RAT RELAY HACKATHON

Objective:

Rat Relay is a unique three-day global product design hackathon organized by the universities belonging to the Design Factory Global Network – DFGN (www.dfgn.org). Rat Relay simulates a real-world situation in industrial product development where very often one person or one team is only working on a project for a limited time and not from the beginning to the end. In Rat Relay projects are rotated around the world in slots and the topics for the projects are submitted by sponsoring companies, startups or NGOs.

Participants:

The students from DFGN universities (including Warsaw University of Technology).

Method:

Each participating institution works in two six-hour slots per day during the three-day hackathon, in morning and evening shifts, in six slots in total. It is mandatory to participate in each slot. Each institution starts with the project submitted by its partner for the first slot and then hands over the project to the next institution in sequence. Except for the last slot, all the other slots are done in different institutions. The last slot is for completing the project and finishing it to be ready to be delivered to the sponsor after the Relay. The last slot is done by the institution that launched the project in slot 1. Each slot creates a hand-over material to sum up all the work the members of the design team done, choices they made, ideas they created, etc., during their slot.

Timing:

It is an extracurricular event that lasts three days.

External partner:

NGO / industry partner / public administration unit. Warsaw University of Technology cooperated with City Hall of Warsaw and City Hall of Żuromin.

Service implemented:

The work on a prototype for solving one of the external partners' problems such as „Activating Smart City citizens using gamification", „Odors in Żuromin". The solutions to problems are crucial for the city inhabitants

Learning outcomes:

Rat Relay offers the unique experience of project planning, project management of remote partners working as "suppliers", product development and project documentation and satisfying expectations and deadlines from the customer or sponsoring company. The main learning outcomes are understanding the work in a real global team, diving deep into global distributed collaboration, handling time pressure, enabling best possible progress for the next team with project documentation and increased argumentation skills for decisions that have been made. Learning outcomes also include process planning skills, product development skills, teamwork skills and international communication skills. The hackathon is assessed with the feedback that is collected from the team after each slot.

The opinions:

"I took part in Rat Relay twice - in 2018 and 2019. It was basically my first contact with Design Thinking in practice. Each time, however, it was an amazing experience, I saw that during each stage we were working on meaningful and relevant issues. My impression was intensified by the fact that after both the first and the second edition of Rat Relay, I saw many

of our ideas put into practice, which allowed me to feel great satisfaction with the challenge. Personally, I recommend everyone to take part in such an event, because apart from the essence of the topics discussed there, the experience itself is undoubtedly worth experiencing and gives a fresh perspective also to the challenges faced in everyday work on any professional or scientific projects."