

The Marchathon

Step Challenge

COORDINATOR GUIDE

Thank you Coordinators



First of all, we would like to say a BIG thank you for taking the time to coordinate our annual Marchathon Step Challenge.

We acknowledge that you have a busy working schedule already, but we are delighted that you can find the time to coordinate Marchathon and encourage your colleagues/classmates to walk as an alternative to the car as well as increasing their physical activity.

What is Marchathon?

Marchathon is the annual Smarter Travel Workplace and Campus Walking Challenge that runs during Spring. It is open to all staff and students of partners of the Smarter Travel Workplace and Campus Programmes.

How does Marchathon work?

The aim of the Challenge is to encourage and support staff and students to walk more throughout their day, particularly on the commute, and to support and facilitate long term physical activity where possible.

While some participants may be working or studying remotely, Coordinators may decide to encourage walking as an opportunity to connect with colleagues virtually and to provide an opportunity to step away from the desk.



Marchathon Key Dates

Registration Opens: Friday 22nd January
Marchathon Information Webinars: 9th - 23rd February
Marchathon Begins: Monday 1st March
Marchathon Ends: Sunday 28th March
Final day to submit steps: 2pm Monday 29th March
Final results announced by: Thursday 1st April

What did the Walktober Coordinators say?

'I think it brought the team together, especially during a time where everything is so remote. Got great reports from those who live alone/cannot have visitors during pandemic - was something that made them feel less alone and part of a community.'

'As well as being part of a team, it motivates everyone to make small changes each week ... it was great fun ... a bit of craic.'

How do staff and students take part?

Participants and Coordinators are asked to refer to the **Marchathon Participant Guide** for more information on how to sign up and take part.

Note: During the Challenge we use an honesty-based system, but spot checks on the accuracy of step entries will be done throughout. Teams who receive an email or phone call to verify their steps are asked to please respond as soon as possible so that delays to the publication of the Leaderboard are avoided. We recommend highlighting this throughout the Challenge to participants.

smartertravel >>>
>>> workplaces

smartertravel >>>
>>> campus



What resources are available?

The Smarter Travel Team have developed the following resources for Coordinators to help make your promotion as easy as possible:

1. **Promotional Marchathon Graphics** - include on emails, intranets, presentations, newsletters, social media and more
2. **Participant Guide** - an easy-to-follow guide that you can circulate to all participants to ensure an easy sign-up process and information for them to follow
3. **Sample Emails** - you can use or amend our sample email guide when promoting and communicating Marchathon at your organisation
4. **Active Travel Logger Video Tutorials** - We have provided easy to follow video tutorials for Coordinators to help them get the most out of the Active Travel Logger
5. **Promotional Presentation Slide** - for use on online lecturers, classes, board meetings and team meetings
6. **Participant Step Target Sheet** - a motivational guide for participants to set a personal step target on a daily, weekly and monthly basis
7. **Marchathon Internal Leaderboard Template** - promote your organisation's Top 5 Leaderboard teams throughout the Challenge
8. **Marchathon Information Webinar** - an opportunity to discuss resources, best-practices and potential opportunities for your organisation.

To access these resources, please visit [Marchathon.ie](https://www.marchathon.ie)

What is the Active Travel Logger?

The **Active Travel Logger website** is the platform that is used for our Step Challenges. Participants must have a registered and verified account to participate in the Challenge.

Coordinators can use the Active Travel Logger for

1. View Organisation's Teams
2. Communicate with Marchathon participants

Please refer to the FAQ Section on www.activetravellogger.ie for more information.

The Marchathon

Step Challenge

COORDINATOR GUIDE



What are the Marchathon Competitions?

There are lots of prizes to be won throughout the Challenge. We will keep participants up to date on prizes and competition winners on www.marchathon.ie

At the end of the Challenge, there will be prizes for:

- Top 3 Teams on both Leaderboards
- Best Small and Large Workplace and Best Campus
- Prize draws for the Top 50 teams on the Overall Leaderboard
- Best Team Captains & Best Team Members and many many more!

To acknowledge the efforts the Coordinators make during Marchathon, the **Top 5 Marchathon Coordinators** will win a fantastic prize! Coordinators will be judged with the following taken into consideration:

1. Number of participants
2. How Marchathon was promoted?
3. How participants were motivated throughout?
4. Events or prize giving event following the Challenge

Useful links

Join the Challenge: www.ActiveTravelLogger.ie

For more information: www.Marchathon.ie

Email: stepchallenge@nationaltransport.ie

Promoting Marchathon - Getting Started!

Successfully promoting Marchathon in your organisation plays an important role in determining whether your colleagues or classmates engage and participate.

Based on previous Step Challenges, we have developed a successful promotional strategy and the resources you need to ensure maximum engagement.

1. **Get buy-in from Senior Management** or similar within the organisation - Promoting the benefits of Marchathon for the organisation and securing support from management is one of the key steps to success.
2. **Begin the promotion early** - Once your organisation has registered for Marchathon, use our promotional graphic, available on Marchathon.ie, to post on your intranet, social media channels, emails, newsletters, etc. with the message '*Coming Soon! Get ready to step and compete against teams nationwide!*'
3. **Create a Marchathon Promotional Team** - It can help reduce workload, increase promotion and participation rates and improve the overall experience.
4. **Attend our Marchathon Information Webinar** - where we will discuss best-practice, share ideas and stories from previous Step Challenges and offer you support
5. Familiarise yourself with the **Active Travel Logger** website and the **Organisation Dashboard**
6. Access your **Coordinator Resources** and begin your promotional strategy. Develop a social media campaign, organise promotion for your intranet, newsletters, canteen, noticeboards, etc.
7. Finalise your **internal organisation competitions and organisation events**. Successful internal competitions and events will be discussed at our Marchathon Information Webinar

Promoting Marchathon - Keeping people stepping!

Some top tips to help you promote Marchathon and keep your organisation motivated throughout.

As the Challenge begins:

- Encourage last minute sign-ups
- Help staff and students to find a team to join
- Promote Marchathon on social media and other promotional channels available to you
- Launch the first day of Marchathon - hold an online event, organise a virtual walk or hold a tea/coffee morning

During the Challenge, check out our list of events or incentives to keep participants motivated:

- Virtual group walks
- Health awareness webinars
- Set up a Marchathon email/messaging group
- Launch a 'My Story' competition
- Promote local Slí na Sláinte routes
- Encourage regular breaks from the computer
- Encourage walking meetings where possible
- Hold internal competitions
- Staff V Student competition
- Department V Department competition
- Set weekly organisational targets
- Celebrate targets and achievements
- Continued promotion and communication
- Remind participants to log their steps
- Promote the weekly Leaderboards

For more information

For more information on Marchathon including resources, video tutorials, weekly competition winners, FAQ's and Terms & Conditions please visit www.marchathon.ie

The Smarter Travel Team are here to support you as a Coordinator. If you do have any other queries that haven't been answered, please get in touch by emailing us at stepchallenge@nationaltransport.ie

