What seemed like a fairytale start, soon turned out not that good. My team leader was extremely enthusiastic and did a great job, unfortunately, many of our fellow team members did not react further after the first email. Since the communication started rocky, I decided to create a Facebook group. Besides creating a group, I also made an overview of the time zones everyone was living at, during the whole project I could see if it was likely for someone to react or if it was in the middle of the night at their country.

With a little improvement in communication, my team leader managed to create a WhatsApp group. Nevertheless, the communication did not improve that much. I decided to approach my leader to discuss some issues directly. We both showed much effort in the group chat and noticed that another team member was also very motivated. I learned that communicating via social media platforms and groups makes it hard to talk to someone on a personal level.

My team leader asked us to deliver ten ideas each, but at first, I had a fixed mindset. I thought, how am I ever going to think of 10 ideas, I only have 2 or 3. I just started working and noticed that I was capable of way more than I ever imagined. I finished my ideas 2nd, and we started brainstorming on similar ideas. After two others turned in their ideas, we picked one, brainstormed and pivoted later on.

We worked in an online Google document, here we could all see each other’s progress. Our team leader divided the tasks, and soon I noticed that one of my teammates and I started early. We both were extremely motivated, enthusiastic, creative, and proactive. After reading her part, I thought it was excellent. Therefore, after learning that a direct approach is very nice, I complimented her in a personal text. I also let everyone know that we finished our parts and that I was able to assist someone if needed.

In the last two days before handing in our project, I saw that the others did not do their parts yet. After previous group assignments during my studies, I learned that there might be a specific reason what is holding them back. I texted all the individuals who did not hand in their part and found out that most of them did not know where to start, what to do, or how to do it. I explained it to them, showed an example and made sure they could get started. At first, I was irritated by others who did not respond, now I learned that some people just need a little push to get started.

All in all, this project was a real roller-coaster for me. Started off great → got irritated → good communication with two others → no responses from the remaining team members → getting to know everyone on a more personal level and being able to help them.

For me, the GEE project really gave insight on that there are many people out there just like me. People who want to change the world for a better cost and are not afraid to stick their neck out for it. This project also thought me to step up, communicate, and work with international people in different time zoned via digital platforms.

My advice for everyone who is going to participate in this project is not to be afraid to step up. Help others and especially enjoy the experience. How often do you get the chance to make new international friends with the same interest (creating a better world)? Enjoy it!