

MARCHATHON

COORDINATOR GUIDE

What is Marchathon?

Marchathon is the annual Smarter Travel Workplaces and Campus Step Challenge that runs during March. It is open to all staff and students of partners of the Smarter Travel Programme.

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 and contribute to the environment where possible.

While some may be working or studying remotely on certain days, coordinators can decide to encourage walking as an opportunity to connect with colleagues virtually, and an opportunity to step away from the desk.

Thank You Coordinators

We would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to all our Coordinators for taking the time to coordinate our annual Marchathon Step Challenge.



Marchathon Key Dates

Registration: Now open.

Marchathon Information Webinars: 7th February – 26th February

Marchathon begins: **Monday 3rd March.**

Marchathon ends: **Sunday 30th March.**

Final day to submit steps: 2pm Tuesday 1st April

Overall results announced by: Thursday 3rd April

Weekly deadline to log steps for the previous week:

Mondays 2pm except March Bank holiday weekend and the Final Week.

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 participant in the challenge.**

Coordinators can use the Active Travel Logger to:

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

Please refer to the [FAQs](#) section on the Active Travel Logger for more information



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 these 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 easy to follow video tutorials specific to both participants and Coordinators.
5. **Marchathon Editable Graphics** – editable graphics for you to use during the challenge to make announcements, celebrate achievements and so on.
6. **Marchathon Internal Leaderboard Template** – promote your organisations Top 5 Leaderboard teams throughout the challenge.
7. **Marchathon Information Webinar** - To access these resources, please visit stepchallenge.ie.



How do staff and students take part?

Everyone refer to the **Marchathon Participants' Guide** for information on how to sign up and take part.

Coordinators, please circulate the guide to all participants at the beginning of their promotional campaign. Also available online.

Note: During the Challenge we use an honesty-based system and spot checks on the accuracy of step entries by the participants.

Useful links

Join the Challenge: ActiveTravelLogger.ie.

For more information: stepchallenge.ie.

Email: stepchallenge@nationaltransport.ie.



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What are the Marchathon Competitions?

There are lots of prizes to be won throughout the Challenge. These include Photo Competitions, Leaderboard Prize Draws, Quizzes and much more. We will keep participants updated on prizes and competition winners regularly on www.stepchallenge.ie.

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

- Top 3 Teams on both Leaderboards
- Best Small, Large Workplace and Best Campus
- Prize draws for the Top 50,100 & 200 teams on the Overall Leaderboard
- Weekly Team targets And more!

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

1. Number of participants
2. How Marchathon was promoted
3. How participants were motivated throughout the month
4. Events or Prize Giving events following the Challenge



Promoting Marchathon - Pre-Launch!

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.

- 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.
- **Begin the promotion early!** Once your organisation has registered for Marchathon, use the promotional graphic to post on your intranet, social media channels, emails, newsletters and so on, with the message 'Coming soon! Get ready to step and compete against teams nationwide'.
- Create a **Marchathon Promotional Team** – it can help reduce workload, increase promotion and participation rates and improve the overall experience.
- Attend our **Marchathon Information Webinar** – where we will discuss best-practice, share ideas and stories from previous Step Challenges and offer you support.
- Familiarize yourself with the Active Travel Logger website and the Organisation Dashboard.
- Access your Coordinators Resources and begin your promotional strategy. Develop a social media campaign, organise promotion for your intranet, newsletters, canteen, notice boards, etc.
- Finalise your internal organisation competitions and organisation events.



Promoting During Marchathon

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:

- Give ideas for participants to incorporate walking on the commute and throughout the day.
- 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 or Department V Department competitions.
- Set weekly organisational targets.
- Celebrate targets and achievements.
- Continued promotion and communications.
- Remind participants to log their steps by the deadline.
- Promote your internal and national Leaderboards.

