

PROGRAM GUIDE

SkillHeart Professional Immersion

Verifiable experience inside real organizations, with objectives, conditions and evaluation defined from the outset.

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Professional Immersion at a glance

ITEM	DETAILS
Format	Supervised professional immersion program with partner organizations
Participants	Emerging digital talent sufficiently prepared to operate in a real professional environment
Organizations	Companies and other entities able to provide supervision, context, feedback and an appropriate scope
Model	Initial assessment → preparation → matching → immersion → evaluation
Cost for participants	Free for selected participants
Participation decision	Requires agreement from SkillHeart, the organization and the participant
Primary outcome	Verifiable experience and structured evaluation
Additional outcome	Possible subsequent access to professional opportunities
Employment guaranteed	No
Legal relationship	Defined case by case; the program name does not by itself determine the nature of the relationship
Duration	Varies by cohort, organization, profile and objectives

Professional Immersion is designed to address a specific barrier:

To access an opportunity, experience is required. To demonstrate experience, someone first has to allow you to work inside a real environment.

1. Why it exists

A person may have learned to code, completed training, built personal projects or contributed to open source and still never have worked inside a real organization.

That transition matters.

Working in a professional environment means far more than solving technical tasks. It also means:

- understanding priorities;
- adapting to existing processes;
- communicating progress and blockers;
- working with other people;
- receiving and applying feedback;
- documenting;
- meeting deadlines;
- using shared tools;
- understanding product and business constraints;
- recognizing limits;
- escalating risks;
- and demonstrating reliability over time.

SkillHeart Professional Immersion exists to create that bridge.

The program connects selected participants with organizations capable of offering a real, structured and assessable experience.

The objective is not to simulate experience.

The objective is to generate **observed, documented and verifiable experience**.

2. How Professional Immersion differs from Industry Labs

Both programs use real environments, but they do not serve the same purpose.

Industry Labs

Work takes place within a technical framework managed by SkillHeart.

SkillHeart structures the tasks, supervises, reviews and controls the integration boundary. The organization receives reviewed technical outcomes.

Professional Immersion

The participant temporarily enters the professional environment of an organization and learns to operate within its processes, team, tools and standards.

The organization provides direct professional context and observes performance.

SkillHeart prepares, supports and evaluates the process.

Industry Labs brings an organization's work into an environment managed by SkillHeart. Professional Immersion brings the participant into the professional environment of an organization.

3. What it is – and what it is not

Professional Immersion is

- a supervised professional-experience program;
- a transition stage between technical preparation and professional opportunity;
- an environment where a person can demonstrate how they work inside a real organization;
- a process with preparation, objectives, follow-up and evaluation;
- a way to generate evidence of technical and professional capabilities;
- and a possible pathway toward later collaborations.

Professional Immersion is not

- a guarantee of employment;
- an automatic employment relationship;
- a job board;
- a route to obtain free work;
- a way to replace staff;
- a promise of hiring at the end;
- or a way to present an activity as “experience” when it has not actually been observed and evaluated.

Professional Immersion is not about placing a person inside a company. It is about creating a temporary, structured and assessable professional experience in which the participant, the organization and SkillHeart understand the objectives, responsibilities, boundaries and applicable conditions from the outset.

4. Who it is for

Professional Immersion is intended for people who have already moved beyond an initial learning stage and need to demonstrate that they can perform consistently inside an organization.

It may be particularly suitable for:

- developers in the early stages of their careers;
- recent graduates with sufficient technical foundations;
- self-taught profiles with demonstrable projects or contributions;
- participants who have progressed from **Open Source Labs**;
- people with technical capability but limited exposure to professional teams;
- and talent that needs to turn knowledge and potential into stronger professional evidence.

It is not an introductory technology program.

Each call may require a specific prior level depending on the organization, stack, responsibilities and objectives.

5. How it works

Professional Immersion may be structured in five stages.

01 Initial assessment

SkillHeart reviews the candidate's profile to understand:

- technical knowledge;
- previous experience;
- quality of work;
- communication;
- reliability;
- autonomy;
- ability to receive feedback;
- and readiness to operate in a professional environment.

The objective is not only to determine what the person knows.

It is also to identify what needs to be strengthened before they enter an organization.

02 Professional Readiness Plan

Before the immersion begins, SkillHeart may define an individual or cohort-based preparation plan.

It may include:

- tools;
- workflows;
- Git and GitHub;
- testing;
- documentation;
- professional communication;
- asynchronous collaboration;
- security;
- responsible use of AI;
- remote work;
- task management;
- and technical competencies specific to the destination environment.

03 Matching and mutual approval

SkillHeart assesses fit between:

- participant;
- organization;
- stack;
- responsibilities;
- technical level;
- availability;
- modality;
- language;
- objectives;
- and supervision capacity.

There is no unilateral placement.

The immersion only proceeds when:



04 Professional immersion

The person participates for a defined period within the agreed environment.

Depending on the case, the experience may include:

- technical tasks;
- meetings;
- code review;
- documentation;
- collaboration with teams;
- internal tools;
- project tracking;
- product learning;
- asynchronous communication;
- and exposure to professional standards.

05 Evaluation and close-out

At the end, SkillHeart consolidates the available evidence and feedback to determine:

- demonstrated competencies;
- progress;
- strengths;
- areas for improvement;
- observed readiness level;
- and possible next steps.

6. Participant selection

Professional Immersion will have limited places.

SkillHeart may assess three dimensions.

Eligibility

Whether the person meets the basic requirements of the call.

Readiness

Whether they have sufficient technical and professional preparation to benefit from a real immersion.

Organization Fit

Fit with a specific organization: stack, responsibilities, modality, availability, language, working culture, level of supervision and objectives.

The process may include:

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|----|---|
| 01 | application; | 05 | interview; |
| 02 | eligibility review; | 06 | professional-readiness assessment; |
| 03 | technical assessment; | 07 | and validation of fit with an organization. |
| 04 | review of prior evidence; | | |

An application may result in:

- **Accepted**
- **Waitlisted**
- **Development Required**
- **Not Selected / Not Eligible**

SkillHeart may recommend a prior stage in Open Source Labs or another program where the person is not yet ready for a professional immersion.

7. Organization selection

Professional Immersion also selects organizations.

SkillHeart may assess:

Professional Environment Fit

There is a sufficiently structured environment in which the person can learn and be evaluated.

Supervision Fit

There is a responsible person able to provide context, follow-up and feedback.

Scope Fit

Tasks and responsibilities are appropriate to the participant's level.

Learning Value

The experience allows relevant competencies to be developed and demonstrated.

Ethical Fit

The organization accepts the rules on respect, confidentiality, privacy, non-exploitation and participant protection.

Operational Fit

Objectives, tools and conditions are sufficiently clear for the experience to run in an orderly way.

SkillHeart will not place participants in organizations that cannot provide supervision, feedback and an environment proportionate to the purpose of the program.

8. What SkillHeart provides

Depending on the cohort and case, SkillHeart may provide:

- selection process;
- initial assessment;
- Professional Readiness Plan;
- prior preparation;
- tools and resources;
- licenses where there is a need and availability;
- organization-fit assessment;
- follow-up;
- coordination;
- structured evaluation;
- incident management;
- and documentation of outcomes.

SkillHeart acts as the layer of structure, preparation and follow-up.

It does not replace the organization's team or automatically assume functions that belong under an employment or professional relationship requiring another framework.

9. What participants can expect

SkillHeart will seek to ensure that each participant can expect:

- reasonably clear objectives;
- sufficient information about the organization before accepting;
- known scope and time commitment;
- known economic conditions, where applicable;
- a designated point of contact;
- feedback during the immersion;
- communicated evaluation criteria;
- respect for their time and work;
- access to essential tools where appropriate;
- reasonable protection of their data;
- a channel for reporting problems;
- and a final evaluation based on observed evidence.

A participant may reject an immersion proposal without that decision, by itself, excluding them from the SkillHeart ecosystem.

Participation is voluntary.

A person may leave the program, although communication and a reasonable close-out of tasks, documentation and access will be expected where possible.

Professional Immersion must not be used as a disguised substitute for paid work.

10. What is expected from participants

Selected participants must make a genuine commitment to the program and the organization.

Depending on the cohort, expectations may include:

- meeting the agreed commitment;
- regular communication;
- punctuality;
- respect for processes and policies;
- documentation of work;
- communication of blockers;
- acceptance of feedback;
- professional conduct;
- compliance with confidentiality;
- responsible use of tools;
- respect for security and privacy;
- and participation in follow-up processes.

SkillHeart may request periodic updates or reports to document what has been done, what has been learned, what difficulties have arisen and which areas require further development.

11. What the organization provides

The organization provides something SkillHeart cannot simulate on its own:

real professional context.

Depending on the case, it may provide:

- a responsible point of contact;
- onboarding;
- proportionate access to tools;
- defined tasks or responsibilities;
- feedback;
- product context;
- working processes;
- review;
- and final evaluation.

The organization must inform SkillHeart of any relevant issue related to performance, conduct, availability, security or fit.

SkillHeart may intervene to adjust objectives, reinforce preparation, mediate or end participation where necessary.

12. What it means for the program to work

Success in Professional Immersion **is not measured solely by whether a later hire takes place.**

The program may be valuable when the participant gains:

Experience

They have worked inside a real professional environment for long enough to generate meaningful observations.

Evidence

There is structured evidence of how they worked, what competencies they demonstrated and what areas they should continue to develop.

Progress

There is observable improvement from the starting point or stronger validation of professional readiness.

Opportunity

A later professional opportunity may arise, but it is not a necessary condition for the immersion to be considered useful.

01

Experience



02

Evidence



03

Progression



04

Possible opportunity

There is no guarantee regarding the final step.

13. Organization evaluation

At the end of the immersion, SkillHeart may ask the organization for a structured evaluation covering dimensions such as:

- technical capability;
- quality of work;
- autonomy;
- reliability;
- communication;
- documentation;
- teamwork;
- ability to receive feedback;
- learning;
- achievement of objectives;
- and readiness for similar environments.

The organization does not determine SkillHeart's final evaluation by itself.

Its feedback is one source of evidence within a broader assessment.

SkillHeart may request concrete examples supporting the ratings provided.

14. Evidence and Professional Immersion Report

The main outcome of the program is **verifiable experience**.

SkillHeart may consolidate it in a **Professional Immersion Report** or equivalent format.

The report may include:

- duration;
- environment;
- responsibilities;
- technologies;
- objectives;
- available evidence;
- observed competencies;
- organization feedback;
- SkillHeart assessment;
- strengths;
- development areas;
- and recommendations.

Where confidentiality restrictions exist, descriptions or evidence compatible with those restrictions will be used.

Every evaluation reflects a specific period and context.

It does not constitute an official accreditation, an absolute judgment of the person or a guarantee of hiring.

15. Privacy, consent and use of profiles

SkillHeart will collect only the information necessary for selection, participation, follow-up and evidence generation.

CVs, evaluations, readiness reports, profiles and other personal data will not be shared with an organization for a specific opportunity without the participant's knowledge and consent, except where an applicable legal obligation requires otherwise.

Before information is shared, SkillHeart will seek to define:

- what is shared;
- with whom;
- for what purpose;
- for how long;
- and what documentation the organization may retain.

Participants may know what relevant information about their profile or evaluation is being used during the matching process.

16. Confidentiality, intellectual property and security

Before an immersion begins, the applicable conditions relating to the following must be defined:

- confidentiality;
- intellectual property;
- access;
- security;
- data;
- tools;
- and information handling.

Participation does not automatically transfer the participant's pre-existing assets to SkillHeart or the organization.

Where the work creates new intellectual property, clear conditions must exist before the relevant activity begins.

As a general principle:

- least privilege will apply;
- access will be proportionate;
- unnecessary systems or data will be avoided;
- secrets must be protected;
- and access must be revoked when no longer necessary.

17. Use of artificial intelligence

Professional Immersion recognizes that AI tools are part of today's technology work.

They may be used where permitted by SkillHeart and the partner organization.

AI-assisted work is allowed when the environment permits it. Work the participant does not understand is not.

Each participant must be able to:

- explain their work;
- verify results;
- identify errors;
- modify solutions;
- and take responsibility for what they deliver.

Proprietary code, secrets, credentials, personal data or confidential information must not be entered into external tools without express authorization.

The organization's policies take precedence with respect to its assets and systems.

18. Duration, commitment and modality

Professional Immersion is designed to be modular.

Duration may vary according to:

- objectives;
- participant level;
- organization;
- stack;
- availability;
- scope;
- and the applicable legal framework.

An immersion may be:

- remote;
- hybrid;
- in person;
- synchronous;
- asynchronous;
- or a combination.

Each call or specific agreement will define:

- duration;
- commitment;
- schedule where applicable;
- time zones;
- tools;
- working language;
- and availability expectations.

19. Economic conditions

Professional Immersion is built around a basic rule:

The participant never pays SkillHeart to participate or to access a later professional opportunity.

Four different elements must be distinguished:

Participation in the program

No tuition fee is paid by the participant.

Possible compensation during the immersion

Compensation may or may not exist depending on the nature of the activity, duration, jurisdiction, organization and applicable legal framework.

Where it exists, it must be known and documented before the immersion begins.

Possible later professional collaboration

This is a separate and voluntary relationship that must be negotiated independently.

SkillHeart fee

SkillHeart may charge the organization a program, coordination, intermediation or other fee where appropriate.

That fee is independent of any participant compensation.

SkillHeart will not use participant remuneration as a mechanism to finance the program.

20. Professional opportunities after the immersion

Completing Professional Immersion does not guarantee hiring.

Depending on evaluation and available opportunities, a person may:

- continue developing;
- join another program;
- be included, with their consent, in a pool of validated profiles;
- be introduced to organizations;
- access external professional opportunities;
- or begin an independent collaboration.

Any later opportunity will be voluntary.

Where SkillHeart facilitates an introduction between a validated participant and an organization:

- the participant does not pay for access to the opportunity;
- the profile is shared with their consent;
- the organization and participant decide whether there is a fit;
- and professional conditions are negotiated separately.

SkillHeart may support the negotiation and help structure reasonable expectations, but does not guarantee the outcome.

21. Legal and contractual framework

Professional Immersion may involve participants and organizations located in different jurisdictions.

Each immersion must operate under a framework appropriate to:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| • nature of the activity; | • working hours; |
| • duration; | • supervision; |
| • compensation; | • economic dependence; |
| • participant's country; | • intellectual property; |
| • organization's country; | • privacy; |
| • level of integration; | • and responsibilities. |

The name of the program does not determine the legal nature of the relationship. The reality of the activity does.

Where the actual arrangement requires an employment, professional, internship or other regulated relationship, the corresponding structure must be used.

SkillHeart will not use Professional Immersion to disguise employment or professional relationships that should be documented differently.

22. How an immersion begins

For participants

Each call will specify:

- profiles sought;
- requirements;
- expected level;
- duration;
- commitment;
- modality;
- selection process;
- and applicable conditions.

For organizations

The process may include:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 01 initial conversation; | 07 candidate selection; |
| 02 Organization Fit assessment; | 08 mutual approval; |
| 03 definition of the type of experience; | 09 preparation; |
| 04 responsibilities; | 10 onboarding; |
| 05 economic conditions; | 11 start of the immersion. |
| 06 legal and contractual framework; | |

An immersion does not begin until **the participant, SkillHeart and the organization** understand and accept the applicable conditions.

Information and calls

skillheart.org

Contact

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About SkillHeart

SkillHeart is the public-facing name of the *Asociación para el Desarrollo del Talento Tecnológico y la Empleabilidad Digital*, a nonprofit association registered in Spain.

Its mission is to help emerging digital talent develop relevant capabilities, gain verifiable experience and access professional, educational and entrepreneurial opportunities responsibly.

Its initial focus gives particular attention to collaboration between African and European technology ecosystems.

SkillHeart does not seek to operate as a source of low-cost labor. Its model is based on dignity, autonomy, preparation, evidence, reciprocity, transparency and sustainable opportunity creation.

Document status and updates

This document describes the general model of **SkillHeart Professional Immersion**.

The specific conditions of each cohort, participant and organization must be defined before the immersion begins and will prevail over this general guide where appropriate.

ITEM	DETAILS
Version	1.0
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SkillHeart

Skills open doors. We build the bridges.

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