EmpowerHer

JOB DISCOVERY OPPORTUNITIES GUIDELINES

Practical ideas and lessons from partner activities

A resource for organisations connecting migrant women with employment, training and support



EmpowerHer

A targeted job fair can create space for direct, individual conversations.

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How to use these guidelines

These guidelines turn experiences reported by EmpowerHer partners into practical options that other organisations can adapt. They are not a one-size-fits-all model: Job Discovery Opportunities can range from an individual meeting with an employer to a guided visit, a focused job fair, or a visit to an employment service. Choose the format that best fits participants' goals, local opportunities and available resources.

The central idea

Create a supported bridge between migrant women and the real people, services and places that shape access to work. The value lies not only in providing information, but in making it easier to ask questions, understand pathways, build confidence and take the next step.

At a glance

Before	During	After
Understand participants' interests; select partners and opportunities; explain the plan accessibly.	Welcome participants; support questions and conversations; connect information to individual goals.	Record learning and contacts; agree next steps; follow up on referrals, applications or introductions.

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1. What is a Job Discovery Opportunity?

A Job Discovery Opportunity is a structured, supported experience that helps migrant women explore employment-related environments, meet employers or employment professionals, and understand routes into work, training or further qualifications. It can take place in a workplace, at a job fair, at a recruitment agency, within an employment service, or through an individual or group session with relevant professionals. In EmpowerHer, partners used different formats according to local context. COMCY arranged direct matches with employers and an employment agent; APIDI accompanied women to external employment and education fairs and a recruitment agency's open-door activity; Pistes Solidaires combined individual employability support, peer-to-peer experience sharing and access to a specialised programme; OnProjects organised visits to employment services; and Wisamar co-organised a compact targeted job fair.

What can the activity achieve?

- Make employers, recruitment practices, employment services and training pathways less unfamiliar.
- Give participants a chance to ask practical questions and receive relevant information.
- Help participants recognise and communicate their strengths, experience and transferable skills.
- Build confidence and professional contacts in a supportive setting.
- Create a route to a concrete next step: a referral, follow-up meeting, an interview or internship.

Keep expectations realistic: A Job Discovery Opportunity is not automatically a job placement. Some activities lead to immediate opportunities; others build knowledge, contacts, and confidence that may help participants move towards employment.

Principles for meaningful and inclusive activities

Start with participants' goals: Ask what participants want to explore and connect opportunities to their interests, previous experience, skills, and professional aspirations.
Make access understandable: Share the purpose, date, location, transport details and format clearly.
Offer language and navigation support: Consider a mediator, interpreter, or translated materials.
Create a welcoming environment: Explain what will happen, allow time for informal conversation and make it acceptable to ask questions.
Prepare employers and hosts too: Brief hosts on the group, the activity's purpose and the need for simple language, concrete examples and inclusive communication.
Respect privacy: Participation should be voluntary. Ask before sharing personal stories, photographs or contact details, and offer alternatives to public speaking where possible (e.g., written feedback).
Plan for next steps: Before the activity ends, help participants identify useful contacts, services or actions and agree how they can follow up.

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2. Formats you can use

The formats below are drawn from activities implemented by EmpowerHer partners. They can be used separately or combined into a pathway.

Format A. Guided visit to a job, education or training fair

Best for: exploring many sectors, employers, training providers and qualification routes in one visit.

How it works: Select a relevant fair, prepare participants in advance, accompany them through the venue and help them identify stands or sessions that match their interests. Encourage them to ask questions, collect information and note useful contacts.

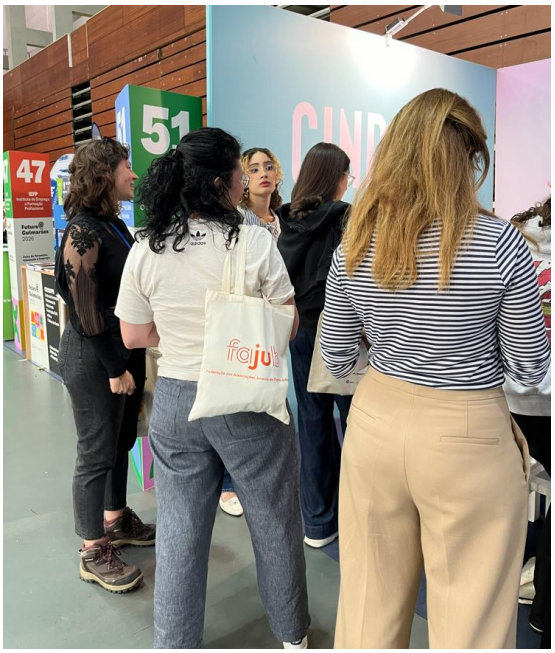
EmpowerHer example: APIDI accompanied 10 migrant and refugee women supported by Adolescere to three external events in the Braga district: Futuro@Guimarães 2026 (68 exhibitors), the Semana do Emprego in Famalicão (a recruitment-focused open-door activity at Gi Group), and Mostra Empresarial e Qualifica-te Braga'26 (more than 80 companies and organisations across approximately 120 stands).

Advantages: Broad exposure; options beyond immediate vacancies; opportunities to discover training and retraining routes; participants can explore at their own pace.

Challenges: Large venues can feel overwhelming; time is limited; language barriers and unfamiliar systems may make it difficult to identify relevant information.

Practical tips: Share a simple visit plan, agree one or two goals per participant, identify priority stands in advance, and leave time afterwards to reflect.





Exploring employment, education and training opportunities at job fairs in the Braga district, Portugal, with guidance and support from APIDI.

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Format B. A compact, targeted job fair

Best for: bringing a manageable number of employees and support organisations together for direct conversations.

How it works: Invite a carefully selected mix of employers, HR professionals, training providers and employment-support organisations. Begin with short, accessible pitches so participants understand who is present, then open the space for individual conversations.

EmpowerHer example: Wisamar and VHS Leipzig co-organised JobDate. The 2.5-hour event brought together 51 visitors with a migrant background and 13 exhibitors representing eight companies and organisations. Short pitches were followed by individual conversations at stands.

Advantages: A focused environment; easier to navigate than a large fair; visitors can receive personalised advice; exhibitors reported useful contacts and promising potential candidates.

Challenges: Recruiting exhibitors takes time; last-minute cancellations can disrupt the programme; pitches may be difficult to follow if language is complex.

Practical tips: Start outreach early, confirm attendance shortly before the event, divide tasks clearly between organisers, and brief exhibitors to use simple language and visual supports.



Wisamar's JobDate format used short exhibitor introductions followed by individual conversations.

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Format C. Individual matching or a small-group meeting with an employer

Best for: participants who would benefit from a direct conversation about a particular role, sector or vacancy.

How it works: Identify a relevant employer or employment contact and match the conversation to participants' interests. Share enough context for both sides to prepare, facilitate introductions and agree a follow-up route.

EmpowerHer example: COMCY arranged three matches: one participant spoke with an IT company and was offered an internship; an employment agent discussed logistics-sector opportunities with an individual participant and a small group; and a group met HR representatives and exchanged contact details for future vacancies.

Advantages. More personal interaction; the conversation can focus on a participant's skills and questions; a clear route to follow-up may emerge.

Challenges. Requires a willing employer and careful matching; opportunities may be limited; not every conversation will result in a vacancy or offer.

Practical tips. Keep the group small, prepare a short skills-and-interests profile with the participant's agreement, and clarify whether the meeting is exploratory, recruitment-related or linked to a specific vacancy.



Inclusion: Are we There yet event in Nicosia, Cyprus

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Format D. Visit to an employment or career-guidance service

Best for: participants who need to understand available services, eligibility, registration and routes towards work.

How it works: Arrange visits to services that offer employment guidance, training referrals, job-search support or tailored employment pathways. Ask each service to explain its role, who can access it, how to register and what happens next.

EmpowerHer example: OnProjects accompanied six migrant women to three services in Almería: Red Cross Almería, Andalucía Orienta and the City Council's ERACIS+ programme. Participants learned about available support, registered for programmes or pathways, and arranged to review possible applications.

Advantages: Makes unfamiliar services more approachable; explains practical access routes; can lead directly to registration, referrals or follow-up appointments.

Challenges: Participants may not know which service fits their needs; eligibility rules and procedures can be complex; appointments and staff availability need coordination.

Practical tips: Choose services based on participant needs, prepare questions in advance, ask hosts to explain the first step clearly, and record each participant's agreed next action.



A supported visit can help participants approach services they may not have known about or felt confident entering.

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Format E. Individual employability support and mock interviews

Best for: participants who want practical feedback on their CV, professional presentation or interview skills.

How it works. Work with a specialist organisation or HR volunteers to provide a CV review, professional-image advice, a photograph if useful, and a mock interview. Give feedback that is specific, encouraging and actionable.

EmpowerHer example. In Pau, Pistes Solidaires worked with La Cravate Solidaire to provide one participant with a professional image consultation, CV review and improvement, a professional photography, and a mock interview with two HR managers.

Advantages. Highly tailored; practical skills can be applied in future applications; participants can identify strengths and areas to improve.

Challenges. Individual support is time-consuming; specialist partners and appointments must be available; advice should reflect local recruitment practices without undermining confidence.

Practical tips. Agree with the participant's priorities first, make feedback strengths-based, and finish with two or three manageable actions rather than a long list of changes.



Individual employability support workshop organised by Pistes Solidaires and La Cravate Solidaire in Pau, France.

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Format F. Open day at a recruitment agency or employer

Best for: helping participants understand how recruiters work and how to access vacancies.

How it works: Arrange a visit to a recruitment agency or employer where participants can meet staff, see the working environment, ask about vacancies and learn how candidates are selected. Where possible, link the visit to CV preparation or interview activities.

EmpowerHer example: APIDI's group attended the opening activity of Gi Group Portugal's Semana do Emprego in Vila Nova de Famalicão. The open-door session included an introduction to the recruitment space, conversations with staff, information about jobs, and an informal coffee break.

Advantages: Direct contact with recruitment professionals; clearer understanding of how agencies connect candidates with employers; a smaller setting may make questions easier.

Challenges: The event may be time-limited; available jobs may not match every participant; follow-up opportunities should not be assumed.

Practical tips: Ask the host to explain registration, current vacancies, recruitment steps, and what participants can do after the visit.





Exploring professional opportunities and engaging directly with representatives at an employment and training fair in Portugal.

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3. Practical tools and checklists

Before the activity

☐ The aim and intended outcome are clear.
☐ Participants have helped shape the focus or understand why the opportunity may be useful.
☐ The host and participants have received clear information about the format and expectations.
☐ Venue, transport, accessibility and language support have been considered.
☐ Ensure that the format fits the participants' circumstances in terms of timing (day of the week, time and duration).

Questions participants might ask

- What kinds of roles, training or support do you offer?
- What skills or qualifications are usually needed?
- How can someone apply, register or arrange an appointment?
- What documents are useful to bring?
- What language skills are needed, and are there ways to improve them?
- What is the next step if I am interested?

After the activity

☐ Each participant has time to say what was useful and what remains unclear.
☐ Useful contact details are shared only with permission.
☐ Referrals, registrations, applications or introductions are recorded where appropriate.
☐ A follow-up date or responsible person is agreed for actions that need support.

A useful low-cost addition

Use a one-page 'My next step' card. Ask each participant to note: (1) one thing I learned, (2) one contact or service I want to follow up with, and (3) one action I will take next. Offer help to complete it if needed.

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4. Lessons from EmpowerHer partner activities

What the partner reports suggest

Direct contact can lead to tangible opportunities. COMCY's 17 June 2026 matches in Nicosia resulted in an internship offer from Artemis Intelligence, practical logistics-sector insights from an employment agent, and exchanged contacts with Alphamega HR for future opportunities.

Small and focused formats support deeper conversations. At Wisamar's 2.5-hour JobDate in Leipzig, short exhibitor pitches helped visitors decide where to go; both visitors and exhibitors valued the individual conversations and manageable event size.

Guided visits can reveal pathways beyond immediate jobs. APIDI's visits in the Braga district exposed participants to employers as well as education, vocational training, retraining and recruitment services.

Support to enter a service can be as important as information about it. In Almería, participants visited three employment services, learned how they work and signed up or registered for employment pathways. The report notes that several services had previously been unfamiliar to them.

Practical coaching and peer stories complement each other. Pistes Solidaires' individual CV and mock-interview support offered practical tools, while a participant's account of securing employment provided peer inspiration and a chance to reflect on barriers overcome.

Preparation and accessible communication matter. Wisamar identified the need for more preparation time and clearer, simpler pitches supported by visual elements. APIDI used Portuguese, English and Arabic in activity announcements.

Challenges to anticipate

- Employer participation may be difficult to secure even when many organisations are invited. Consider approaching an institutional ally, such as a municipal employment department, to help open doors.
- Large events can provide variety but may require more guidance so participants can identify the most relevant stands.
- Different language, cultural and professional backgrounds call for clear information, flexible facilitation and language support where possible.
- Eligibility criteria and limited places can restrict access to some programmes; communicate requirements early and identify alternatives where possible.
- Do not equate attendance with impact. Build in follow-up to understand whether participants accessed services, applied for opportunities or used what they learned.

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