



POLITECNICO
MILANO 1863

DIPARTIMENTO DI DESIGN

NET
MILANO

FINAL SYNTHESIS DESIGN STUDIO SECT.2 | “BETTER FUTURES”

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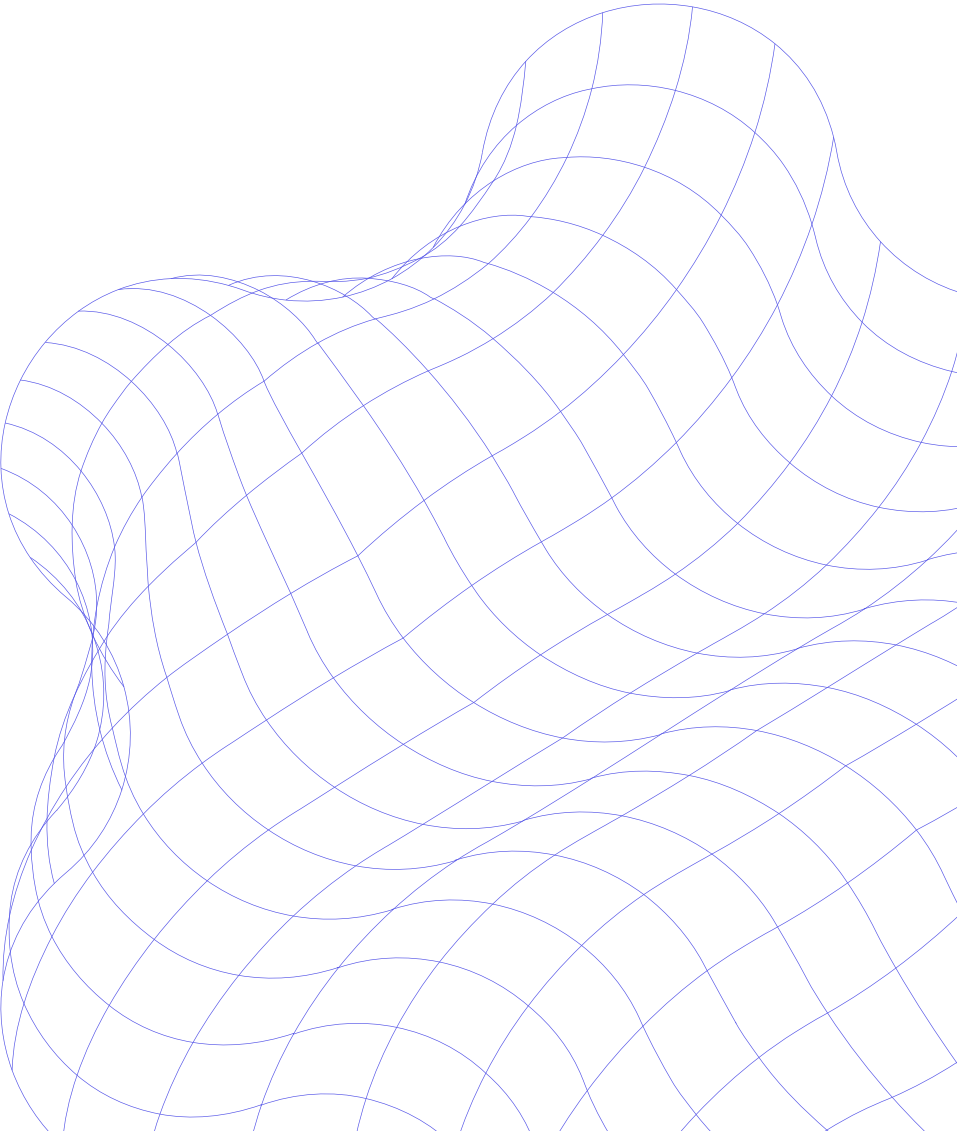
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What Is NET Milano?

NET is a service that provides short workshops which help non tech-proficient people break the ice with technology in a practical way and in partnership with local activities.

Research Context

Wellbeing in the future

NET originated from the challenge to develop a project about wellbeing in the cities of the future, taking into account current and future trends. More specifically, the topic of wellbeing evolved into the more specific theme of digital divide. The reason behind this choice lies in the fact that cities are becoming more and more smart. However, this causes older people to be left out for their scarce technological skills. This is the concept of digital divide, an ever-present phenomenon in Italy which became especially evident after the pandemic.

Source: The Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI). (2020). *Shaping Europe's Digital Future*. European Commission. <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi>

Digital divide

“A division between those who have access to the Internet and those who do not”.

When it strikes old people, it is called **“intergenerational digital divide”**.

from AgendaDigitale.eu

Digital divide

The more cities become smart, the more they become inaccessible for people who cannot use technology. They become excluded and cannot contribute to society, nor leverage the opportunities which technology provides to make life simpler, so their life gets more difficult.

Although digital divide and wellness may sound distant from each other, we believe that feeling included, being able to participate in future cities and feeling part of a community thanks to technology and not despite it are beneficial to older citizens. Finally, in these times of Covid, this problem is particularly relevant, because of the digital acceleration we have and are experiencing. Those who are not confident are marginalized even more, so the problem of the digital divide is already here.

Source: Capgemini Research Institute. (2020). *The Great Digital Divide: Why bringing the digitally excluded online should be a priority.* https://www.capgemini.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Report---Digital-Divide_Web.pdf



Users' Voice

“

Tech shouldn't be that time consuming, it shouldn't be so complicated.

Giuseppina, 66 years old

“

I've never tried teaching anything tech-related to my granny, because for her even turning on the TV is already a struggle.

Filippo, 19 years old

“

Not everybody [among her peers] likes and is interested in technology, but it is necessary [to learn how to use it].

Marinella, 75 years old

“

In this period it's fundamental to know how to use the computer. If you can't go out, you can ask for help, you can do grocery shopping online, watch films... [...] There is also the problem of isolation, not just because of the pandemic.

Vilma, 68 years old

Experts' Corner

Simona Savoldi Poli

Simona Savoldi Poli teaches elderlies how to use the computer, the smartphone and the Internet. She holds her classes in Centro Zante in Milan. She developed a method of her own, where she stressed the importance of approaching tech as fun and practical.

When asked how teaching to elderlies should be approached, she states that her method succeeds in keeping students motivated. By making lessons neither too easy nor too difficult the level of engagement is quite good and both creativity and conviviality play an important role.

 [Senior Web Care](#)

Marilisa Del Vecchio

Marilisa Del Vecchio has a degree in IT Security and works as a Cybersecurity Consultant in Accenture company. Currently, she mostly deals with issues about data protection, security awareness and security governance.

How does cyber security relate to people who lack digital literacy in a scenario where IoT and digitalisation are getting predominant? Marilisa pointed out that awareness about what users should be protecting is the biggest challenge to guarantee the safety of users.

 [LinkedIn](#)

“ Old people are the majority of the population, still nobody pays attention to them. So I had the idea of the computer course.

Simona Savoldi Poli

Future City

Economy

Economy is trying to recover after the first pandemic wave in 2020. There are issues from higher rates of unemployment that worsened the gap between the rich and the poor. Despite this, technology is enabling new jobs and readapting business models.

Safety

Technology empowers communications, problem response and surveillance, therefore it has the potential to improve people's safety, especially drivers, pedestrians and neighbourhoods.

Government and Participation

Technology also allows mass collaboration while citizen's engagement is growing more and more. This smart city is IoT and data driven and the government keeps projecting for resilience, takes care of the citizens and aims at improving their wellbeing. The government is making efforts to fight cyber crimes and misinformation.

Everyday Life

The smart working trend made neighbourhoods vital units around which citizen's life orbitates, providing social inclusiveness. People will be working more but the majority of people will be looking to go outside for leisure. Streets will have less retail stores and more familiar and essential services thanks to higher demand of delivering products and goods.

Sources: EU Security Union Strategy. (2020), *Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament*. European Commission.
<https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/system/files/ged/communication-eu-security-union-strategy.pdf>

EU Science Hub. (2019). *The Future of Cities*. Publications Office of the European Union.

Fulton, W. (2020). *How the COVID-19 pandemic will change our cities*. Rice Kinder Institute for Urban Research.
<https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/the-future-of-cities/concluding-considerations#the-chapter>

The World Bank. (2020). *The Global Economic Outlook During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Changed World*.
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/06/08/the-global-economic-outlook-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-a-changed-world>

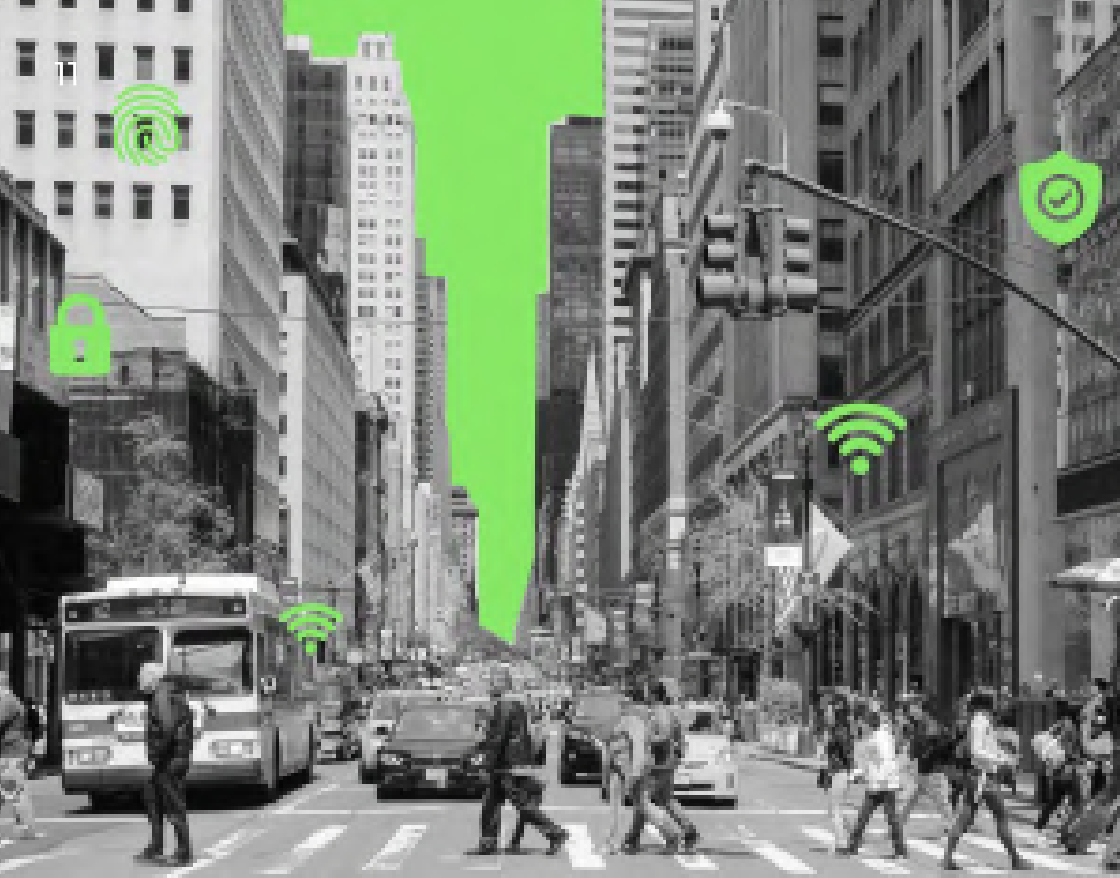
A contrast

Upon comparing the two results coming from two parallel researches, a crucial contrast emerged: on one hand, a smart futuristic city where technology and IoT are everywhere, while on the other side people who do not have sufficient tech skills to access their city services.

So a question arose:

In a digital city, what happens to those who are not digitally proficient?





Excluded citizens

Making every service in the city digital while assuming that everybody is able to use technology cuts out all those people who do not know how to use digital services and devices. As a consequence of this, in a future where everything is digital, these people could be deprived of the possibility of exercising their citizenship rights.

This problem led to the following HMW question:

How might we provide people who lack tech skills with the possibility to use digital city services?

Concept Proposal

NET provides a catalogue of single workshops, which can be held either in presence or online, which have the purpose to introduce elderlies to technology in an engaging and practical way, without a scholastic feel. There are also workshops which allow people to use technology in their daily life or as a support to their passions. Everyone is free to either attend only one workshop or to create a unique path following their passion.

NET also takes advantage of a local network of activities, businesses and professionals in order to create a service deeply entwined with the local community.



NET Uniqueness

Competitors' approach



Senior Web Care

Traditional methodology based on learning, homeworks and frequency.



Samsung SAVE for Seniors

Focus on tech and on devices functions per se.



Senior Planet

Focused on what technology can do to make older adults life better and funnier.

NET approach

Gamification

One shot, flexible group workshops with a gamified approach and individual independent follow up.

→ **Quizzes, Group games, Booklets**

Creativity

Focus on devices as a medium to enable people in daily life and empower their creativity.

→ **Workshops such as Recipe Album**

Local

Focus on devices as a medium to enable people in daily life and empower their creativity, also taking advantage of local resources and activities.

→ **Partnership with businesses such as Cortilia, local senior citizens centres and labor unions**

The Local Dimension

One of the ways in which NET differentiates itself from its competitors is by taking advantage of local resources. Workshops are held in places which are familiar to the users (such as senior citizens centres), while guests come from local activities, businesses and initiatives (such as shops, restaurants, producers, libraries...). In this way, on one hand NET benefits from having a unique offer which mirrors the peculiarities of the neighborhood or the city it operates in (this will be even more evident when the service scales up and reaches different cities), while on the other the partners have the possibility to promote their business and potentially gain new customers.

Potential partners

Food producers around Milan through Cortilia

Massimo Polidoro
Journalist and expert in fake news

Orazio Spoto
Photographer and founder of Igers Milano

Centro Zante, a senior citizens centre

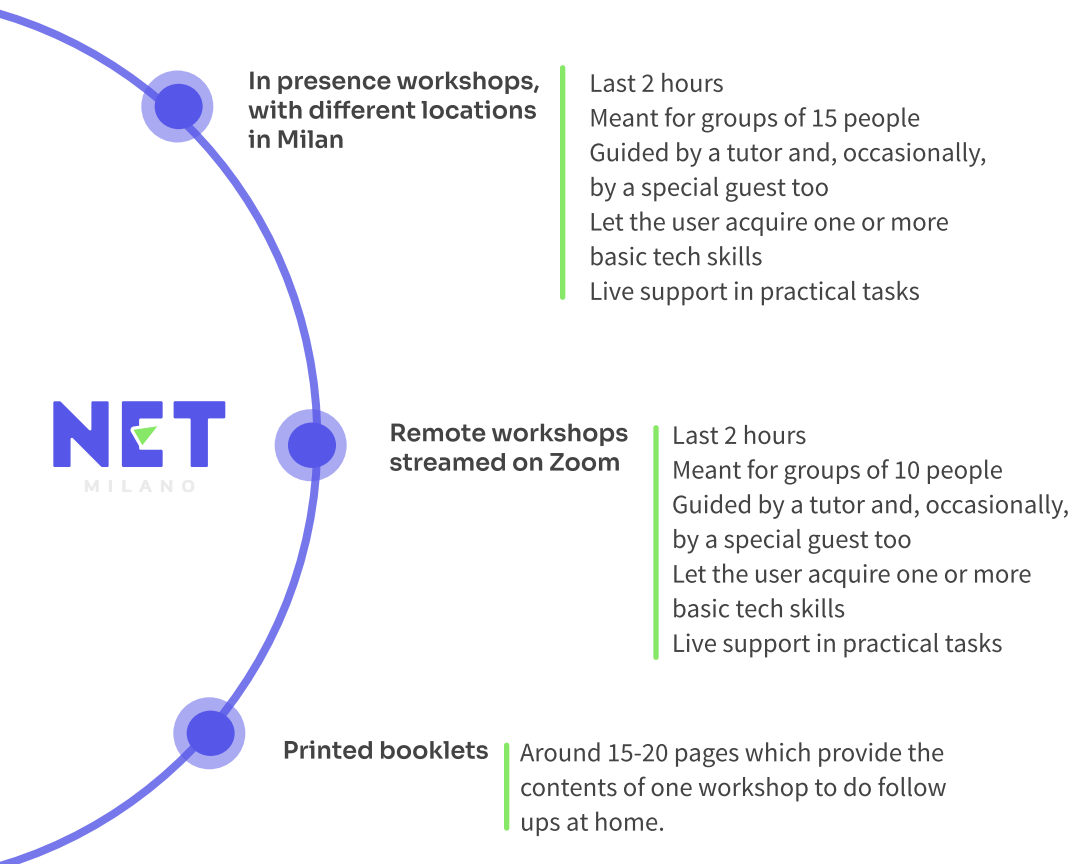
Francesca Noè
Foodblogger at "A Milano puoi"

Cineteca di Milano



Offering

A general overview of what NET offers to its users: little or non tech-proficient older adults eager to learn or improve their tech skills.



Tech Skills

NET's workshops aim at teaching one or more basic tech skills to the users. The skills were selected taking into account some sources like the EU's *Digital Competence Framework*, which identifies the key components of digital competence, and results from interviews with target users who stated what they would like to know.

Source: EU Science Hub, *Digital Competence Framework 2.0*.
<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomp/digital-competence-framework>



Accounts



Booking



Blogging



Browser



Communicate



E-Commerce



E-Mail



Fake news



Photography



Streaming
platforms



Text & editing

Primary Persona

“I never had the opportunity to get in touch with tech. I can see the opportunities it provides and I feel like I’m missing out.

Pain points

- I don’t like to rely on someone else everytime I need an explanation.
- I can’t use tech devices, I don’t have the basic knowledge for that.
- I would never want to go “back to school” again. I don’t like to feel judged for my skills.



Needs and wants

- I want to approach technology because I feel behind.
- I would love to share my journey with others and have fun.
- I want to become able to leverage technology for my everyday activities.



Secondary Persona

(its importance would increase in case of service scaling up)

“I use social media everyday and I’m always eager to learn what else I can do with my smartphone.

Pain points

I don’t have much free time to attend a course which asks for too much of it.

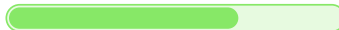
My schedule is never the same, it would be hard for me to attend a long course which is always at the same time.

I don’t like to learn through online tutorials, they are too long and boring.

TECH PROFICIENCY



OPEN-MINDEDNESS



ACTIVENESS

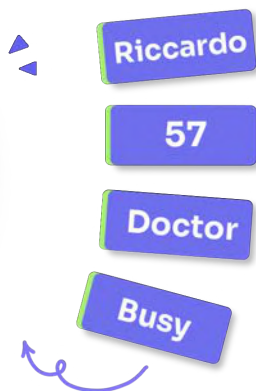


Needs and wants

I’m a curious person who likes learning new things.

I would like to learn how to use LinkedIn to get in touch with other professionals.

I would like a course which doesn’t start from the basics, since I would get bored.



Actors

Manager

The manager takes care of logistics and management operations, above all looking for and choosing guests for the workshop and defining the catalog and calendar of activities.

Guests

Guests collaborate with tutors to create, run and prepare the material for workshops. Guest experts are knowledgeable about a certain topic which they teach in NET workshops (for example, fake news, photography...). Guest partners may be representative of local activities and services who show users how to use their product/service (for example, a Cortilia representative who shows what users can do with the service).

Users

NET users are people who have little or no tech-proficiency but are curious to learn new things and would like to improve their tech skills. The service target is people over 55 years old, but younger people may also join.

Staff

The staff takes care of internal operations such as customer service (booking workshops by phone, sending out e-mails and credentials, collecting feedback...).

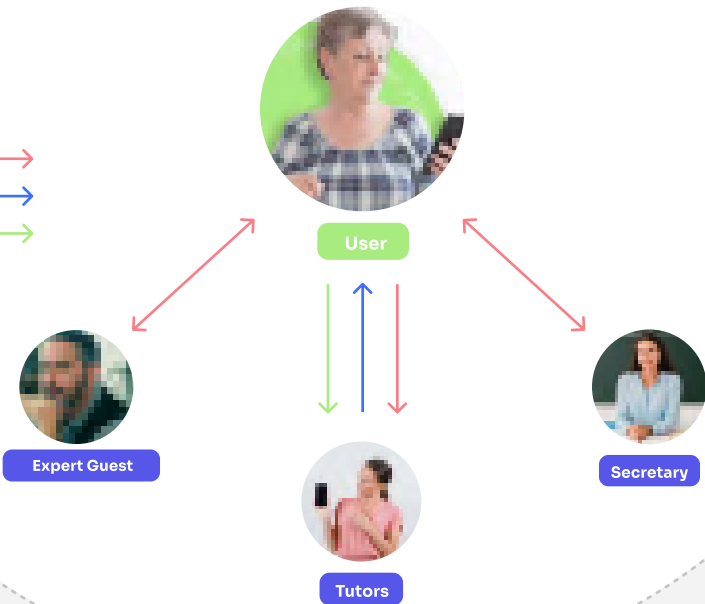
Tutors

The tutors are able to teach tech and have the right soft skills to teach to elderly. They facilitate workshops by showing users how to do tasks, translating tech jargon and acting as general support during activities with guests. They create, run and prepare the material for workshops, either with guests or alone, depending on the workshop.

Front End Relationships

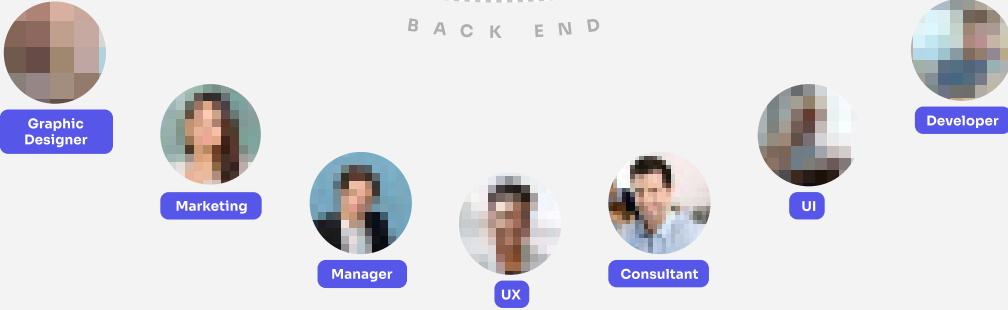
Legend

- info flow
- material flow
- money flow



F R O N T E N D

B A C K E N D



Touchpoints

NET users interact with the following touchpoints throughout the whole experience.



Website

Awareness
Get information
Book workshops
Download support material



Tutor

Workshop teaching



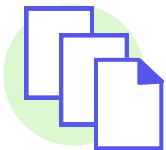
Online material and printed booklet

Post-workshop
support for learning



Secretary

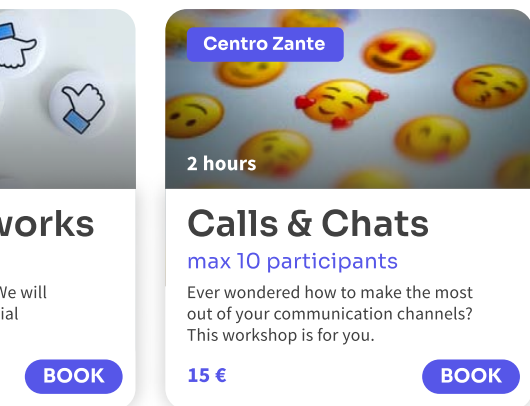
Customer assistance
Book workshops



Advertising material (posters, brochures, leaflets)

Awareness
Get information

Website - UI elements



SEND YOUR REQUEST

BOOK THIS WORKSHOP

SEND YOUR REQUEST



Silvia Rossi

Silvia is in the IT teaching field since 2013.

"I am in IT teaching field since 2013. To me, working for NET means entering a world of friends, opportunities and personal fulfillment."

Activity cards

Each activity is displayed through cards where users can have an immediate understanding of the modality, the duration and the content of the workshop.

Remote

Centro Zante

Icons and buttons

Icons are one of the most difficult parts of the tech language to understand for non tech-proficient users. As for buttons, the actions or the pages that they lead to are clearly displayed by their label.

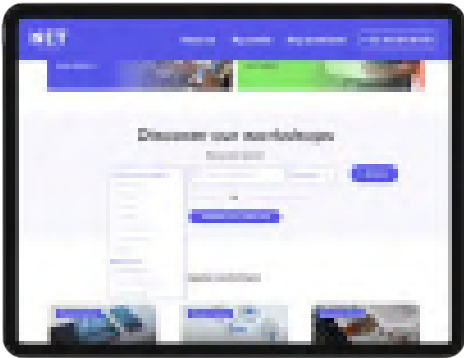
Make the staff visible

Users want to know the people they are going to spend some time with, especially if they claim to be experts in their field. We decided to introduce pic and bio of the tutors.

Website - User approaches

The website was meant as a touchpoint for those users who have already basic tech skills to browse and book workshops and for their relatives, who may come upon it and would like to book a purpose for an elderly. It also welcomes younger users looking for infos or a potential partnership. The user experience on the website is designed to be suitable for users with different approaches and goals, here are some:

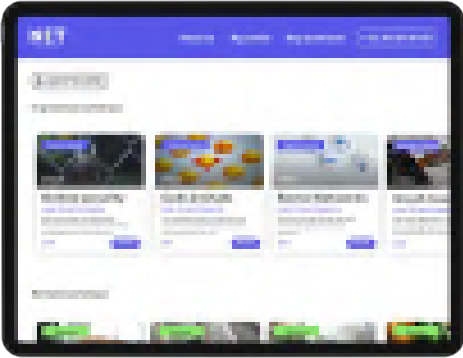
Research with filters



Advanced search bar

The user who knows what they want: they go on the website, go to “Advanced search” and select filters (topic, location and online or in presence modality). They choose the workshop they are looking for and book it. They also have the choice to book a combination of workshops.

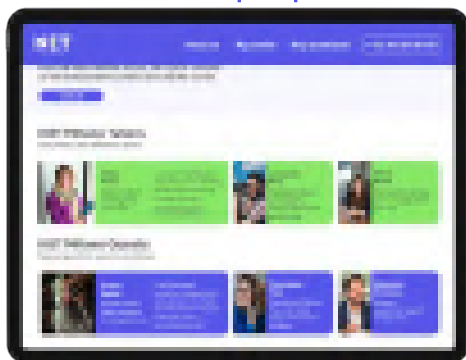
Free browsing



Full catalog page

The curious user who just wants to check what NET offers without necessarily buying: they go on the website, browse the full catalog, check the most interesting and / or popular workshops, check the calendar to see when they are held, check the FAQ to have their doubts clarified and, if they are convinced, they create a new profile to book a workshop later.

Partnership request

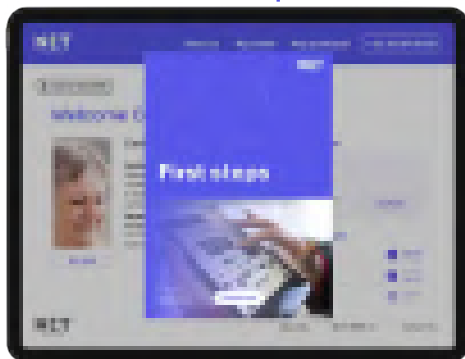


About us page

The user who would like to propose themselves as either a tutor or a guest: they check the About us page to see if they are aligned with NET's mission and, if so, they leave their contacts and upload requested documents on the Work with us page.

In the About page, the mission of NET is stated and the tutors, guests and founders are shown, to develop a trustworthy and transparent relationship with the users.

Follow up



Download material

The user who already attended a workshop and wants to download the online material: they log in their profile and in their personal page they click on the download icon next to the workshop.