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Defining, inviting and mobilizing participants

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Introduction

After building the Cosmovision of your Monster Gincana, it is time to think about the participants. Who are these participants? How to make the invitations? If there is already a group of participants defined and interested in the process, you can skip to the " Gathering Precious Information" session. Otherwise you have to start thinking about invitations.
For us, it was easier to establish some criteria for building the list of invitees. From our analysis of the context of the digital care field in Brazil, we established some criteria, such as territoriality, inviting activists and collectives outside the Southern part of the country, priority for black, quilombola and indigenous women, transgender and non-binary people, and age diversity. This is a list of criteria that can guide this discussion:

- Territory
- Gender
- Race
- Dialogue with the organization's work
- Field of action
- Willingness to approach the organization
- Have you ever asked for any help?
- Situation of vulnerability and risk
- Needs
- Social and economic profile

We also established the number of openings according to the human and financial resources we had available. From there, we closed the list of people and organizations to be invited.
We made a first list with few names beyond the limit, to make a first call, and, if necessary, a second call for participants, so as not to generate expectations and, due to excessive registrations, we would have to deny someone's participation.
So, in this case, it was not necessary for us to establish a list of selection criteria, but it may be necessary depending on how you choose to open or advertise the applications.
In the case of our Gincana, we did not make any public announcements or disclosures. In our analysis, it would not be necessary and would not bring gains.
It is also important at this moment to think about how the format of the Gincana will be, how long it will last, if people will sign up in teams and how big they will be, the expected dedication time, if there will be support to buy prepaid mobile internet, see below so as not to leave out any important information when making the invitation.

It is based on this information that people will be able to decide if they want to participate and if they have the necessary availability.
Now it is time to invite! You can send the invitations via email, or start a closer contact with each participant. The invitations can be made to the group or collective, which can indicate several members or just one. The intention of the organizer has to be explicit so as not to generate doubts.
Another option is to make invitations directly to activists, and if they are unable to participate, the next one on the list is invited. With the list of participants in hand, and the Cosmovision built, we wrote the code of conduct and the invitation email, which we share below:

Code of Conduct

The code of conduct is an instrument for the creation of safe spaces that celebrate diversity and that lead us to paths and resources to report any situations causing discomfort, violence, or disrespect.
Below is our code of conduct, which can serve as a model for the development of new codes, according to each context, experience, and desires.

Code of Conduct.png



Invitation email (must-have information)

In this email, it is important to use direct and precise communication, also maintaining discretion so as not to expose the other participants or make the process vulnerable. It is also important not to leave out affection, since this influences the moment we decide to participate or not in an activity.

The e-mail must contain important information that has been previously thought out by the Gincana's organization:

- the format of participation
- whether in teams or individually
- the format of the activities, whether synchronous or asynchronous
- whether there will be activities to be developed between meetings
- a description of the proposal and objectives
- the expected time commitment, whether some kind of prior knowledge or skill is required
- adherence to the code of conduct. Below

As an example, see next, an invitation e-mail that we prepared for the Monster Gincana:

Dear Ones (or activist or invited collective/group).
How are you?

The scenario has been delicate, so, before anything else, we wish you and your entire network of affection to be safe, in good physical and mental health (as much as possible) and on the way to vaccination. :)

We are the Transfeminist Digital Care Network and who writes is the [we identified ourselves to bond from the beginning].

The Network was born in 2018, in the face of drastic changes in the national political landscape. It was the response of an articulation of digital security trainers who work in the field autonomously or as members of different collectives or organizations (Coding Rights, Marialab/Vedetas and Cl4ndestina) to respond to an increasing demand for information on how to better protect oneself in the use of technologies for activism. Since then we have done a series of workshops and awareness activities on digital care issues in various regions of the country.

We believe it is a moment to expand this network. Our contact is to tell you, and at the same time invite your group to form a team between 3 and 5 people, to sign up and participate in the Gincana Monstra!

There we go: the Gincana Monstra is a process of building networks, sharing and learning that is being thought in a format of online Gincana. First, to get to know each other and be together in support networks, since we will be trans and cis women, transvestites, non-binary people and trans men from various locations in Brazil. We will also be sharing and building knowledge from our communities through learning processes and strengthening our actions in collectivity.

And like every Gincana, we will also have tasks, challenges, awards, and lots of fun! Everything will be done in a way that contemplates as much as possible the realities regarding availability, connection, skills, etc.

Monstrxsses: That' s how you want us to be? That is what we will become!

Being a monster is not being human, or being almost human, but not being normal. And what is normality for the dimension of women, trans* and non-binary people that we are?

Indigenous and black women are dehumanized, trans* and transvestite people are dehumanized, lesbian and bisexual women are dehumanized, non-binary people are dehumanized, non-standard

bodies are dehumanized, and depending on the territory where this subject comes from, they are even more disregarded.

Monstrxsses are pointed out as bestial and demonic creatures, but for us it is to break with the rules that gag our freedoms of being. Monstrxsses hurt imposed structures because as such "monsters" are denied affection, safe spaces, secrets, and opportunities, they build their own structures of affection and safety.

As a way to face the labels we are given, we then assume ourselves as monstrxsses. Who says we want to be just a version of ourselves? We are the creatures that transfigure and assume their various possibilities. We bring the idea of being monsters from ancestral cosmovisions that we are people who transmute, we allow our various possibilities to exist from our bodies, from our senses, from the various ways we face the systems that dehumanize and mutilate LBTQI+ women and people. To be a monstrxsses is to create pathways, to look to the future from the now, to be wind, water, fire, and earth. And as much as the bestiality they attribute to us is our freedom: let's be monstrxss, monstresses, and monsters!

Being monstrxsses in the digital world is another great challenge, we face surveillance, controls, precariousness, boycotts, binaries. The secrets of these new technologies are restricted to white, Western men, who feed the capitalist infrastructures by curtailing our humanities and our freedoms. Thus, we want to meet with the many other monstrxsses who also challenge these logics and experience together our possibilities of being, doing, creating, and transforming. Our infrastructure is affection, and we understand affection as technology, resistance, and creation.

This is our invitation: to realize together the Gincana Monstra. A space to work on our difficulties, to take care of ourselves and each other <3.

Who's welcome: Monstrxsses activists! Cis, trans and transvestite women, trans men and non-binary people.

How does it work : It's almost the same as a non-monster Gincana. Each collective, group or movement registers a team of 3 to 5 people (cis women, trans* people and non-binary people), in the registration form we ask you to answer all the information requested to make it easier to organize the dynamics and also to get to know each participant. The forms will be analyzed and it is our mission to gather monstrxsses who have diverse experiences, we are not concerned with

how well you understand how the internet works, if your skills are more basic, tell us about it; if your internet access is bad, we are also interested in knowing. The important thing is that you like technology and want to deepen your knowledge on the subject to become a monstrxss spreading good digital practices in order to strengthen your activism and that of the monstrxss groups in your heart ;)

Registration is free and can be done in this form: [provide link to a secure form]

The final result of the selected teams will be released by [fill in date - remember to leave a few days off in case you need to extend], by the emails registered on each team's registration form.

Giveaways: At the end we will have the delivery of prizes worth [total amount reverted to purchase of equipment], in equipment specially prepared by us to strengthen your collective political actions with safety.

Our calendar :
Announcement: from [date]
Registration period: [date]
Results out: from [date]
Duration of the Gincana - [date] [duration]

Some tips : Encourage mixed teams, with people from different fields, technology, communication, arts, etc.

Provide participation of cis women, transgender and non-binary people with different internet access (bandwidth, time and device limitations).

You can put together your team with people and organizations that were not invited, but we ask you not to make public this invitation.

The prize will be a kit with different equipment to strengthen collective action and learning processes in integral care. When assembling the team take this into consideration, being in the same territory or being part of the same collective can facilitate the use of these, but this decision is up to you ;)

Some information : Scheme will be deconference. All activities can be done synchronously or asynchronously, in order to guarantee the participation of those who have limited internet access

and other difficulties and/or time constraints.

Important : We believe that 5 hours of dedication per week is necessary for each person in each team, but the teams will have the autonomy to organize their time between individual and collective activities.

We will have help with prepaid mobile internet for participants who need it during the event. We ask that you indicate this need at the time of registration for our organization.

The prizes will be sent to a single address indicated by the teams in the registration form. Registration closes on _____, so use this time to form your team! And let's dive into this Monster Gincana!

Oh! and just one last thing, it is very important for us that you signal your participation even before you sign up, so if you received this mail and want to sign up, answer us with a "Yes, I'm putting the team together and we will sign up" or a "I received this mail but I'm not interested in participating". This will help us manage the vacancies and extend the invitations.

Any questions or suggestions please contact us at [e-mail] \o/

What if the participants don't sign up?

We had this experience at first and went to talk to them. What we heard most was that they were extremely happy and excited about the invitation, but they didn't think they could handle it, and as feminists are extremely committed, they preferred not to sign up.

With this challenge in our hands, we extended the deadline for registration, opened a date to do a round of questions and also contacted them individually to say that we were thinking about the overload of feminists and that it would not be necessary to dedicate more time than we had communicated in the invitation e-mail. The result of this action was that we had a great presence at the session and a massive adhesion right afterwards.

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