

CONSORZIO INTERUNIVERSITARIO PER L'OTTIMIZZAZIONE E LA RICERCA OPERATIVA

Project coordinator, It will coordinate WP3 - Pilot educational programmes monitoring pilots and it will organize a pilot educational programme in Italy relying on its network of affiliated universities.

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LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

Leader of WP2 - Competences portfolio .It will organize a pilot educational programme and will contribute to the exchange and evaluation of experiences.

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RE:LAB S.R.L.

Leader of dissemination and exploitation WPs. It will contribute to the design and evaluation of pilots and provide e-learning facilities for the learning experiences to be carried out.

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CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Responsible of WP4 - Awards and impact multiplication . It will organize a pilot educational programme and will contribute to the exchange and evaluation of experiences.

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INNOVATE4FUTURE

Leader of WP1 State of the art and WP5 Quality plan. It will formulate a template for describing good practices and coordinate the gathering of good practices and initiatives.

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REGGIO CHILDREN S.R.L.

It will provide feedback on the Device competences portfolio, given its expertise in research training and educational project related to children well-being. It will organize a pilot training programme and will contribute to the exchange and evaluation of experiences.

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MONASH UNIVERSITY

Leader of a specific task on DEVICE transferability, allowing the consortium to better appreciate which results could be transferable outside Europe and under which conditions.

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DEsign for VULNERABLE: Generations. Children and Elderly

Contacts

Project coordinator

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About

The project aspires to bridge traditional industrial design programmes with ergonomics, usability concepts and user experience approaches with a specific focus on vulnerable generations. It intends to address the need to modernize and develop educational programmes with a specific focus on vulnerable generations and, ultimately, to become a milestone towards the modernization of design education.

Scenario

European population is ageing quickly, lifestyle is consequently changing in compliance with the specific needs connected to elderly people in order to maintain their wellbeing as long as possible. As a consequence, the social cost for health assistance is constantly increasing and the observation of the decrease of physical parameters, as well as of functional limitations, becomes then a binding element for designers who are requested to consider the specific needs of this wide part of society in order to create products that are well accepted, comfortable and safe to use.

On the other hand, another category of vulnerable end users that seems to raise little consideration among designers is emerging: children. Designers are requested to consider the emotional and cognitive involvement of the end user during the design process of a new product in a way introduce new products that meet changing consumer needs and wishes. User-centered design, ergonomics, psychology become unavoidable elements of this process.

The aim of the DEVICE project is at a first stage to describe the state of the art with regard to such vulnerable users and then to collect information, experiences and ideas from professionals, professors and experts in the field of design to evaluate the impact of user centered design on their lives and to create specific courses for designers.

With regard to elderly people, recent studies demonstrated that it is possible to keep a good quality of life despite aging and health impairments if a person is surrounded by a user-friendly, safe and comfortable environment, especially at home. On the other hand, steps forward shall be made to address the consideration of designers toward children as end users with a particular focus dedicated to toy design, thanks to their pedagogic role.

Project overview

DEVICE is an Erasmus Multilateral Projects funded by the European Commission within the Lifelong Learning Program.

DEVICE was launched on the 1st of October 2011 in response to a need recognized by the European Commission to help companies and academic research centres to focus on vulnerable generations from hardware to software, usability and user-centred design.

Objectives

- To analyse and study the current status of research and innovative practices on design for vulnerable generations and methodologies for involving children and elderly people in product design
- On this basis, to elaborate a competencies portfolio and educational programmes aimed at training students and employees in enterprises in designing and developing human-centred complex products that integrate advanced technological innovations for vulnerable generations
- To deliver pilot educational programmes on design for vulnerable generations
- To multiply impact through a vulnerable generation compliant award and a searchable database accessible online aimed at easing knowledge management
- To analyse transferability of results obtained towards and from different target groups (e.g. disabled people) and different geographic contexts (e.g. USA and other developed countries)
- To identify sustainability pathways aimed at fostering university-enterprise collaboration on concrete design and innovation projects

Expected results

- A report on the current status of research and innovative practices on design for vulnerable generations
- A competences portfolio and educational programme
- A report on the evaluation of pilot seminars
- A Vulnerable generation compliant award
- A searchable database accessible online
- A transferability and sustainability report

Project structure

- **Wp1:** State of the art has the aim to collect research results and innovative practices on design for vulnerable generations and methodologies for involving children and elderly subjects in product design, defining research gaps and educational priorities.
- **Wp2:** Competences portfolio aims at defining a portfolio of competences for products design for vulnerable generation. A training need analysis involving universities and enterprises belonging to the consortium, as well as students and professionals in design and related fields will be performed.
- **Wp3:** Pilot educational programmes will develop Educational programmes and training material on design for vulnerable generations dedicated to students and professionals and will organize Pilot seminars and training sessions in enterprises and universities.
- **Wp4:** Awards and impact multiplication aims to organize and present the "Vulnerable generation compliant award" and facilitate Knowledge Management of research results.
- **Wp5:** Quality plan will built a quality plan to continuously evaluate the project results, their quality and the correspondence between these results and the actual users needs and requirements.
- **Wp6:** Exploitation and sustainability will define a strategy to exploit in a sustainable way the results of DEVICE.
- **Wp7:** Dissemination will elaborate and implement an integrated dissemination plan focused at specific target groups through selected communication channels.
- **Wp8:** Project Management aims at ensuring project coordination between partners and for the liaison with the EC and the Device partners.

