

Living Lab Environments

Innovation received via the European Prize for Innovation in Public Administration

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Organisation: Prizztech Ltd

Country: Finland

Level of government: Regional/State government

Sector: General public services, Health

Type: Communication, Methods

Launched in: 2009

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

Living Lab offers a solution to the challenge of finding new and cost-efficient ways of producing services for an ageing population in the functional Public-Private-People partnership. Living Lab is a new, innovative structure which combines different stakeholders in order to test and develop user-driven products for elderly people and elderly care.

Citizens (elderly people, relatives and elderly care professionals) have participated actively in the product development and usability testing processes. The testing of welfare technologies took place in real life contexts, i.e. in elderly people's homes.

The Living Lab Model has provided information of the latest technology solutions for public health care to support procurement, improved nursing processes and the technological skills of elderly care personnel, increased cooperation between elderly people, relatives and nursing personnel and supported home care.

It has also improved business opportunities, developed user-driven innovations and facilitated cooperation between municipalities, business and other stakeholders.

Presentation video of the Living Lab Model

Why the innovation was developed

The Living Lab Model was created on the needs of the social and health services of the City of Pori. The City of Pori has proactively searched for new practices and technology for elderly care. Finland is one of the fastest ageing nations in Europe, and at the same time, a great number of the people working in social and health care services are retiring. One objective of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland is to support elderly people to live independently at home. Living Lab and welfare technology services offer one solution for this challenge.

Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Improve effectiveness, Improve service quality, Improve social equity, Improve user satisfaction

- Create possibilities for municipalities and companies to test welfare technology before procurement.
 - Enhance cooperation between public sector and business.
 - Enable elderly people, relatives and elderly care professionals to impact the products and services designed for them.
 - Support elderly people to live longer at home.
 - Create opportunities for companies to develop user-driven welfare technology for elderly people and elderly care.
 - Increase business opportunities for companies.
 - Share good practices.
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Main beneficiaries

Elderly people, Government bodies, Government staff

- Municipalities (9).
 - Citizens: elderly care professionals, elderly people and relatives (270).
 - Welfare technology suppliers (14).
 - Third sector (2)..
 - Universities (3)
 - Regional developers (2).
 - Local, national and international networks.
 - Funders (2).
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Existing similar practices

TUPA – Support and wellbeing for living at home

In the private sector, civil society or elsewhere

South Ostrobothnia Health Technology Development Centre (EPTEK)

TUPA is an ERDF-funded project which aims at strengthening the operation of multidimensional homecare support groups created within the project “Wellbeing Living Lab.” These support groups aim to find well-being technology and service-based solutions to the challenges of elderly people living at home. The aim of the groups is to enable elderly people to live independently at home for as long as possible.

<http://www.eptek.fi/index.php?page=tupa-english>

Active Ageing in Europe - A collaboration between organisations from Austria, the Netherlands and the UK

In the private sector, civil society or elsewhere

Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK)

The objective of the project is to exchange good practices and models on active and healthy aging on European level. The aim is to disseminate and take them into use in Tampere Region.

Key themes: Active ageing and preventive operations models; utilisation of culture, art and music in preventive senior services; community spirit and participation of elderly; communal living for seniors; possibilities of technology and social innovations in active ageing; Living Lab operations model.

<http://activeageing.tamk.fi/>

Results

Efficiency

- Testing of technology before procurement has prevented unproductive investments.
 - New practices.
 - Launching new products quickly on the market.
 - Cost-efficient model to develop technology.
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Effectiveness

- Effective model for testing environments to receive valuable information and experiences about the newest technology solutions on the market.
 - Improved technological skills of elderly care professionals.
 - Feedback for companies from real-users → concrete development ideas.
 - Elderly care professionals' expertise in product development.
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Service quality

Accessibility:

Information and experiences about technology

Responsiveness:

- The model has empowered all the stakeholders to test, develop and re-design technology solutions for elderly people and elderly care.
- Increased the cooperation between different stakeholders.

Reliability:

3-6 month pilots/technology in a real-life context provided excellent information about usability.

User satisfaction

Users are more motivated to use technology solutions when they have had the opportunity to influence the products to match their needs.

Development

Design

The idea of the Living Lab was created with the cooperation of the social and health services of the City of Pori, based on their needs to find more efficient models for elderly care. Prizztech Ltd has also wanted to provide a new product development environment for welfare technology companies.

The purpose has been to test and develop technological solutions in order to provide a better quality of life and dignity for elderly people as well as improving safety, preventing loneliness and supporting elderly people to live at home.

Testing

A model for testing welfare technology solutions was created at the beginning of the project: The Living Lab on Wellbeing Services and Technology. The model and procedures have been developed further during the projects based on stakeholders' feedback as well as the perceptions and experiences of the projects' employees.

Implementation

Tools used:

Special interest groups have been brought together to design and implement the Living Lab Model.

Resources used:

Living Lab - User-driven wellbeing in Satakunta (1 April 2012 - 30 September 2014):

- Budget: EUR 197 270.
- Funded by: The Regional Council of Satakunta (ERDF) and municipalities of the Pori region.

The Living Lab on Wellbeing Services and Technology (1 December 2009 - 30 April 2012):

- Partners: Pori Regional Development Agency Ltd (from 1 April 2012, Prizztech Ltd), South-Ostrobothnia Health Technological Development Centre and Tampere University of Applied Sciences.
 - Regions: Satakunta, Tampere and South-Ostrobothnia.
 - Total budget: EUR 530 715.
 - Budget in the Pori region: EUR 200 000.
 - Funded by: The Regional Council of Satakunta (ERDF) and municipalities of the regions.
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Challenges and solutions

There have been some challenges with welfare technology suppliers. It is important to make clear rules and contracts with welfare technology companies and the testing environments

Partnerships

Elderly care professionals

Other

The elderly care professionals have participated actively in the usability testing processes, product development and service design.

City of Pori

Other Public Sector

The partnership between Prizztech Ltd and the City of Pori has enabled the creation of a new innovation platform for developing user-driven technology.

Regions in Finland (Satakunta, South-Ostrobothnia and Tampere)

Other Public Sector

There have been three independent projects (one in every region) focusing on a different perspective under the same theme. As a result of this innovative cooperation, three models for testing and developing welfare technology were created. The cooperation enabled dissemination of the experiences and good practices between the partners.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

In the Living Lab, the public sector has offered a product development platform for welfare technology companies. The Living Lab has empowered users as developers and enhanced multidimensional cooperation between various stakeholders. This cooperation (Public-Private-People) has enabled the user-driven and needs-driven development of welfare technology innovations for elderly care.

The Living Lab cooperation and the testing process have been considered valuable and successful for all the stakeholders. The Living Lab has improved the public sector's knowledge of welfare technology and increased efficiency through product testing processes before procurement. At the same time, the private sector's understanding of elderly care has increased and the user-driven product development has enhanced the competitiveness of welfare technology suppliers. Multidimensional cooperation produces better technology solutions for elderly people and elderly care.

Conditions for success

The Living Lab Model requires an active network of different stakeholders. Participation in the Living Lab has been made easy and effortless for public sector and welfare technology suppliers.

The testing of welfare technology is systematic and professional. The Living Lab requires a coordinator who is responsible for the whole testing process including negotiations, contracts, plans, questionnaires for all the target groups, coordination of technology testing, meetings, documentation, feedback analysis, reports and communication etc.

Other information

The Living Lab on Wellbeing Services and Technology project was nominated as a finalist in the RegioStars 2013 Competition in the category of INCLUSIVE GROWTH: Social innovation: creative responses to societal challenges. The RegioStars Competition is organised annually by the European Commission. In this competition the European Commission seeks the most innovative projects and best practices from the European Union.

Examples of tested and developed technology solutions:

- GPS safety solution and bracelet.
- Home care ERP and mobile applications for logging customer visits.
- Video phone services.
- Telehealth services.
- A service that motivates elderly people to take physical exercise.
- A cooker safety solution.
- A program to convert mobile phones into safety equipment.
- Physical testing advice.
- A nurse alarm system.