



grassroots
young entrepreneurs in eco-health tourism

Matia, Matera's Chatbot

Experience Design for an idea by
Alina Dumitru, Matera, Italy (2024)

*"A helpful chatbot
providing
thorough advice
on grassroots,
unconventional
experiences in
Matera"*



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1. Matias, Matera's Chatbot

An idea by Alina Dumitru (2024)



An AI Guide to Hidden Gems of Matera

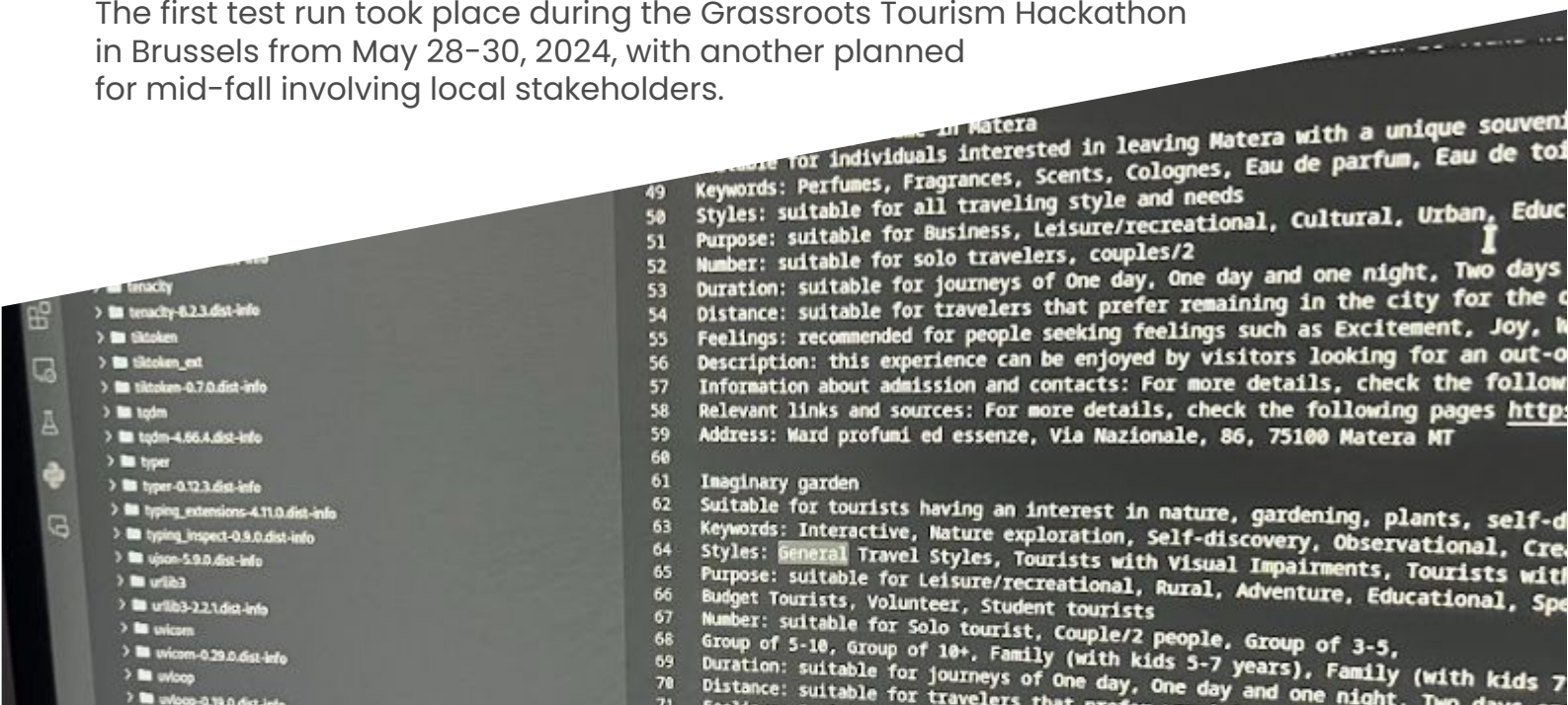
The second project which emerged from the hackathon and was chosen as part of the incubation programme was developed by Alina Dumitru and aims to develop **a chatbot powered by Artificial Intelligence** to aggregate local providers of alternative experiences. The goal is to enhance the visibility of local attractions and offer tourists instant recommendations and valuable information.

The idea emerged after Alina, originally from Romania, spent three months in Matera and observed the **overwhelming concentration of tourists in the city centre**. While this is understandable given Matera's beauty, the city has so much more to offer beyond the typical tourist hotspots. It felt essential to highlight these hidden gems and alleviate the pressure on over-visited areas.

With invaluable guidance from Sara and collaboration with local programmer Matteo, Alina transformed a bold vision into a working prototype in the months following the hackathon. The chatbot isn't just another platform; it's a revolutionary tool that leverages cutting-edge technology to **create a sustainable, interconnected local network**.

The goal is to go beyond traditional Google searches, providing **a more meaningful and impactful way to discover Matera's hidden gems**.

The first test run took place during the Grassroots Tourism Hackathon in Brussels from May 28-30, 2024, with another planned for mid-fall involving local stakeholders.




2.

The call

July 2023: Call for young tourism entrepreneurs

On July 27, 2023, a call was launched by each partner of the project Grassroots to select participants to the hackathon which would take place in Matera in October 2023. The Italian call received 10 applications of which 4 were selected. Below, you can see the first Italian post to promote the call.

 **Promoting Europe**
July 27, 2023 · 🌐

★ FREE TRAINING ● **Grassroots Tourism Hackathon: Shaping Sustainable Tourism Innovation** ●

📅 When: October 3-5, 2023 | 📍 Where: Matera, Italy

🌱 Join the interactive and international **Grassroots Tourism Hackathon** in Matera. This unique event is challenge-based, tackling environmental, social, and economic issues, drawing inspiration from IT hackathons where bugs in systems and codes are resolved.

Prize: Winning team receives a reward and support for idea incubation from sustainable tourism experts.

Note: Coffee breaks with snacks will be provided, but meals are not included.

To apply 👉 <https://bit.ly/grass-roots-form>

Deadline to apply: 18th of August.

#ErasmusPlus #GrassRoots #SustainableTourism #EcoTourism



👍 You, Alba Martinez Bermudez, Paolo Montemurro and 18 others

6 shares



Like



Comment



Send



Share

3.

The hackathon in Matera

October 2023: the Hackathon in Matera, Italy

3rd, 4th and 5th October: 3 days of learning, exchange and inspiration.

The Grassroots Eco-Health Tourism partnership has gathered young tourism entrepreneurs, project managers and mentors in Matera for a *hackathon*, a format borrowed from the IT sector and applied to the tourism sector by keeping the must-have ingredients:

- challenge-based approach
- fast-paced environment
- fair competition
- final rewards

Alina also went on local TV!
See here: [TRM Network Live Special - 6 ottobre 2023](#)



Alina Maria Dumitru
Laureata in Global Markets & Local Creativities

4.

The hackathon in Matera

Inspiring speakers and activities

Three speakers led the presentations:

- Vania Cauzillo, an energetic stage director who highlighted the possible synergies between tourism and cultural and creative enterprises;
- Elvira De Giacomo, a tourism expert who shared some numbers behind the foundation Matera-Basilicata2019;
- Sara Simeone, a sustainable tourism expert, part of the team at Materahub who curated the whole hackathon.

The hackathon included a range of group activities, city explorations and much more. Read the full article [here](#).

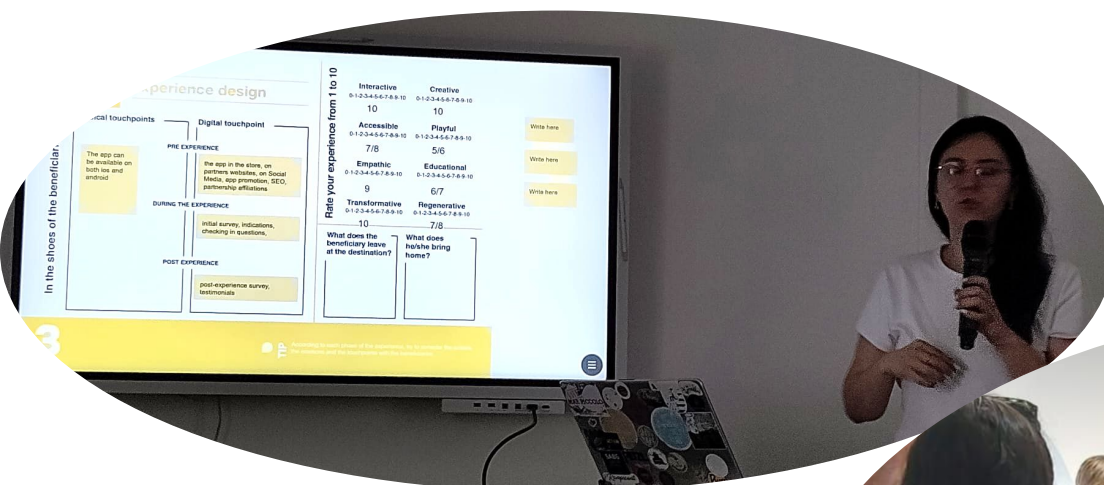


4.

The hackathon in Matera

How the hackathon helped Alina's idea

Not only this hackathon hosted as a field activity a first, draft version of Living Histories: it also gave Alina the possibility to benefit from the exchange with team members from other countries, who gave him a lot of useful advice and external points of view, which always help. [In this powerpoint](#) you can have a look at the reasonment they did by using the beta editable version of the Grassroots Eco-Health Tourism Guide.



4.

The hackathon in Matera



Afternoon and networking activities

The hackathon also gave Alina the opportunity to boost the networking and discovery of local hidden gems.



5.

Further development



Leftover advice needed after the hackathon:

- Legal advice for gathering and using data, creating licences, patenting, copyright.
- Financial guidance.
- Networking and communications with stakeholders and partner agencies.
- Data analysis requires a behaviour analysis expert, would guidance on where to find the right people.

Title of the experience at the end of the hackathon:

MakeYourTrip.Matera – App using open data for tailored touristic itineraries

For mentoring Alina Dumitru:

- **Cesare Fialà**: co-founder at Culture Hint, he works a lot with data measuring and monitoring for tourism. Sara Simeone crossed him on LinkedIn and she arranged an online meeting with Alina to provide feedback to her idea of a chatbot allowing to also measure some data.
- **Raffaele Vitulli**: founder at Basilicata Creativa, he worked and works a lot with tourism and culture-related projects, this is why Sara Simeone put him in contact with Alina who met him and asked him a lot of questions to clarify the purpose of her chatbot idea.
- **Matteo Benedetto**: he is a developer and founder at Loop44 coworking space, where Alina went a couple of times with Sara to co-develop with Matteo the chatbot as it is today. He was very eager to help and did it for free.
- **Sara Simeone**: despite being project manager for Grassroots on behalf of Materahub, she also was a tourism entrepreneur in the past, as she organised several active tourism experiences such as Lost in Nature Outdoor Festival. Plus, she graduated in Design of Sustainable Tourism Systems. She helped Alina push his idea forward from an early, intangible idea to a concrete first tour which was really appreciated by the testers.
- **Laura Magan**: working at Momentum and dissemination leader of Grassroots, also she provided Alina with invaluable feedback in Brussels.

Sneakpeeks of documents used for planning

GRASSROOTS YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS IN ECO-HEALTH TOURISM™

5.

Further development

Sneakpeeks of documents used for planning

EXPERIENCES CATEGORIES		TITLE	KEYWORDS	DESCRIPTION & ADDITIONAL INFO	LINKS&CONTACTS
Macro-categories	Meso-categories				
GARDENING	Gardening lab	Urban gardening	Interactive, Nature exploration, Self	-	Check out if Noi Ortadini have upcoming events!
	Other	Imaginary garden - transformative tour	Interactive, Nature exploration, Self	Let yourselves be guided through an	https://www.gameoftraces.com/experience/imaginary-garden
CRAFTS	Engraving	-	Engraving workshop, Learn to engr	-	-
	Linocut print	-	Linocut workshop, Learn to linocut	-	Team art studio
CITY EXPLORATION	Dark tourism/Urbex	The Village of Craco	Abandoned ghost town, Medieval v	-	https://maps.app.goo.gl/infy1NHjRRCshMMr9
		La Palomba	Open-air museum of contemporary	Private property, managed by the scu it consists of a six-hectare area that v	can be visited by calling the following numbers: 3
		Convento di San Francesco della Rabatana di Tursi	Franciscan friary, Founded 13th ce	-	https://maps.app.goo.gl/B6K8T37pDwfXfV7c6
		Borgo di Alianello Vecchio	Abandoned village (ghost town), Fc	-	https://maps.app.goo.gl/cBvdKqMcAgVsw82b6
	Tours	The Crypt of the Original Sin	Cave church (Sassi di Matera), Er	-	https://maps.app.goo.gl/8mgWVWQ6C5zaFF3G
		Wonder Grottole	Olive oil tasting, Tour of an olive gr	-	https://www.gameoftraces.com/experience/wonder-grottole
		Ivan Losacco	-	-	https://www.instagram.com/photographicgratitude
		Ferula Viaggi Santeramo Cosimo	Travel experiences, Cultural experi	They operate in Puglia and Basilicata	https://www.ferulaviaggi.it/
		Silent City	Hiking guide service, Official guide	Passionate about sharing his knowle	Check out this page for more details https://visita
		-	Night Tour, Historical Walking Tour	-	https://www.gameoftraces.com/experience/silent-city
SPORTS & OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES	Horseriding	Ergghio' Matera	Cultural association, Agro-pastoral	The cultural association "Ergghio" wa	Contact ergghio.matera@hotmail.com or check out https://www.isassidimatera.com/guida-matera/itinerari
		-	Horseback riding lessons, Horseba	-	http://www.eledoradoranch.it/
		-	Horseback riding lessons, Horseba	-	https://www.turismoquestre.com/iscritti/vento-barro
		-	Horseback riding lessons, Horseba	-	https://visitaissidimatera.it/guida-escursionistica-a
		-	Horseback riding lessons, Horseba	-	-
	Cycling	Ferula Viaggi	Cycling tours, Puglia, Basilicata, bil	Dozens of itineraries, Different levels	https://www.ferulaviaggi.it/ and https://www.bikebase
		-	Bicycle tours, 20 to 90 kilometers, f	-	https://www.materaturismo.it/tour-in-bici/
		-	Electric bike tours, Effortless explor	-	https://www.isassidimatera.com/bici-elettriche/
	Swimming	-	-	-	-
	Speleology	GASP	-	-	Contact Ivan Losacco at https://www.instagram.com
	Outdoor cinema	-	-	-	-
	Foraging	-	-	-	-
GASTRONOMY AND CULINARY TOURISM	Oil tasting	Oil tasting at Wond	Olive oil production, Tour of an olive	-	https://www.gameoftraces.com/experience/wonder-grottole
		-	Pasta making	-	https://www.cavamarlo.it/
		-	-	-	https://www.cooknfunatmarys.com/
	Cooking	Traditional food ex	Farm-to-table experience, Wine pa	-	https://www.gameoftraces.com/experience/wonder-grottole
		-	-	-	https://www.instagram.com/omega13_ac?igsh=aWh
	Wine tasting	-	Winemaking, process, Wine educa	-	https://www.materacookingclass.com/
	Mixology/Cocktail making class	-	Winemaking, process, Vineyard tou	-	https://www.gameoftraces.com/experience/wonder-grottole
PHOTOGRAPHY	Baking	-	Traditional Matera baking, Bread m	-	Lucio zaf
	Wedding elopement	-	Custom-made vintage wedding dre	-	https://www.creaexperience.it/i-nostri-tour/
	Portrait	-	Historic city with unique cave dwell	-	https://www.somewherecrazy.com/elopement-italy-n
DIY & CRAFTS	Perfume blending	Blend your own perfume in Matera	Perfumes, Fragrances, Scents, Col	-	https://www.instagram.com/shy_lab_visuals/
	Oil infusion & tasting	-	Perfumes, Fragrances, Scents, Col	-	Waard
	Visual arts workshop	-	Olive oil production, Tour of an olive	-	https://www.gameoftraces.com/experience/wonder-grottole
	Innovative ceramics & pottery	-	-	-	https://www.instagram.com/mimmocentonze/?hl=en
	Unconclina workshon	-	Digital design, 3d printing, CNC rou	-	https://www.gameoftraces.com/creative_industria/te

5.

Further development

Sneakpeeks of documents used for planning

PERSONAS

Styles	Purpose of travel/Interests	Number	Trip duration	Preferred distance from the city of Matera	Feelings
General Travel Styles	Business	Solo tourist	One day	Within the city	Excitement
Tourists with Mobility Needs	Leisure/recreation	Couple/2 people	One day and one night	Radius of 5 km	Joy
Tourists with Visual Impairments	Cultural	Group of 3-5	Two days and one night	Radius of 10 km	Wonder
Tourists with Hearing Impairments	Rural	Group of 5-10	Two days and two nights	Radius of 20 km	Contentment
Tourists with Cognitive Differences	Sports	Group of 10+	Three days	Radius of 50 km	Accomplishment
Tourists with Non-Apparent Conditions/needs	Urban	Family (with kids 3-5 years)	Four days		Connection
	Adventure	Family (with kids 5-7 years)	Four days - one week		Freedom
	Gastronomic	Family (with kids 7-13 years)	More than a week		Gratitude
	Educational	Family (with adolescents)			Inspiration
	Special interest tourist (arts, culture, history, exploration)				Curiosity
	Eco-tourists				Openness
	VFR Tourists				Surprise
	Budget Tourists				Anxiety
	Medical Tourists				Frustration
	Volunteer				Loneliness
	Student trip				Homesickness
	Family trip				Culture Shock
					Overwhelm
					Need for alone time
					Need of an interesting experience
					Need of novelty

Name	Alex Moore	The Miller Family	Sarah Jones						
Age	22	John & Mary (50)	32						
Details	Last Uni Year		Marketing professional						
Location	Berlin, Germany	Atlanta, Georgia	Seattle, Washington (USA)						
Travel style	Independent traveler on a tight budget, prioritizing cultural experiences and historical exploration. Open to alternative accommodation and public transportation.								
Duration									
Travel setting	solo	Collaborative plan	solo						
Interests	History, particularly Roman ruins	Exploring historical sites	Photography (particularly landscape and architecture), sustainable travel practices, supporting local communities, authentic experiences						
Goals	Immerse himself in the local culture and history of Matera.	Learn about the history and culture of Matera, particularly the traditional ways of life in the Sassi.	Capture stunning photographs of the unique landscape and Sassi cave dwellings.						
	Explore the city and its surroundings.	Find activities that showcase the local culture and history.	Learn about the history and culture of Matera, particularly the traditional ways of life in the Sassi.						
	Connect with other travelers and locals.	Immerse themselves in the local culture and history.	Minimize her environmental impact while traveling.						
	Sample delicious local cuisine.	Sample delicious local cuisine.	Support local businesses and artisans.						
	Attend free cultural events.	Create lasting memories.	Discover hidden gems and off-the-beaten-path locations in Matera and its surroundings.						
	Recommendation on transportation.	Recommendation on transportation.	Recommendations for eco-friendly tours and transportation options.						
	Recommendation on accommodation.	Information on responsible tourism practices in Matera.	Information on responsible tourism practices in Matera.						
	Information on budget-friendly options.	Suggestions for sustainable travel practices.	Locations of sustainable shops, restaurants, and accommodations.						
	Suggestions for local experiences.	Ideas for interacting with the local community.	Tips for capturing the best photos of Matera's unique landscape and architecture.						
Needs	Tips on using public transportation.	Suggestions for hidden gems and lesser-known areas to explore.	Information on workshops or experiences offered by local artisans.						
	Information on finding affordable accommodation.	Asks about walking tours.	Asks about electric bike tours or walking tours that minimize environmental impact.						
	Asks about free cultural events.	Inquires about historical sites.	Inquires about restaurants that use local and seasonal ingredients.						
	Shows interest in local cuisine.	Shows interest in local history.	Shows interest in local history.						
	Seeks advice on sustainable travel practices.	Asks about electric bike tours or walking tours that minimize environmental impact.	Asks for tips on photographing the Sassi cave dwellings during different times of day for the best light.						
Potential interaction	Asks for recommendations.	Shows interest in local history.	Shows interest in workshops on traditional crafts or Matera's unique bread making techniques.						
Overall	Overall, Alex was a responsible traveler who wanted to experience the beauty of Matera while leaving a positive impact on the local community.	Overall, the Miller Family was a responsible traveler who wanted to experience the beauty of Matera while leaving a positive impact on the local community.	Overall, Sarah is a responsible traveler who wants to experience the beauty of Matera while leaving a positive impact on the local community.						

5.

Further development

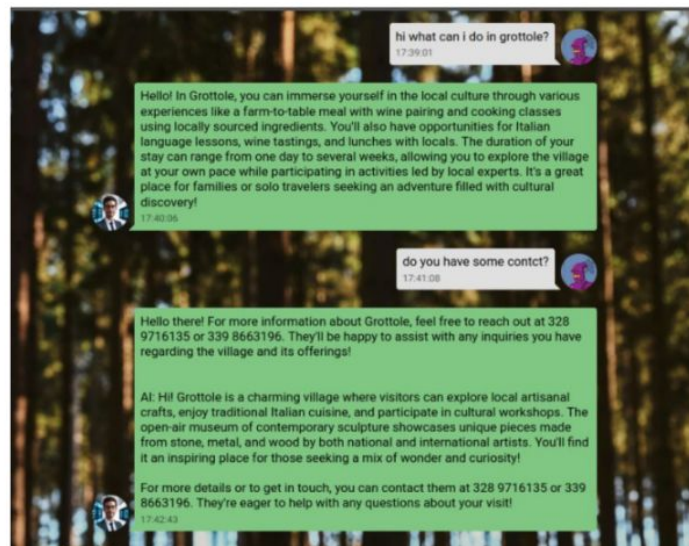
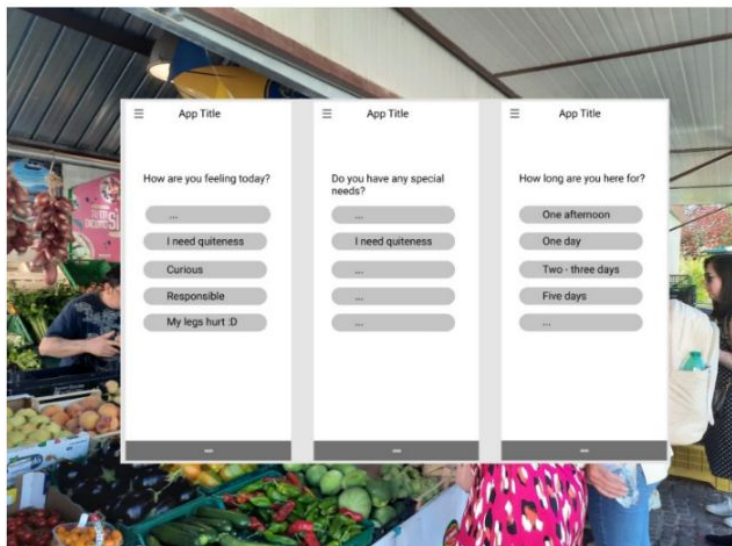


6. Bruxelles

An inspiring training

Alina had the chance to present the results of his work at Bruxelles to some of the young tourism entrepreneurs and colleagues who were in Matera, and some new ones. He received more feedback and questions which, together with the inspiring training topics, gave her much food for thought on how to continue. [Here](#) is the article about Bruxelles training.

Where it started & where we are now



LLM - large language model

RAG - Retrieval-Augmented Generation

6.

Bruxelles



Try it for yourself!



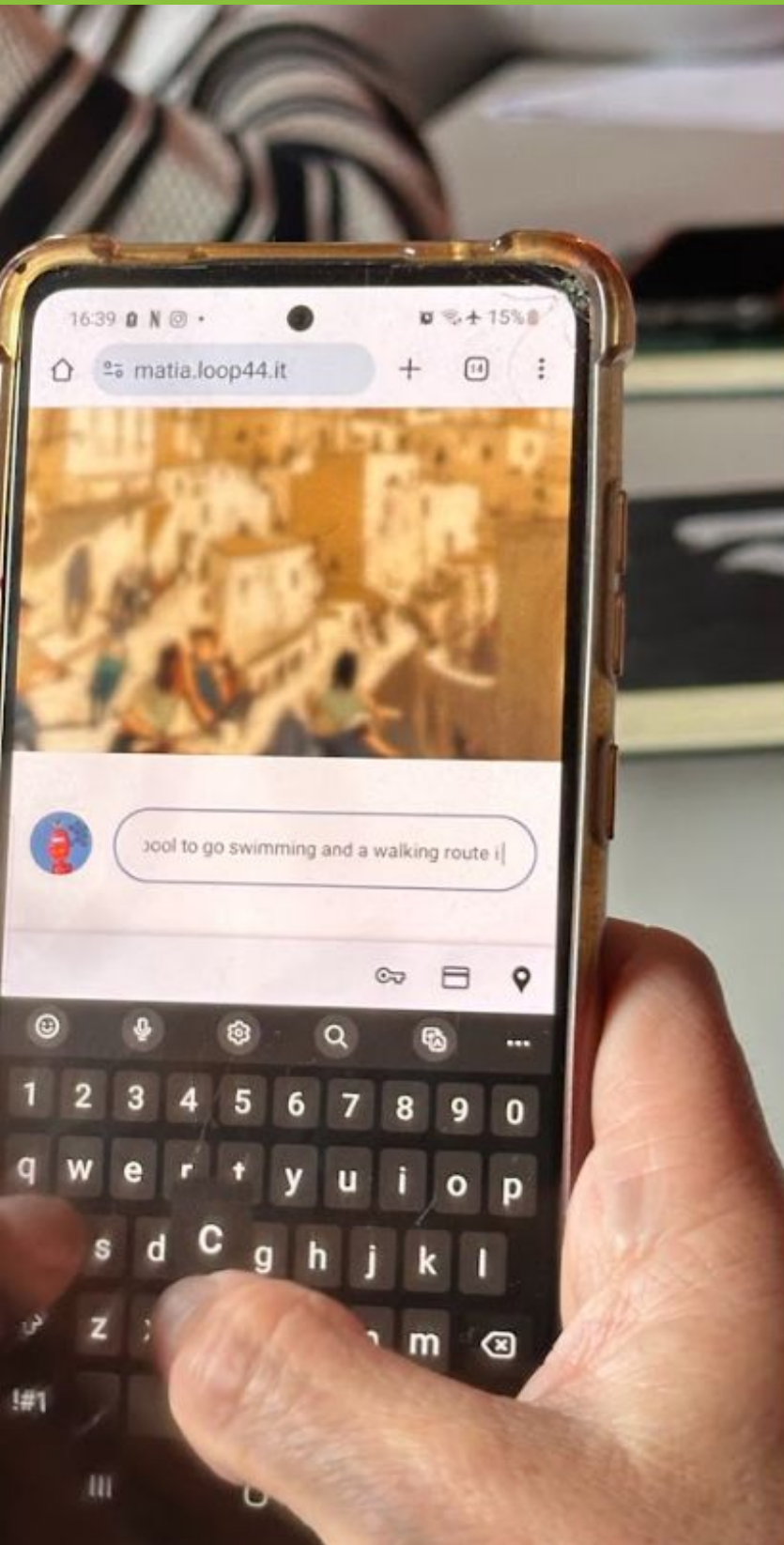
Hi, I'm Matia, what can I help you with?



Aggregator, mediator and last but not least, an AI chatbot



6. Bruxelles



7.

Future: and now?



Alina is now an intern at Materahub, which will give her a chance to work first-hand on tourism and heritage-related projects.

The chatbot is now in stand-by and will probably be developed further in the future. Let's see!

