

COMMUNITY BASED LIVING LABS TO ENHANCE SMES INNOVATION IN EUROPE

CO-LLABS

Scope

The over-all objective of the CO-LLABS Thematic Network is to achieve a European-wide adoption of ICT-based Living Lab services and practices to allow SMEs to improve their innovation capabilities and processes and become part of “open innovation” environments. Thus, CO-LLABS addresses Work Programme Objective 4.1b “to improve the capacity of businesses and in particular SMEs to benefit from ICT-based innovations in their products and services”.

To that end the CO-LLABS Thematic Network brings together a selection of Europe’s most advanced Living Labs on the one hand and regional SME-innovation oriented organisations on the other to exchange practices of Living Lab support services, and identify and develop specific pilots in domains such as **e-health, energy, media, e-business** and **e-inclusion**. The work is grounded in thorough understanding of current Living Labs practices and experiences and strengthened by creating better insight in successful business models of future SME-oriented Living Labs. The CO-LLABS Thematic Network supports interaction with policy makers at regional, national and European level to establish consensus on the Living Labs approach as a cornerstone of European innovation policies, in particular at the regional and cross-regional level.

The underlying motivation is that Living Labs provide services to SMEs that would otherwise not be available to them. Focus is on how SMEs and their business partners can be involved in Living Labs in the best way in order to collaborate in open innovation, and on sharing experience among Living Labs initiatives and beyond as regards SME involvement in co-creation of Living Labs practices.

Technical and innovation approach

The CO-LLABS Thematic Network acts as knowledge network and equally as innovation development network. Its over-all approach is to form a core of advanced **European Living Labs, Research Organisations** and **Innovation Agencies**, that have gained already strong experience in SME-oriented innovation, are ready to take next steps to introduce and implement the Living Labs approach, and also ready to

Contract number

ICT PSP/2007/1 – 224797

Type of project

Competitiveness and Innovation
Framework Programme

ICT Policy Support Programme

Project coordinator

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Project website

<http://www.ami-communities.eu/wiki/CO-LLABS>

Community contribution to the project

483,000 Euro

Project start date

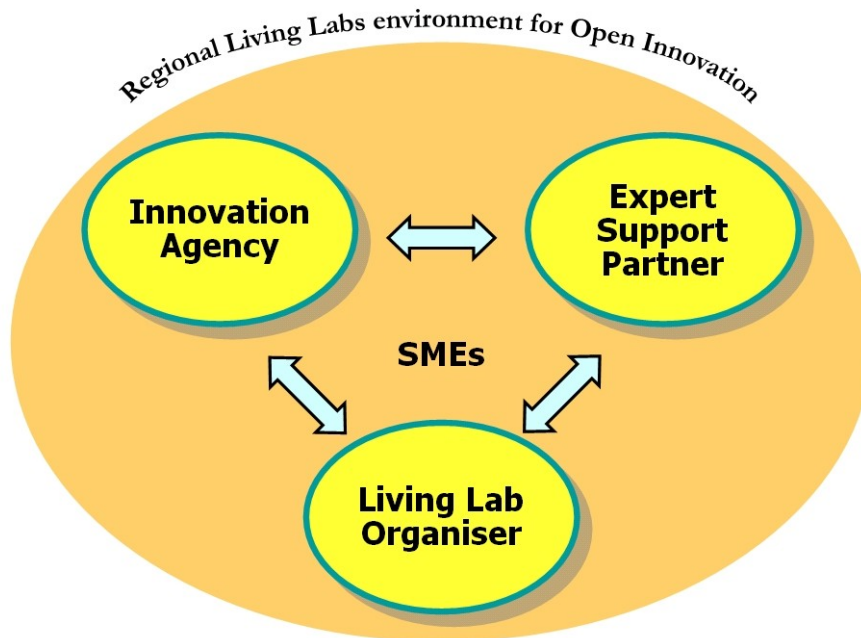
1 Apr 2008

(duration: 28 months)



transfer and share their experiences regarding the use of Living Labs services for new pilots development. To this core, a large set of other Living Labs (in earlier stages of development) will be added through our collaboration with the **European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL)** activity and our collaboration established with European innovation initiatives at regional level to support SMEs in ICT-based innovation.

The Thematic Network will focus on experience sharing in terms of user acceptance of innovative solutions provided by Living Labs, experience research centres and other similar initiatives. The concept of *user experience* is central, and Living Labs are considered as the key



instrument to implement open innovation business models tailored to SME needs and creating user experience. In doing so, the Thematic Network will actively pursue the networking character and network effects of Living Labs Communities by sharing experiences and developing common approaches and practices.

Identifying and assessing best practices is in fact one of the major objectives of the CO-LLABS project. A specific activity line has been dedicated to Best practices focusing on how Living Labs and Experience Research services are

supporting SMEs innovation. Other foreseen activities and outcomes in the CO-LLABS Thematic Network include the following:

- Pilots development of SME-oriented Living Lab initiatives in domains of e-business, e-inclusion, e-health and others, and stimulating the collaboration among Living Labs, innovation agencies and business stakeholders to develop these pilots
- Living Labs business models and governance structures development for networks of Living Labs supporting SME innovation
- Network mobilisation, exploitation and dissemination to create an active community stimulating SMEs for open innovation and exchange experience in how to use the Living Labs concept for SME innovation
- Policy initiative development to stimulate Living Labs, Innovation Agencies and Research Organisations to work with SMEs on open innovation
- Elaboration of a joint action plan to establish self-sustainable pilots and ensure viability of the CO-LLABS network after its formal project duration.

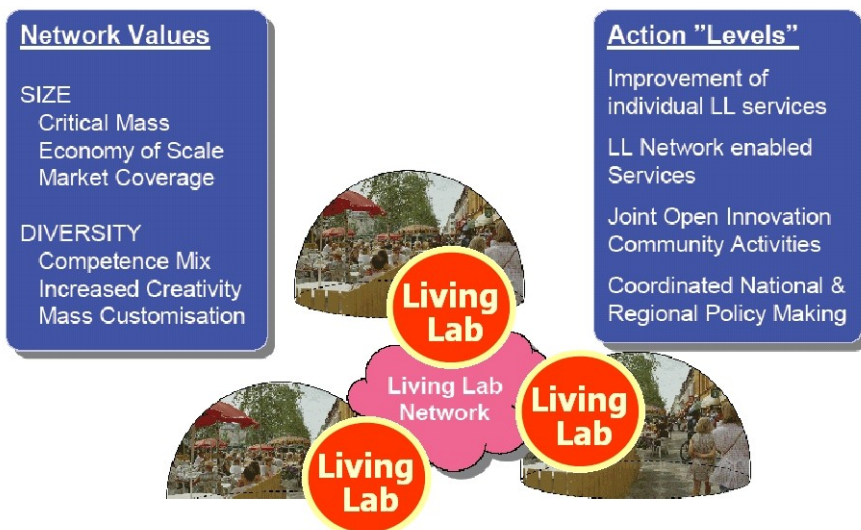
Target users and benefits

Expected impacts of the CO-LLABS project can be identified at the level of individual Living Labs and at the level of the Network of Living Labs operating in a co-ordinated and synergic fashion. Major expected impacts of the Thematic Network of Living Labs are the following:

- The CO-LLABS Thematic Network results will enable public authorities and major stakeholders in the EU to implement Living Labs systems learning from Best practices,, thereby providing an innovation platform to European Industry, and generating economy of scale for Living Lab services
- Improved competitiveness of European businesses and particular SMEs by providing them the tools to access Living Labs innovation services at a regional and European scale

- Further development of the capabilities of Living Labs to create markets for innovative ICT solutions and services for supporting processes of Open Innovation
- Identification of large scale pilots demonstrating the Living Lab approach and the benefits of synergy and scalability offered by the European Network of Living Labs for SME innovation.

CO-LLABS addresses the needs of SMEs through the formation of regional clusters of Living Labs, SME-oriented Innovation Agencies and research organisations. The SME-oriented Innovation Agencies will establish - and be responsible for - the relation with SMEs in their region.



CO-LLABS does not work directly with individual SMEs, but Innovation Agencies and also Living Labs will do so. COLLABS will not itself establish Living Labs, it investigates how local and regional partners can work together in order to improve the regional innovation system and support SMEs. In

doing so, SMEs will benefit from the project in multiple ways, in particular:

- Pilots will be developed to initiate and validate open innovation activities and SMEs can participate to the development of these pilots. Pilots will demonstrate strategies on how SMEs can participate in Living Labs
- Policy initiatives will be developed to stimulate Living Labs, Innovation Agencies and Research Organizations to work together with SMEs on open innovation
- Business models will be explored governing collaboration between Living Labs, SMEs and research organizations. This will benefit the provision of services to SMEs by Living Labs in an indirect way

The significant Living Labs movement which has been growing in the last years since the launch of the European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL) by the Finnish Presidency, on November 20, 2006, provides a favourable context for achieving the expected impacts. ENoLL is growing now with the Third Wave to add new members and sources of co-creative innovation in addition to the 51 Living Labs which have already joined the European Network.

The momentum is significant and the CO-LLABS network results can sustain the expectations by identifying and preparing for large scale pilots demonstrating the Living Lab approach and the synergy, scalability offered by the European network. Pilot cases have a strong potential of actually involving large number of users and also some distinct potential for SMEs, as co-creators, providers of innovative solutions and as main beneficiaries of the innovation.

Project partners



Organisation name	Country
Associazione ESoCE Net (<i>co-ordinator</i>)	IT
BIC Lazio S.p.A.	IT
Bremer Institut für Produktion und Logistik GmbH	DE
Mobile Technology Research Center, University of Bremen	DE
Fundació i2CAT, Internet i Innovació Digital a Catalunya	ES
Universitat Ramon Llull Fundació Privada	ES
Luleaa Tekniska Universitet, CDT	SE
Fachhochschule Vorarlberg GmbH	AT
Wirtschafts-Standort Vorarlberg GmbH	AT
Stichting Living Lab	NL
Stichting Center for Technology and Innovation Management	NL
Interdisciplinair Instituut voor Breedbandtechnologie, VZW	BE
Helsingin Kauppakorkeakoulu, CKIR	FI
Art and Design City Helsinki Ltd.	FI
Univerza v Mariboru	SI
INTELI - Inteligência em Inovação	PT
Alfamicro – Sistema de Computadores, Lda	PT
University of Szeged	HU
Wirelessinfo	CZ
Silicon Sentier	FR

Support Partners: Frascati Living Lab, ESRIN-ESA, BIG Bremen, CIDEM, Botnia Living Lab, VINNOVA, Living Lab Vorarlberg, Municipality of Leiden, IBBT iLAB.O, SITRA Helsinki City, Forum Virium, eLiving Lab, ICT Technology Network, RENER Living Lab, Rural Living Lab, Wirelessinfo Living Lab have contributed to the CO-LLABS proposal and expressed their support for the project.

Join the Support Partners' team: Copenhagen Living Lab, Lahti Living Lab, Laurea LL Network, LEVIER, VDC, Creative Knowledge Centre Living Lab, ITL, TLL Sicily, ECO LivingLab, Living Labs Minho, Slovenian Automotive, Zaragoza Living Lab, Manchester EastServe, Digital Lifestyles Centre, TRAIL, the Greek Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and other organisations have also recently expressed their support in favor of the CO-LLABS initiative.

You too can support CO-LLABS: the Letter of Intent is available at the AMI@Work on-line Communities web-site (www.ami-communities.eu)

<http://www.ami-communities.eu/bscw/bscw.cgi/d360563/CO-LLABS%20supporting%20letter%20of%20intent.doc>