

GREENER EU

Integrated Development Network Design - Europe

D2 Planning and Preparation report



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Introduction

The initiation of a state-of-the-art collaborative digital platform for the Master Unit Network (MUN), inside the context of the GREENER-EU project will provide a significant advancement towards the network shared objectives. As an integral element of our commitment to fostering collaboration, interaction, and knowledge exchange among Master Units in Europe, and with a special focus on Portugal, Denmark, and Italy, the digital platform will serve as a dynamic space to augment the impact of our educational initiatives. Deliverable D2 presents an in-depth account of the planning and preparation phases, elucidating the technical requirements, architecture and technological choices of the platform and its alignment with the unique characteristics of the Master Unit network.

This document meticulously dissects user requirements, stakeholder feedback, and the planned functionalities of the platform. A thorough examination extends to technical specifications, architecture, user training initiatives, and considerations for data security and privacy. Furthermore, the document outlines how the platform seamlessly integrates with other project activities, aligning with the overarching goals of the GREENER-EU project.

As we navigate through this planning and preparation report, the digital platform emerges not only as a technological asset inside MUN but also as a catalyst for wider inclusive active citizenship, environmental sustainability, and the collaborative ethos of the partners. It encapsulates the commitment to education and sustainable development, with a targeted focus on the Master Unit Network, youth empowerment, knowledge transfer, and the cultivation of a cooperative collaboration among diverse stakeholders.

Background

The foundation for Deliverable D2 draws from a comprehensive array of sources, to establish a groundwork for the development of the collaborative digital platform within the MUN. Key inputs include insights from Deliverable D1, providing a strategic framework and project trajectory. Additionally, further knowledge stems from the periodic monthly meetings held over the preceding years, acting as dynamic forums for cooperative ideation and project alignment.

The synergy generated through the implementation of Activities A1 and A2 significantly contributes to the technical specifications and requirements, and significant experiential input was derived from various events hosted by Master Units, with the participation of multiple representatives from distinct Master Units. These gatherings, often occurring in the summer or holiday seasons, fostered an environment of collaborative discourse, enriching the planning and preparation processes. The insights from these heterogeneous sources lays the groundwork for the strategic and technical facets delineated in Deliverable D2.

Objective of the Digital Platform

The primary objective of the digital platform is to serve as an integrated hub for the Master Unit Network (MUN), fostering seamless collaboration, knowledge exchange, and interaction among the participating Master Units across Europe. This technologically advanced platform aims to amplify the impact of educational initiatives, with a special emphasis on inclusivity, environmental sustainability, and the cultivation of a collaborative ethos. By providing a dynamic space for active citizenship, youth empowerment, and knowledge transfer, the digital platform seeks to empower Master Units in their pursuit of sustainable development and cooperative collaboration. The platform's overarching goal is to become a catalyst for positive change within the Master Unit Network and contribute to the broader objectives of the GREENER-EU project.

User Requirements and Feedback

Inputs from MUN participants, derived mainly from monthly meetings, Activities A1 and A2, and various Master Unit events, lead to a comprehensive list of functionalities and features for the digital platform. Here are some potential inputs with corresponding features:

1. Collaborative Knowledge Repository

- Input: Insights shared during thematic discussions within working groups;
- Feature: Internal Knowledge-base for sharing and accessing information related to each Strand and their activities.

2. Interactive Strand Resources

- Input: Suggestions from MUN participants for enhanced resource sharing (online, documents, PDFs, events reports,...);
- Feature: Resources section for each Strand, allowing members to upload, rate, comment, and interact with shared materials. If rating/commenting/interacting will be too difficult to implement in this phase, at least a well compiled list of resources for each strand will be a good starting point to gather inputs for a future evolution of the platform.

3. Global MUN Map

- Input: Interest in a visual representation of Master Units, targeted to the general public (and with a special focus on volunteers, members, academia, educators), to know which are near to their places of interest (home, holidays, working place...)
- Feature: MUN Map showcasing various Master Units with detailed descriptions for better visibility and connection. The descriptions should be editable from the team responsible of the MU, but with a process of MUN review to avoid inappropriate utilization of the platform.

4. Communication Hub

- Input: Desire for streamlined communication channels on priority topics.
- Feature: Dedicated communication channels such as WhatsApp Core-members channel for efficient internal communication, Telegram channels for more generic

interactions, ensure continuation of monthly MUN meetings, in-person gatherings during major events.

5. External Communication Channels

- Input: Preference for utilizing popular social media platforms to keep the general public informed and aware of MUs activities, scope, vision and their way of becoming part of a sustained effort in specific directions.
- Feature: Integration with external communication channels like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Newsletter (Mautic) for wider outreach.

6. Project Reports and Documentation

- Input: Requirement for a centralized location for grants and project-related documents, as well as a shared point of next opportunities.
- Feature: Section for project-related documents, reports, vision, mission, aims, and project-related content. Platform to share next funded opportunities.

7. Members Directory

- Input: Need for a comprehensive list of MUN participants.
- Feature: Members directory with detailed profiles for easy access and networking.

8. Topics of main interest

- Input: Interest in organized lists for each MUN Strand.
- Feature: Strands section with lists for members, resources, and fundraising opportunities specific to each Strand.

9. Future Enhancements

- Input: Aspirations for increased interactivity and engagement.
- Feature: Planned future enhancements for ratings, commentaries, and more interactive elements within the platform.

Functionalities and Features

The platform was defined to be structured into two distinct components: a public one (External Platform) and an internal one, exclusive to MUN members (Internal Platform), each offering varying levels of access. Additionally, select MUN members will have the privilege to review and suggest modifications to specific sections within the External Platform.

External Platform

The main sections of the External Platform will be:

- About Section
- Members Section
- Strands Section
- MUN Map Section
- Communication Section

Platform Sections descriptions

1. **About** section

- **Vision, Mission, Aims**

This section articulates the overarching vision, mission, and specific aims of the Master Unit Network, providing a concise overview of its strategic objectives.

- **Reasons**

Explore the motivations and rationale behind the establishment and operation of the Master Unit Network, offering insights into the driving forces behind its formation, focused on common necessities and perceptions of which are the “main reasons” behind the creation of MUN.

- **The Network**

Clarify key terminology by providing detailed definitions and descriptions for fundamental concepts within the Master Unit Network.

- Master Unit
- Strands
- Working groups

- **Erasmus+ project**

Provide an overview of the Erasmus+ project, including detailed reports, deliverables.

- Reports & Deliverables
- Logo Erasmus

2. **Members** section

Centralized repository presenting a comprehensive list of entities involved in the Master Unit Network (MUN). This inclusive compilation encompasses both Master Units and affiliated associations/entities within the broader MUN ecosystem. Providing a quick

reference to the diverse contributors, their main interests and potentialities, this section fosters transparency and accessibility, reinforcing the collaborative spirit of the network.

3. **Strands** section

The Strands section strategically outlines the prioritized key thematic Strands that address crucial necessities within MUN members. Each identified Strand is accompanied by one or more respective Working Groups, highlighting collaborative initiatives actively contributing to the advancement of these specific Strand.

Additionally, the section provides a platform for the inclusion of essential resources related to each Strand, targeted to the general public, facilitating easy access through embedded links and concise notes. The deliverable D3 will be executed to allow future enhancements, such as increased interactivity, ratings and commentaries to enrich the user experience (not to be developed in this stage, to gather further user feedback before proceeding).

- List
- Resources list (for each strand)

4. **MUN Map** section

An interactive mapping presentation (such as platforms like Google Maps), designed to visualize and geolocate key information about several Master Units (MUs) within the Master Unit Network (MUN). Each Master Unit will be represented on the map, allowing designated team representatives to update pertinent information specific to their respective MU. The information, though initially static in nature (excluding event details or volunteer information, which will be incorporated in a subsequent platform development phase), will require a review by the MUN team prior to final online publication. It is anticipated that, during the initial platform phase, not all Master Units will be featured, and comprehensive information may not be uniformly available.

5. **Communication** section

A curated list of various digital communication channels essential for fostering engagement and disseminating information related to the Master Unit Network (MUN) to the general public. This section seamlessly integrates popular social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube with specialized playlists, offering dynamic avenues for sharing updates, multimedia content, and fostering community interaction. Additionally, the inclusion of a Newsletter feature, facilitated through a Mautic server, further enhances communication outreach. Mautic, being an open-source marketing automation tool, empowers the MUN to craft and deliver targeted newsletters, ensuring efficient and personalized communication strategies. The combination of these communication channels strengthens the network's ability to connect, share, and promote collaborative initiatives among its members.

- Facebook
- Instagram
- YouTube with Playlists
- Newsletter (Mautic)

The above-designed sections of the platform will not only serve as informational pillars but also embody the Master Unit Network's commitment to transparency, collaboration, and inclusivity. By providing a comprehensive repository of essential information, fostering community engagement, and facilitating dynamic communication channels, this platform aims to be a catalyst for the vibrant exchange of knowledge, ideas, and initiatives among the diverse entities within the Master Unit Network and the volunteers that are dedicating their time and energy for this purpose.

Internal Platform

The Internal Platform stands as a robust repository designed with a primary focus on establishing an efficient Knowledge Base (KB) tailored for internal use within the MUN. Its primary objective is to streamline knowledge-sharing processes by offering a straightforward mechanism for content dissemination, coupled with ease of management and organization through well-defined categories, user feedback, navigation analytics, easy but highly configurable search system, and some characteristics that the target group is already accustomed with.

Key Features of the Internal Platform

1. Simplicity and Organization

The Internal Platform prioritizes simplicity and user-friendly organization, ensuring that information is easily accessible and comprehensible. Its intuitive design allows for straightforward navigation and seamless content discovery, as well as content production and management.

2. Search Functionality

Equipped with a simple and comprehensive search system, the Internal Platform enables users to quickly locate specific information within the Knowledge Base. The search functionality enhances efficiency and ensures that users can find relevant content promptly.

3. User Priorities Analytics

Integrated dashboards offer insights into user anonymized preferences and priorities analytics. This feature allows for a higher quality of user experience, helping MUN members to discover content aligned with their interests and needs within the MUN context.

4. User Feedback Mechanism

The Internal Platform facilitates user feedback, providing a valuable mechanism for continuous improvement. Users can share their rankings, thoughts, suggestions, and experiences, fostering an environment of collaboration and refinement.

5. Attachment Capability

Recognizing the importance of flexibility, the Internal Platform supports the inclusion of attachments, to allow users to supplement their knowledge with relevant documents, images, or

files, enhancing the comprehensiveness of shared information and reutilization of materials already identified/produced.

6. Built-in Table of Contents

The inclusion of a built-in Table of Contents will further contribute to user-friendliness. It aids in structuring and organizing content, ensuring a coherent and easily navigable presentation of information.

Initial Categories for Knowledge Base Articles

1. Getting Started

Dedicated to assisting users in their initial interactions with the Internal Platform, this section provides guidance and resources to facilitate a smooth onboarding experience.

2. Working Groups

Tailored for small teams concentrating on specific topics within a designated MUN Strand, this category fosters collaboration and knowledge-sharing among focused groups.

3. Master Unit Network

This generic information category serves as a repository for shared knowledge/materials/resources/reports/infographics about the MUN itself. It encompasses essential details, historical context, and general information that can be beneficial for all users within the network.

By incorporating these features and categories, the Internal Platform aims to enhance the internal knowledge-sharing dynamics of the Master Unit Network, promoting efficiency, collaboration, and continuous learning among its members.

Technical Specifications

In the pursuit of selecting an optimal technology stack for both the Internal and External platforms, a thorough analysis of various Content Management System (CMS) technologies was conducted, weighing the pros and cons of each.

Among the contenders, four prominent systems were presented to the team for consideration.

Content Management Systems analyzed

1. WordPress

a. Pros

- i. **Ubiquity** - WordPress is a widely adopted and well-established content management system (CMS) with a vast user base;
- ii. **User-Friendly Interface** - Known for its intuitive dashboard, WordPress facilitates easy content management and customization;
- iii. **Extensive Plugin Ecosystem** - A rich repository of plugins allows for versatile functionality enhancements.
- iv. **Active Community** - Ongoing community support and regular updates contribute to the platform's stability.
- v. **Significant In-House Expertise** - Numerous MUN projects and entities within the MUN ecosystem are already well-versed in utilizing WordPress as their platform engine. This translates into a broad ecosystem of volunteers and interested individuals with substantial knowledge about this system, particularly on the content-providers' side.

b. Cons

- i. **Customization Complexity** - While WordPress is customizable, extensive modifications may require a steeper learning curve.
- ii. **Security Concerns** - As a popular platform, WordPress can be a target for security vulnerabilities if not properly configured and maintained.

c. Cons Mitigation

- i. With ZIRAK as a partner, both the Customization Complexity and Security Concerns associated with WordPress can be effectively addressed. ZIRAK's expertise ensures a secure and customized platform for both the Internal and External aspects of the project.

2. Drupal

a. Pros

- i. **Flexibility** - Drupal is known for its flexibility, making it suitable for diverse project requirements.
- ii. **Scalability** - It can handle large amounts of content and traffic, providing scalability for potential future growth.
- iii. **Customization** - Like WordPress, Drupal supports extensive customization, allowing tailored solutions.

b. Cons

- i. **Learning Curve** - Drupal can have a steeper learning curve compared to WordPress.
- ii. **Module Availability** - While it has a variety of modules, the ecosystem might be smaller than WordPress.

c. Cons Mitigation

- i. Although ZIRAK's expertise can alleviate challenges in platform setup & technical maintenance, it's essential to recognize that the steeper learning curve associated with Drupal may pose difficulties for content providers within the Master Unit Network (MUN). Between Drupal and WordPress, given the existing familiarity within the MUN ecosystem, WordPress emerges as the more pragmatic choice, ensuring a smoother content management experience for contributors.

3. Joomla

a. Pros

- i. **User-Friendly** - Joomla is often considered more user-friendly than Drupal and WordPress, providing a balance between flexibility and ease of use.
- ii. **Extension Ecosystem** - It has a diverse extension ecosystem, offering additional functionalities.
- iii. **Community Support** - While not as extensive as WordPress, Joomla has an active community.

b. Cons

- i. **Customization Complexity** - Customization may not be as straightforward as WordPress.
- ii. **Smaller User Base** - Compared to WordPress, Joomla has a smaller user base.

c. Cons Mitigation

- i. Similar to the considerations made for Drupal, it's evident that the user-friendliness and widespread acceptance of WordPress outweigh Joomla in terms of ease of use inside the MUN and community support. While ZIRAK's expertise can address certain challenges associated with Joomla, the overall familiarity and user-friendly nature of WordPress make it a more favorable choice within the Master Unit Network.

4. MediaWiki (Internal Platform only)

a. Pros

- i. **Collaborative Editing** - MediaWiki excels in collaborative content creation, allowing multiple users to edit articles simultaneously.
- ii. **Version Control** - It provides robust version control, enabling users to track changes and revert to previous versions if needed.
- iii. **Community-Driven** - MediaWiki is widely used and has a strong community, resulting in extensive documentation and support.

b. Cons

- i. **Learning Curve** - Similar to other wiki platforms, users might need some time to familiarize themselves with the editing syntax.
- ii. **Visual Customization** - While functional, visual customization options might be more limited compared to full-fledged CMS.

Comparison Summary

1. **WordPress:** Ideal for websites and content-heavy platforms, with extensive customization options.
2. **Drupal:** Offers high flexibility and scalability, suitable for complex projects with a steeper learning curve.
3. **Joomla:** Strikes a balance between user-friendliness and customization, suitable for medium-sized projects.
4. **MediaWiki:** Specialized for collaborative knowledge sharing, especially effective for documentation and information repositories.

To choose between these options required an analysis on the specific requirements and preferences of the MUN members, and few tests to double-check and gather user feedback.

Main Characteristics of the Three Identified Systems

- **Ubiquity and Familiarity:** WordPress boasts widespread use and familiarity within the digital landscape, providing a solid foundation for content management.
- **User-Friendly Interface (general public):** All three systems prioritize user-friendly interfaces to ensure accessibility for a diverse user base.
- **User-Friendly Interface (contents providers):** Considering the prevalent experience of MUN-associated entities with WordPress, it appears that most users within the network will be more confident to use WordPress than the other CMS options. This familiarity is expected to expedite the early stages of platform implementation.
- **Customization Potential:** While WordPress is renowned for its customization capabilities, alternatives 1 and 2 should be evaluated for their respective strengths in accommodating project requirements.
- **Community Support:** WordPress benefits from an active community, whereas alternatives 1 and 2 need to be assessed for the strength and responsiveness of their user communities.
- **Security Considerations:** Security is a critical aspect, and all three systems should be scrutinized for their robustness and vulnerability mitigation strategies.

Given the extensive analysis of various CMS options and considering factors such as familiarity, user-friendliness, and community support, **WordPress emerges as the preferred choice** for both the Master Unit Network's internal and external platforms.

Hosting provider

The selection of SiteGround.com as the domain/hosting provider for the Master Unit Network's digital platform comes from an evaluation of various factors aligned with the project's requirements:

1. Proven Track Record: "SiteGround.com" has demonstrated a reliable and stable hosting service, having been previously utilized for ZK and AMPT's projects, ensuring a trusted and familiar platform.

2. Competitive Pricing: The hosting provider offers competitive pricing structures, providing value for the allocated budget, which is crucial for a project emphasizing efficient resource utilization.

3. Quality Customer Service: SiteGround is renowned for its exceptional customer service, offering timely and helpful support to AMPT to address any technical concerns or queries that may arise during the platform's development and operation.

4. European Base: Being based in Europe aligns with the Master Unit Network's geographic focus of this first phase, ensuring optimal performance and compliance with European data protection regulations.

5. User-Friendly Interface: SiteGround provides an intuitive and user-friendly interface, streamlining the management of hosting services and facilitating a smoother experience for the project team.

6. Cutting-Edge Technologies: The hosting company leverages cutting-edge technologies, contributing to enhanced performance, security, and overall reliability of the hosted digital platform.

7. Built-In Security Features: SiteGround prioritizes security with built-in features, ensuring a secure environment for hosting sensitive project data and user information. Their support to avoid major website hacking was already tested positively in the last years from ZK.

8. Scalability: The hosting provider offers scalable solutions, accommodating potential future growth and ensuring that the MUN platform can adapt to evolving requirements seamlessly.

By considering these factors, **SiteGround.com emerges as a well-rounded choice** that not only aligns with the Master Unit Network's specific needs but also provides a solid foundation for the successful implementation and sustained performance of the digital platform.

External Platform

Theme

The **selection of the ASTRA theme** within the WordPress framework for the External Platform is underpinned by several considerations based on the project's needs and objectives:

- 1. Versatility and Customization:** ASTRA is renowned for its flexibility and customization options, allowing for the seamless integration of specific design elements and functionalities tailored to the unique requirements of the Master Unit Network's digital platform.
- 2. Performance Optimization:** ASTRA is designed with a focus on performance optimization, ensuring fast loading times and efficient resource utilization. This is crucial for providing an optimal user experience and accommodating potential scalability as the platform evolves.
- 3. Responsiveness:** The theme is inherently responsive, meaning that the digital platform will be accessible and visually appealing across various devices and screen sizes. This responsiveness enhances the platform's accessibility and usability for a diverse user base.
- 4. Compatibility with Plugins:** ASTRA is well-compatible with a wide array of plugins, facilitating the integration of additional features and functionalities to enhance the future overall capabilities of the MUN digital platform.
- 5. User-Friendly Interface:** ASTRA provides an intuitive and user-friendly interface for easy navigation and management. This ensures that members of the Master Unit Network, especially MU volunteers with limited technical expertise, can effectively contribute and engage with the platform's content.
- 6. Regular Updates and Support:** The theme benefits from regular updates and robust support from its developers, contributing to the long-term stability and security of the digital platform. This aligns with the Master Unit Network's commitment to utilizing technologies that are actively maintained and supported.
- 7. Pre-Built Starter Templates:** ASTRA offers pre-built starter templates that expedite the initial setup phase, providing a solid foundation for further customization. This accelerates the development process, allowing the platform to become operational more efficiently.
- 8. SEO-Friendly:** The theme incorporates SEO-friendly features, optimizing the platform for search engine visibility. This is essential for enhancing the discoverability of the Master Unit Network and its initiatives within the online landscape.

Maps plugin

Several embedded maps plugins were investigated, to be able to choose the one who will be more appropriate for the longer time possible, seeing the importance of this kind of presentation in the External Platform. Here are the main maps plugin tested:

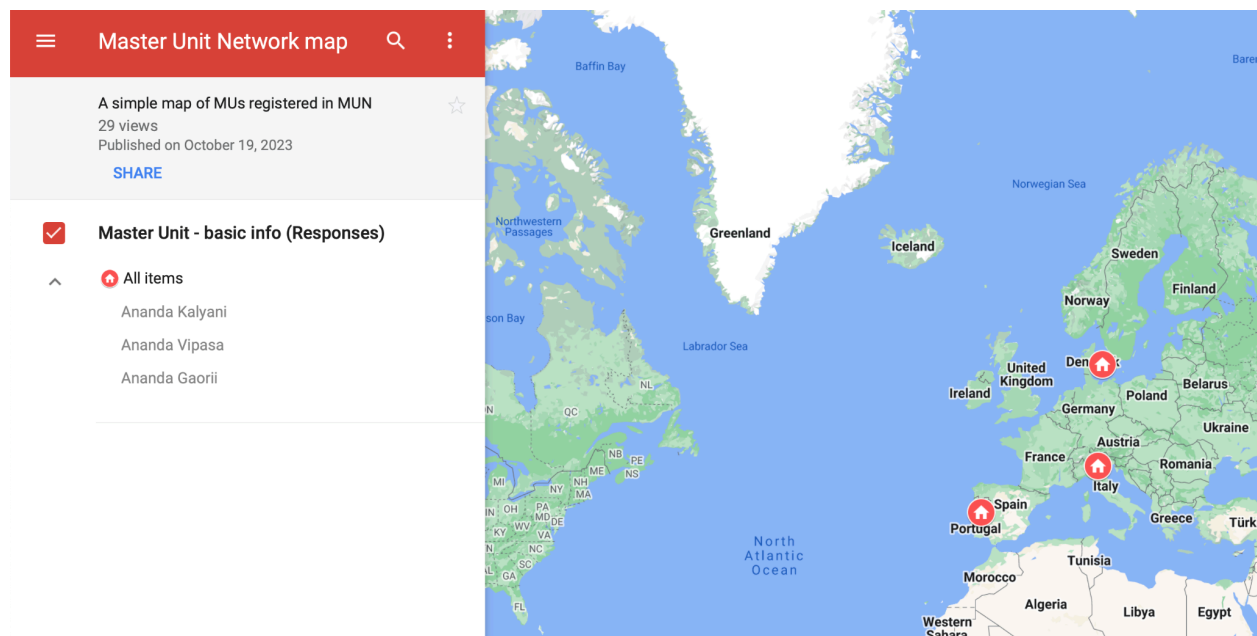
Google MyMaps

Quite basic, it could be configured and become more responsive, but it will require more maintenance and adaptation to Google Maps availability and limitations.

One very interesting point is the possibility to import XLS data from a Google Form:

[How to Import Map Data into Google MyMaps](#)

Still, the final results will depend too much on two factors that at the moment cannot be a main focus of MUN: maintenance and limitations.



WP Go Maps vs WP Google Map Plugin

[WP Go Maps \(formerly WP Google Maps\) – WordPress plugin](#)

[WP Go Maps](#)

[WordPress Plugin for Google Maps – WP MAPS](#)

[WP Maps Pro](#)

These two plugins were quite similar, and both could serve the purpose of providing our MUN embedded interactive Map. In the end, due to some bugs in the WP Go Maps (in 2023) and some problems with the API in the same plugin, the second was chosen and bought.

The selection of the **WP Maps Pro plugin for the Google Maps integration** is underpinned by a comprehensive suite of features designed to enhance the functionality and user experience of the platform. The primary functionalities of WP Maps Pro include:

1. Adding Multiple Locations: WP Maps Pro simplifies the process of adding multiple locations on Google Maps without the need for latitude and longitude of the individual MU.

2. Displaying Content: The plugin seamlessly displays pages, or custom post types on Google Maps, offering a dynamic and interactive visualization of all the entities connected to a MU.

3. Customization of Info Windows: Users can easily customize the content of location info windows using placeholders, providing flexibility in presenting information, as well as link to more complete webpages, that will be managed with the “edit/review/publish” process.

4. Additional Information in Infowindow: The plugin allows the addition of unlimited fields to locations, showcasing diverse information directly within the infowindow or listing.

5. Integration with ACF Plugin: WP Maps Pro integrates seamlessly with the Advanced Custom Fields (ACF) Plugin, enabling the display of posts and custom fields on Google Maps effortlessly. This will be useful in the near future, with specific parameters useful for the website user-filtering, such as: volunteers, visits, events,...

6. Marker Clusters: To address an abundance of locations, the plugin supports marker clusters, enhancing map clarity and user experience, especially because groups of entities will most probably be clustered around a specific MU/rural area.

7. Responsive Design: The plugin ensures responsive Google Maps, adapting settings based on various devices like smartphones, tablets, and large screens.

8. Filtering by Categories: Users can filter markers or pins both on the map and in listings based on assigned categories, enhancing content organization.

9. Support for KML/KMZ, Fusion, Traffic/Transit Layers: The plugin supports KML/KMZ layers, Fusion Table layers, and Traffic/Transit layers on Google Maps.

10. Adding Custom HTML on Maps: Administrators can enrich Google Maps with custom HTML, including images, videos, or other content, enhancing the informational value.

11. Filtering Markers Listing: Users can easily sort and filter marker listings on Google Maps based on various criteria.

12. Search Within Radius: The plugin allows users to search pins within a specified radius on Google Maps, improving search functionality.

13. Sorting Listing Order: Visitors to the website can sort marker listings in ascending or descending order based on their preferences.

14. Multiple Maps on a Single Page: Users can display multiple maps on a single page using respective shortcodes, promoting versatile content presentation.

15. Customized Infowindow on WordPress Page: WP Maps Pro allows the display of a customized info window with post content or custom fields on a WordPress Page.

16. Adding Multiple Filters: The plugin enables the creation of multiple filters, allowing visitors to filter Google Maps markers or pins based on specific criteria.

Secondary features, not used for now:

17. Highlighting Areas: Users can highlight areas on Google Maps using circles, rectangles, polygons, or polylines, customizing colors, opacity, and stroke width.

18. Customizable Google Maps: The plugin empowers users to customize Google Maps on the WordPress website, adjusting map type, zoom level, center location, and other features.

19. Snazzy Maps Styles Integration: Leveraging Snazzy Maps styles, administrators can easily apply visually appealing skins to the Google Maps interface through backend settings.

20. Directions Between Points: The plugin facilitates the easy display of directions between two points on the map, providing distance values for effective navigation.

21. Showing Nearby Amenities: WP Maps Pro enables the display of nearby amenities around a location, offering valuable contextual information to users.

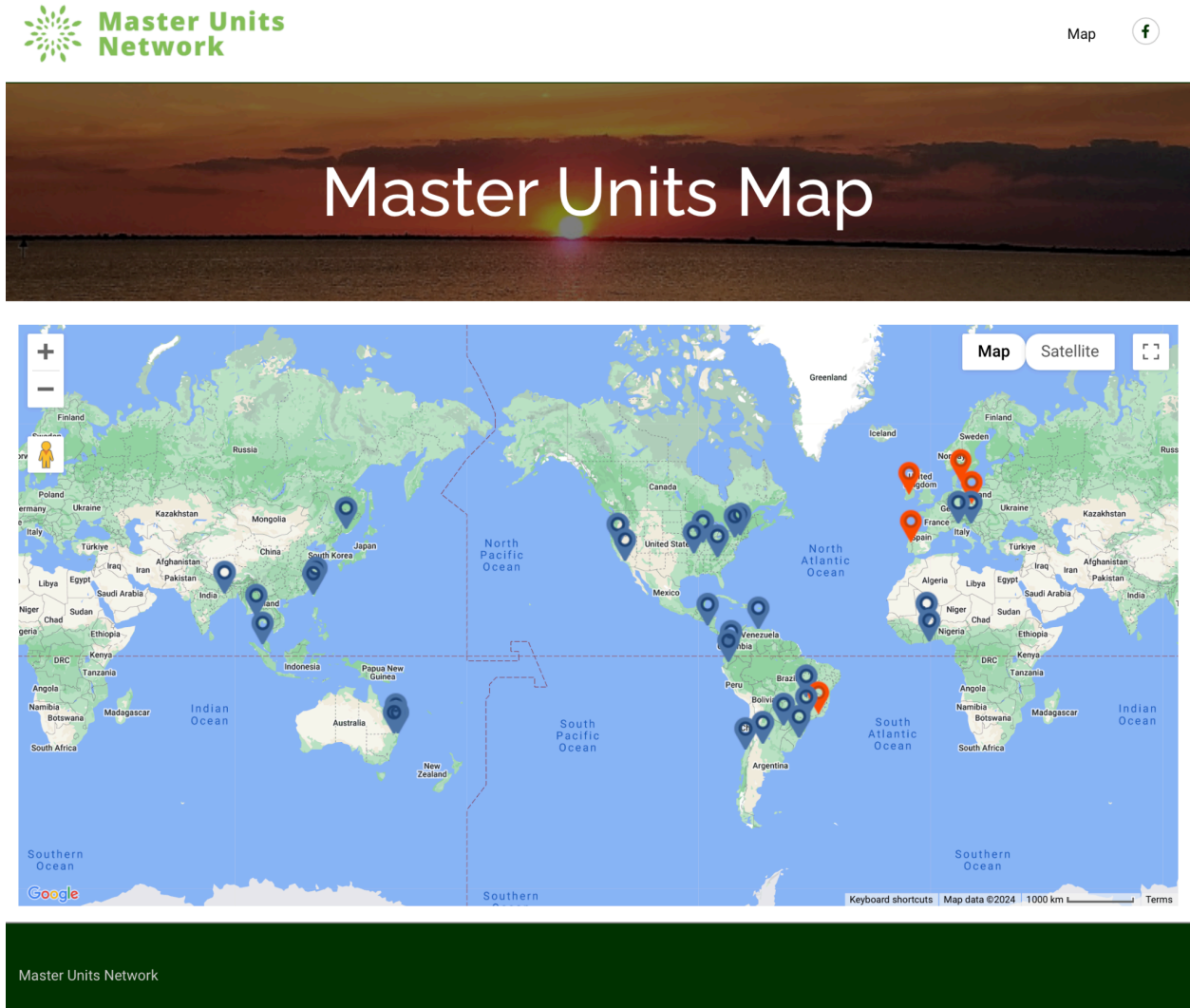
22. Displaying Multiple Routes: Users can showcase multiple routes on Google Maps, providing options with a show or hide toggle checkbox.

23. Street View Integration: WP Maps Pro seamlessly integrates street view functionality, allowing users to view locations in detail.

24. Highlighting Visitor's Current Location: The plugin includes a feature that highlights the current location of visitors on Google Maps, aiding in orientation.

25. Google Maps Widget: Administrators can showcase a Google Maps widget in the sidebar or any widget-supported section on the WordPress theme.

The result will be similar to the following image:



The proposed labels for the initial release of the External Platform, derived from collaborative brainstorming sessions during the MUN monthly meetings, encompass the following:

<input type="checkbox"/> Marker Category Title ▾	Marker Image
<input type="checkbox"/> MU	
<input type="checkbox"/> Limited description	
<input type="checkbox"/> MUN	

1) MU

- Description: the location of an established Master Unit.
- Details: Provides comprehensive information about existing Master Units within the network.

2) Limited Description

- Description: the location of a Master Unit with a limited description.
- Details: Typically includes concise information, such as a link to a social media page or a brief paragraph, due to communication constraints with volunteers in some foreign countries.

3) MUN

- Description: the location of a member of the Master Unit Network.
- Details: to foster motivation and engagement in the network's early stages, a special label is intended for the MUN members. In the future, additional services provided to MUN members aim to accelerate the onboarding of Master Units into the Network.

Custom Posts - Master Unit

In the realm of our digital platform development, the installation of the Custom Post plugin is a crucial step towards achieving a streamlined and consistent structure for managing content. The **plugin "Custom Post Type UI"** offers an intuitive interface that simplifies the process of registering and handling custom post types and taxonomies within the MUN website.

For a network as diverse and dynamic as the Master Unit Network (MUN), where numerous Master Units will provide updated content, this plugin becomes instrumental in maintaining a cohesive and organized approach to content and templates creation.

By utilizing this plugin, we not only enhance the efficiency of content management but also provide a user-friendly experience for volunteers exploring potential projects. The plugin facilitates the consolidation of needs, projects, and relevant details associated with each Master Unit, allowing for easy navigation and exploration based on specific parameters.

This is the suggested parameters implementation (no custom taxonomies at this stage):

Post Type	Settings	Supports	Taxonomies	Labels	Template Hierarchy
Edit Master Units (mu) Get code	name: mu label: Master Units singular_label: Master Unit description: Master Unit description made by MU Authors public: true publicly_queryable: true show_ui: true show_in_nav_menus: true delete_with_user: false show_in_rest: true rest_base: "" rest_controller_class: "" has_archive: false has_archive_string: "" exclude_from_search: false capability_type: post hierarchical: false can_export: false rewrite: true rewrite_slug: "" rewrite_withfront: true query_var: true query_var_slug: "" menu_position: "" show_in_menu: true show_in_menu_string: "" menu_icon: "" custom_supports: "" enter_title_here: Add Master Unit	title editor thumbnail revisions author	category post_tag	menu_name: Master Units all_items: All Master Units add_new: Add new add_new_item: Add new Master Unit edit_item: Edit Master Unit new_item: New Master Unit view_item: View Master Unit view_items: View Master Units search_items: Search Master Units not_found: No Master Units found not_found_in_trash: No Master Units found in trash featured_image: Featured image for this MU set_featured_image: Set featured image for this MU remove_featured_image: Remove featured image for this MU use_featured_image: Use as featured image for this MU archives: Master Unit archives insert_into_item: Insert into Master Unit uploaded_to_this_item: Upload to this Master Unit filter_items_list: Filter Master Units list items_list_navigation: Master Units list navigation items_list: Master Units list attributes: Master Units attributes name_admin_bar: Master Unit item_published: Master Unit published item_published_privately: Master Unit published privately. item_reverted_to_draft: Master Unit reverted to draft. item_scheduled: Master Unit scheduled item_updated: Master Unit updated. parent_item_colon: Parent Master Unit:	Archives file name examples. archive-mu.php archive.php index.php Single Posts file name examples. single-mu-post_slug.php * single-mu.php single.php singular.php index.php *Replace "post_slug" with the slug of the actual post. Template hierarchy Theme Handbook

This will be how the MUN platform administrators will see these “custom posts”. This setup enables the segregation of information, distinguishing between institutional pages, generic posts, and custom posts. Future expansions will involve creating additional custom posts tailored for managing specific features such as volunteering projects, events, or related topics.

Title	Status	Authors	Categories	Tags
Ananda Kamala — Draft	Draft	Padmadhara Portugal	—	—
Ananda Madhuri	Published	Padmadhara Portugal	—	—
Ananda Rainjana	Published	Padmadhara Portugal	—	—
Ananda Palli	Published	Padmadhara Portugal	—	—
Ananda Annapurna	Published	Padmadhara Portugal	—	—
Ananda Suruci	Published	Padmadhara Portugal	—	—
Batu Gajah	Published	Padmadhara Portugal	—	—
Ananda Asitima	Published	Padmadhara Portugal	—	—
Ananda Raga	Published	Padmadhara Portugal	—	—

The data inside the custom posts “Master Units” will be defined later, during MUN monthly meetings and later adapted, based on the inputs coming from user feedback and website visits analytics. In general terms to kickoff the process we can suggest:

- A general section highlighting the specificities of the Master Unit, what is different from other implementations, where it specifically focuses on, it’s unique traits;
- A set of sections, that will become standardized as long as more Master Units will be included, that probably will be repeated by some of the other Master Units (such as, volunteering in the MU, or events, or visiting, or active AM departments and local social / environmental service organizations connected to the Master Unit ecosystem,...)
- A predefined set of parameters that can be useful for later filtering on specific topics that can be of interest to the general website visitor, for example, size in ha, number of residents, if volunteers are welcome,...

Custom Fields in Custom Posts

Inside the custom posts, **Advanced Custom Fields (ACF) will serve as a crucial plugin** for our external platform, providing essential functionality for dynamic field addition, versatile field placement, and effortless display. In the context of our project, where the ability to dynamically add fields, especially within custom posts, is fundamental, ACF was identified as a practical solution.

Here are the main reasons guiding us to choose the ACF plugin:

- **Dynamic Field Addition**
ACF's field builder allows administrators to add fields to WordPress edit screens seamlessly. This capability is essential for our project, enabling the dynamic inclusion of fields based on evolving requirements.
- **Versatile Field Placement**
The flexibility of ACF in placing fields across various elements within WordPress, including posts, pages, users, taxonomy terms, media, and comments, aligns with our need for a versatile solution. This feature supports the integration of structured data in different contexts within our platform.
- **Effortless Display**
ACF's developer-friendly functions for loading and displaying custom field values in theme template files align with our requirement for a straightforward mechanism. This capability ensures that our developers can efficiently showcase custom field data without unnecessary complexity.
- **Content Modeling Efficiency**

The ability of ACF to facilitate the creation of new custom post types and taxonomies directly in its UI is a valuable feature for our content modeling workflow. This ensures a streamlined process without the necessity of extensive coding or reliance on additional plugins.

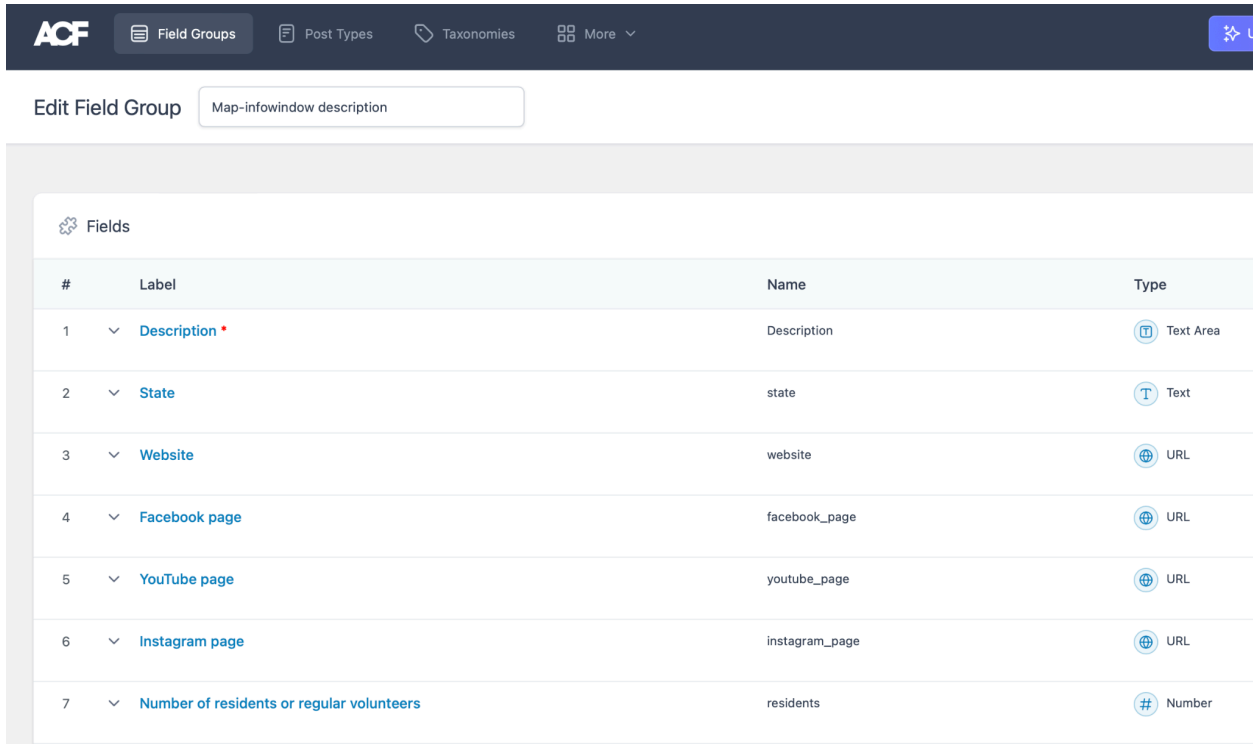
- **User-Friendly and Accessible**

For users engaged in content creation and data entry, ACF provides an intuitive field user experience. Its seamless integration into the native WordPress environment, along with adherence to accessibility standards, ensures an inclusive and straightforward experience for our diverse user base.

- **Comprehensive Documentation**

ACF's decade-long community contributions and commitment to clear documentation are advantageous for our project. The availability of comprehensive documentation and developer guides will be crucial in facilitating the implementation of ACF within our platform.

At the kickoff, it's suggested to have at least those fields, and then refine in the following years:



The visualization of those fields (box to be put below every Master Unit post, to include data from ACF plugin) could be done in the first release with the **plugin “Code Snippets”**, to provide quick, responsive implementation, before choosing specific, more targeted implementations. The same plugin could be used in other pages, to test and automatize specific tasks.

Publishing process

It is suggested to implement a professional Publishing plugin, to allow a streamlined management of Custom Posts, namely who can edit Custom Posts, who can review and publish, and keep all the process clear and well maintained.

The PublishPress plugin (a group of plugins that improve Publishing teams collaboration) allow several features to be implemented, crucial in this scenario:

PublishPress Authors Pro, allowing to add multiple authors and guest authors to WP posts.

PublishPress Permissions is an advanced yet accessible content permissions, to give users or groups type-specific roles, enable or block access for specific posts or terms.

PublishPress Planner helps the MUN web-admins to plan and publish content, including a content calendar, notifications, and custom statuses.

PublishPress Revisions helps to review published content with teamwork, using the Revisions model to submit, approve and schedule changes.

Other WP plugins

- **Security Optimizer**, **SiteGround Central** and **Speed Optimizer** are default SiteGround plugins, focusing on Cybersecurity, basic operations and performance optimizations;
- **User Switching** plugin provides instant switching between user accounts in WordPress, to efficiently test the PublishPress revisions workflow, to assess possible problems when a user encounter a not expected behavior, and other specific situations;
- **WPForms Lite** is a beginner-friendly WordPress contact form plugin, using Drag & Drop form builder to create WP forms and gather information from different target audiences;
- **FileBird Lite** helps to organize WP media files into folders/categories.
- **User Role Editor** helps to change/add/delete WordPress user roles and capabilities, useful to define the PublishPress workflow and then keep disabled during normal operations;
- **Duplicate Page** helps to streamline templates and processes, testing and should be kept disabled during normal operations.

Internal Platform

Theme

The adoption of the **Heroic Knowledge Base (KB) theme and plugins** for the Internal Platform stems from a meticulous analysis of its features and their alignment with the specific needs and objectives of the Master Unit Network (MUN). The Heroic KB emerged as a comprehensive solution that perfectly complements the Internal Platform's goals.

Key Features of Heroic KB Plugins:

1. User Restriction

Heroic KB's ability to restrict access to logged-in users aligns with the Internal Platform's emphasis on internal knowledge sharing, ensuring that valuable content is accessible only to authorized individuals within the MUN, organized in Working Groups and Strands.

2. Internal/External Site Support

The plugin's versatility in supporting both public and private access settings caters to the diverse use cases of the Internal Platform, accommodating various future scenarios.

3. Multilingual Support

Recognizing the multicultural nature of the MUN, Heroic KB's multilingual support enhances inclusivity, allowing the Internal Platform to provide content in multiple languages.

4. Article Attachments

The capability to attach files directly to articles enhances the comprehensiveness of knowledge-sharing within the Internal Platform. Users can supplement their knowledge with relevant documents, images, or files.

5. Built-in Table of Contents

The inclusion of a built-in Table of Contents simplifies navigation, offering users a structured and organized overview of articles, enhancing user experience.

6. Article Ratings & Feedback

Heroic KB's provision for article ratings and feedback aligns with the Internal Platform's commitment to continuous improvement. User feedback mechanisms empower MUN members to share insights, suggestions, and experiences, fostering a culture of collaborative refinement.

7. Email Reports

The weekly email reports feature provides administrators with key information and statistics, facilitating ongoing monitoring and management of the Internal Platform. This ensures proactive engagement and response to user interactions.

The Internal Platform, designed as a robust repository for internal knowledge-sharing within the MUN, leverages Heroic KB to streamline content dissemination and enhance organizational efficiency. The platform's user-friendly interface, combined with Heroic KB's advanced features, creates an environment conducive to collaboration, exploration, and continuous learning. The selection of the Heroic KB plugin for the Internal Platform underscores a strategic choice to empower MUN members with an efficient, secure, and feature-rich knowledge-base (KB).

Plugins

The main plugins installed in the Internal Platform are those related to the domain provider (SiteGround) and with the Knowledge-Base (Heroic KB). Summarizing:

- **Security Optimizer**, **SiteGround Central** and **Speed Optimizer** are default SiteGround plugins, focusing on Cybersecurity, basic operations and performance optimizations;
- **User Switching** plugin provides instant switching between user accounts in WordPress, to efficiently test the PublishPress revisions workflow, to assess possible problems when a user encounter a not expected behavior, and other specific situations;
- **Heroic Blocks** plugin, providing blocks for HeroThemes products;
- **Heroic Glossary**, providing a useful glossary plugin for WordPress;
- **Heroic Knowledge Base**, the Knowledge-Base plugin described above;
- **Heroic Knowledge Base Analytics Pro**, enabling analytics functionality for Heroic Knowledge Base;
- **Heroic Table of Contents**, an user-friendly way to add a Table of Contents to WP pages and posts.

Integration with Other Tools

The Master Unit Network recognizes the importance of seamless integration with various external tools to enhance collaboration, communication, and resource-sharing. The External and Internal Platforms are strategically designed to facilitate integration with the following tools:

1. Social Media

The MUN actively engages with various social media platforms, including YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram, to reach a broader audience. Integration steps have been initiated to consolidate social media channels within the External Platform, providing a centralized hub for multimedia content, updates, and community engagement. Users can access, share, and engage with social media content directly through the platform.

2. Real-time Communication Channels

Platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram play a pivotal role in facilitating real-time communication among the MUN community, including the general public, MUN Working Groups, and specific Teams. Both the Internal and External Platforms are designed to integrate these

communication channels seamlessly. This integration aims to streamline conversations, discussions, and announcements, creating a cohesive environment for users with different communication preferences.

3. Fundraising Database Integration (Work in Progress)

Information about grants that align with the objectives of specific Master Units is crucial for advancing projects and increasing internal and external cooperation. The Internal Platform incorporates steps towards integrating a fundraising database. This integration will allow MUN members to access and share relevant information about funding opportunities directly within the platform. The goal is to centralize fundraising efforts, promote collaboration, and enhance resource-sharing among Master Units.

4. Volunteers Platform Integration (Work in Progress)

Acknowledging the ongoing development of a volunteers platform, the MUN aims to seamlessly integrate this platform with both the External and Internal Platforms. The volunteers platform, currently in its early design phase, will serve as a valuable resource for obtaining information about volunteers interested in visiting Master Units. The integration aims to provide Master Units with a streamlined process to access volunteer profiles, availability, and preferences, fostering efficient coordination and collaboration.

These integration initiatives align with the MUN's commitment to creating a comprehensive digital ecosystem that leverages diverse channels and platforms. By facilitating seamless connections and consolidating information, the MUN platforms aim to enhance the overall experience for its users, promoting collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and collective impact across the network.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

The Master Unit Network is committed to providing an accessible and inclusive digital platform, tailored to the needs of diverse users, including youths, volunteers, educators, and youth workers (External Platform) and Master Units departments (Internal Platform). In designing and developing both the External and Internal Platforms, we prioritize several key aspects to ensure accessibility and inclusivity:

1. User-Centric Design

Our platforms embrace a user-centric design approach, focusing on simplicity, intuitiveness, and ease of navigation. Clear and concise interfaces aim to accommodate users with varying levels of digital literacy, ensuring a seamless experience for all.

2. Responsive Design

Recognizing the challenges posed by varying internet access, particularly in rural areas, our platforms feature responsive design. This adaptability caters to users accessing the platforms through different devices, including smartphones and tablets, making information accessible to a broader audience.

3. Low-Bandwidth Considerations

In acknowledgment of potential limitations in internet connectivity, efforts are made to optimize platform elements for low-bandwidth scenarios. This ensures that users with slower internet speeds can still access essential information without significant delays.

4. Multilingual Support

To cater to a diverse user base, multilingual support is integrated, allowing users to engage with platform content in their preferred language. The first version of the platform is developed in English language, but with the possibility to translate in other languages in the near future.

5. Accessible Learning Resources

The platforms are designed to host learning resources that are accessible to users with diverse learning needs. This includes providing content in various formats, accommodating different learning styles, and ensuring compatibility with assistive technologies for those with disabilities.

6. Empowering People with Fewer Opportunities

Special attention is given to the needs of individuals facing fewer opportunities. The platforms aim to empower these users by providing information on MUs that have the capacity to provide support of different kinds for special situations, including grants, infrastructures, and on-site support with dedicated volunteers.

7. Engagement with Stakeholders

To enhance inclusivity, the platforms encourage engagement with stakeholders at all levels. Regular feedback mechanisms, user surveys, and collaborative initiatives during regular meetings seek to gather insights from the community, ensuring that the platforms evolve to meet the evolving needs of their diverse user base.

8. Digital Literacy Support

Recognizing the varying levels of digital literacy among users, the MUN team is activating young volunteers to support MUs with less digital competency, and guide MU teams to organize, structure and publish their contents on the platform effectively.

9. Inclusive Content Creation

Content creation within the platforms is encouraged to be inclusive, considering diverse perspectives and experiences. This approach ensures that the information shared reflects the richness and diversity of the MUN community.

By prioritizing these aspects, the MUN aims to create a digital environment that fosters collaboration, knowledge exchange, and community building while being accessible and inclusive to users with diverse needs and backgrounds. Continuous feedback and iterative improvements will be integral to maintaining the platforms' commitment to accessibility and inclusivity.

Data Security and Privacy

Ensuring robust data security and privacy measures is a noted concern in the development and operation of our collaborative digital platform for the Master Unit Network.

The following key aspects underscore our effort to safeguarding collected data:

Encryption Protocols

All data transmitted over the platform will be encrypted, including secure communication via HTTPS, to protect data in transit, preventing unauthorized access during transmission.

User Authentication

The platform will implement secure user authentication mechanisms to verify the identity of the platform managers. Two layers of authentication will be needed for the Internal Platform users.

Access Control and Authorization

Strict access control measures will be in place, ensuring that users only have access to the data and functionalities relevant to their roles.

Data Backups and Recovery

Regular data backups will be performed in SiteGround to mitigate the risk of data loss, and data recovery in the case of unexpected incidents, to restore the platform's functionality swiftly.

Compliance with Data Protection Regulations

The platform will adhere to relevant data protection regulations, such as the GDPR in Europe, and similar overseas regulations when it will be extended to other countries.

Monitoring and Auditing

Continuous monitoring of platform activities will be in place to detect and respond to any unusual or suspicious behavior. Regular audits of security protocols will be conducted to identify and address potential vulnerabilities.

Data Minimization and Anonymization

The platform will adopt a data minimization approach, collecting only the necessary information for its intended purpose. Additionally, any personally identifiable information will be anonymized or pseudonymized where possible to enhance user privacy.

Security Awareness and Training

Regular training sessions and awareness programs will be conducted by ZK for platform administrators and users. This ensures a proactive approach to security, with users understanding best practices and potential threats.

By incorporating these measures, the digital platform aims to create a secure and privacy-aware environment for all users, fostering trust and confidence in the Master Unit Network community.

User Training and Support

The Master Unit Network recognizes the significance of effective user training and ongoing support to ensure a seamless and inclusive experience for its diverse user base. The approach to user training and support is outlined as follows:

1. Training for Initial Group of Master Units

To initiate the platform's adoption, MUN will provide targeted training sessions for a smaller group of European Master Units. This focused approach allows for in-depth training, feedback collection, and the identification of specific needs related to platform usage. By engaging with a select group, MUN aims to tailor its support to the unique requirements of MUs and their volunteers.

2. Feedback and Special Needs Assessment

The training sessions will serve as an opportunity to gather valuable feedback and assess any special needs not yet identified. MUN is committed to refining the platform based on this feedback, making it more user-friendly and addressing accessibility challenges. The collaborative engagement with the initial group ensures that the platform evolves to meet the practical needs of MUs and their volunteers.

3. Interactive Platform Scheme

A simplified scheme of how to interact with the platform will be prepared, leveraging the support of volunteers from various MUs. This simple scheme aims to guide MU volunteers and Teams through the platform's functionalities and processes, making it intuitive and user-friendly. The scheme will undergo testing in the initial years, allowing for iterative improvements based on real-world usage and user feedback.

4. Assistance from European Volunteers

In cases where specific Teams within Master Units require additional assistance, a dedicated team of 4-5 volunteers in Europe will provide support and training. This team, composed of individuals with expertise ranging from communication to IT, will be available to address queries, provide guidance, and assist with platform-related tasks.

5. Global Support Teams for International Expansion

As the MUN expands its reach beyond Europe, the vision includes forming teams of 4-5 volunteers from various countries to support the onboarding process. These teams will play a crucial role in gathering material, structuring content, uploading data onto the server, and undertaking similar tasks, for those MUs in countries with significant needs and limited volunteer resources.

The user training and support strategy is designed to ensure that MUN members, regardless of their geographical location or technical expertise, can effectively utilize the platform. The phased approach allows for continuous improvement, aligning the platform with the evolving needs and expectations of the MUN community.

Conclusion

In the pursuit of fostering collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and community engagement, the Master Unit Network (MUN) has meticulously designed a comprehensive digital ecosystem. The platform's multifaceted structure encompasses internal and external components, strategically addressing the diverse needs of Master Units (MUs), working groups, and volunteers.

The **Internal Platform** stands as a robust Knowledge Base (KB), offering simplicity, organization, and a user-friendly experience within the MUN ecosystem. With features such as search functionality, user priorities analytics, and a feedback mechanism, it aims to enhance the internal knowledge-sharing dynamics within the MUN. The choice of the "Heroic KB" plugin aligns with these objectives, providing user restrictions, multilingual support, and other essential functionalities.

On the other hand, the **External Platform** unfolds as a dynamic hub, weaving together the varied strands of MUN's initiatives for the general public. From the interactive MUN Map to the curated Communication section, the platform prioritizes accessibility and engagement. The choice of WordPress, supported by the WP MAPS PRO plugin and Advanced Custom Fields (ACF), ensures versatility, ease of customization, and efficient content management.

Critical to the success of these platforms is a robust plan for user training and support. By initiating training with a smaller group of MUs, gathering feedback, and continuously refining the platforms, MUN aims to create an inclusive and user-friendly environment. The commitment to

providing assistance through European volunteers and establishing global support teams for international expansion underlines the dedication to accessibility across diverse user groups.

As MUN embarks on this digital journey, the collaborative spirit, transparency, and commitment to inclusivity permeate every aspect of the platform. The phased implementation, iterative improvements, and a strategic vision for future expansions underscore MUN's commitment to creating a vibrant, interconnected community dedicated to positive change and shared knowledge. The platforms are not merely tools; they are **pathways to collective growth, learning, and impact** within the Master Unit Network.

Next Steps

The journey of the Master Unit Network into the digital realm is dynamic and evolving. As we move forward, several key next steps and initiatives are outlined to enhance and expand the functionality and impact of the platforms in the years after the end of the current project:

1. Fundraising Database Integration

The integration of a dedicated fundraising database into the Internal Platform is a crucial next step. This database will serve as a centralized repository for information on grants and funding opportunities aligned with the goals and actions of specific Master Units (MUs). This integration aims to streamline the process of identifying and applying for relevant grants, fostering financial sustainability for MUN initiatives.

2. Volunteers Platform Implementation

The ongoing development of the Volunteers Platform represents a significant stride in harnessing the power of volunteers across Master Units. The platform, still in its early design phase, will facilitate the connection between MUs and volunteers interested in contributing their time and skills. The platform will evolve iteratively, addressing the specific needs of both MUs and volunteers, enhancing collaboration, and promoting shared initiatives.

3. Detailed Process Drawings

The creation of detailed process schemes for both the Internal and External Platforms will provide a comprehensive visual guide for users, administrators, and contributors. These drawings will map out user interactions, content creation workflows, and backend processes, offering clarity and transparency in navigating the platforms. This visual aid will be instrumental during training sessions and in communicating the intricacies of the platforms.

4. Iterative Platform Improvements

Acknowledging that the platforms are dynamic entities, a structured plan for iterative improvements is imperative. Regular feedback loops, user surveys, and continuous monitoring will drive updates and refinements. This iterative approach ensures that the platforms remain

responsive to user needs, technological advancements, and emerging trends, fostering a user-centric and resilient digital environment.

5. Global Support Teams for International Expansion

As the Master Unit Network looks toward global expansion, establishing support teams consisting of volunteers from different parts of the world becomes paramount. These teams will play a crucial role in assisting MUs outside Europe, offering support in gathering, structuring, and uploading material onto the platforms. This initiative aims to bridge the resource gap and ensure that the benefits of the platforms extend to MUs globally.

6. Integration with Other Social Media Channels

The activation and integration of additional social media channels such as LinkedIn and youth-oriented channels into the External Platform will enrich the content-sharing experience. Leveraging these channels will amplify the visibility of MUN initiatives, attracting a broader audience and fostering community engagement.

7. Strategic Content Consolidation

A strategic approach to consolidating content across platforms is essential. This involves assessing the content landscape, identifying redundancies, and streamlining information dissemination. By adopting a holistic content consolidation strategy, MUN aims to enhance the coherence and efficiency of the platforms.

These identified next steps outline a roadmap for the future Master Unit Network's digital initiatives, encapsulating both the ongoing developments and the strategic vision for the future. The commitment to continuous improvement, inclusivity, and responsiveness to user needs underpins the ethos of MUN's digital journey.