receiving support from the partner organisation, they can continue to work on the platform until they have successfully found a job.
- **Subjects:** The platform is project-based. Each project contains pre-approved topics, the participant needs to understand in order to work on the project itself. For now, learners can choose projects that contain topics from Web-Fundamentals, Innovation, Full-Stack, Front-End and Data-Analysis.
- **For beginners:** The introduction project "Welcome to Coding Land" is recommended.
- Learners who want to train an innovation mindset should start with the "Innovation Camp".
- **Certificates:** When a project is ready, the learners upload a video of themselves, explaining the project. Once a learner has completed a certain amount of projects and therefore solved every concept that comes with it, she or he qualifies for a certificate.
- **Job readiness:** If a learner takes on a real-life project, they essentially can learn exactly what a company is looking for and thus gain an advantage when accessing the labour market.

Until now, CodeDoor has qualified 3000 people.

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60%

of applicants successfully entered the CodeDoor program

Success story: Alara came to Germany from Lithuania. She left a difficult childhood and upbringing behind to improve her life. Alara needed a chance for education, professional independence and self-determined life. Through a meet-up, she came into contact with CodeDoor and learned the basics of coding. We helped her to an internship in a start-up company - but she still lacked much knowledge. So while interning, she continued to learn with CodeDoor and qualified as a Full Stack Developer - with success! She was taken over by the start-up company and worked there for a year.

Since she liked the other learners and tutors, Alara still joined CodeDoor events, such as a hackathon with the international IT-company, that one of our tutors organised. She immediately clicked with the company's staff and when she was ready for a new challenge, she found her second job as a programmer with them. Ever since that, she is climbing up the career ladder, while she is organizing meet-ups to encourage other women to start coding.