



<p>Vision and Aims</p>	<p>The Active and Assisted Living (AAL) Programme, is jointly undertaken by 21 participating countries and the Commission through a public-public partnership (Article 185 TFEU initiative), leveraging national, regional and Horizon 2020 funding, The programme aims at enhancing the quality of life of older people and strengthening the industrial base in Europe through the development of innovative ICT-based products, services, and systems that meet the needs of our ageing society.. AAL supports collaborative research projects on innovative ICT-enhanced services for ageing well.</p> <p>The aim of AAL2Business is to increase the number of successful AAL-funded projects in terms of market uptake by ensuring tailored and customised commercialisation and market-related support (through a mix of training, coaching and mentoring) to AAL-funded participants.</p>
<p>Target Audience</p>	<p>Any organisation being part of a consortium running an AAL-funded project, such as research organisations, SMEs, care organisations, public sector service organizers, municipalities, social security systems, insurance companies, housing corporations, etc.</p>
<p>Key Features</p>	<p>Our approach has been based on the Lean Startup methodology and philosophy for developing solutions that best fit/solve market (explicit or latent) needs/problems. This approach aims to shorten solution (product, services, whatever) development cycles and rapidly discover if a proposed business model is viable. This is achieved by adopting a combination of business-hypothesis-driven experimentation, iterative product releases, and validated learning.</p> <p>The use of the Lean Startup approach facilitates the definition of business models for AAL early-stage projects and the preparation of AAL growth-stage projects to access investors, partners, and relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>According to this approach, when working on the business model, the key point is to start from the problem and not from the solution. New initiatives (including spin-offs) often fail because their offer (a product, a service, a license) is not designed for the intended customers. Every customer has a problem, and every problem has a solution but the other way round is not true: not every solution has a problem, and not every problem has a customer.</p>

The service offer included:

- Lean Startup Academy (LSA),
- Go-To-Market Launchpad (GtML);
- Thematic online courses.

The Lean Startup Academy (LSA) was a 3-month course that provided participants in AAL projects with a chance to increase their commercial traction and further their market success. AAL Teams were guided by a business coach to identify their target market, use the best channels to reach them, choose a fitting value proposition and validate their business model by checking their assumptions against the market. The goal here is to develop a goal-oriented and well-planned “go to market” approach for the exploitation and dissemination of key results and solutions. The Lean Startup Academy targets **AAL projects at their early stage** (projects that just started or at the mid-term of their implementation). The course was made up of 3 workshops with individual online coaching sessions between the workshops. The main tools used during the coaching activities were:

- The Lean Canvas, that helps people describe, analyse, design and develop business models more systematically. The Lean Canvas suits research projects and start-ups particularly well and is essentially based on problems, customers, and the connection between them. The Lean Canvas is a conceptual framework that represents an exploitation opportunity in nine boxes, depicting the details of customers, competition, Unique Value Proposition, solution, unfair advantages, channels, demand creation, revenue models, resources, activities, and cost structure.
- The Value Proposition Canvas, that helps in defining the value proposition, namely the value and benefits deriving from the use of the novel solution, and in understanding target customers to avoid one of the most common mistakes when developing an innovation: building something that nobody wants.
- The exploitation roadmap, that helps the consortium to identify and plan activities to be performed after the end of the project, by focusing on the key components of a “business plan” and preparing a detailed roadmap for the implementation of the first steps planned. Once carefully examined and validated all key aspects of their business (through the Lean and Value Proposition Canvases), partners are able to prioritize the next steps for the implementation of the business plan [securing resources, creation of the most appropriate vehicle (start-up, joint venture, etc.), accessing to funds/finance, etc.].
- A case study, that has been introduced when courses were delivered online due to the Coronavirus pandemic. In order to be effective in online service delivery, an approach based on the case study has been introduced with the participants split into different sub-rooms to enable them to familiarise themselves with the canvas and collaborate with each other. The case study was built on the Austrian company Cogvis specialized in 3D smart sensor technology and artificial intelligence for the health and care sector with application modules for fall detection and prevention, safety, and dementia.

	<p>The <u>Go-to-Market Launchpad (GtML)</u> was a 3-months course aimed to support growth stage AAL-funded projects with a more mature or sound commercialization strategy, generally at the end of their implementation or already concluded, through dedicated training and coaching on how to present a business value proposition in a clear and effective way and being able to catch the attention of different typologies of investors (business angels, crowdfunding platforms, etc.).</p> <p>2 main paths were available for the participants: the first one leading to the pitching event where the outcome is a presentation, a pitch deck, and projects will be supported by a coach to create an effective presentation, to be presented in front of a group of investors; the second one leading to the crowdfunding campaign, where the final outcome is the definition of a crowdfunding campaign, that then can be launched on different crowdfunding platforms.</p> <p>The main tools used during the coaching activities were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The pitch deck</u>, a 3-5-minute presentation aimed at explaining the potential of a business idea and catching the attention of different typologies of investors (business angels, crowdfunding platforms, etc.) during a pitching event. • <u>The Crowdfunding Masterplan</u>, which defines the project scope, identifies target groups and best practices, and crucial elements for the story, to be used in a crowdfunding campaign. <p><u>Thematic online courses</u> were short webinars aimed at building capacities of AAL teams not involved in the Lean Startup Academy and the Go-to-Market Launchpad and complement coaching sessions for those involved in the Academy and the Launchpad. Each round was made up of 7 different webinars corresponding to each of the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lean Canvas • How to craft a compelling unique value proposition • Early-stage investors (who they are and what they are looking for) • Basics of IPR and the unfair advantage • Crowdfunding – Involving the crowd to finance your innovation • Advanced IPR (negotiation, IP transfer, license agreements) • How to pitch to investors (tools and tips).
<p>Achievements & Learnings</p>	<p>With regard to the LSA, 7 rounds were delivered and 58 projects, represented by 86 organisations, have accessed this service. Out of 86, 17 were end-user organisations, 50 were SMEs, and 19 were research organisations.</p> <p>With regard to the GtML, 5 rounds were delivered and 21 projects, represented by 32 organisations, have accessed this service. Out of 32, 5 were end-user organisations, 23 were SMEs, and 4 were research organisations.</p> <p>With regard to the webinars, 3 rounds have been delivered and 430 people have accessed this service.</p> <p>With regard to the GtML, following a survey with 15 projects which attended the first 4 rounds, 5 projects reported the following impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One project closed a license agreement; • One project raised a 100K loan from the innovation hub of Paribas

	<p>Fortis;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One project got the interest of the French Minister of Education and got awarded by the francophone Academy of Telemedicine and E-health; • One project got a grant from the Integration Department of the Flemish Government in Belgium; • One project got the interest of an Italian Business Angel Network and was selected for a pitch event. <p>The main learnings from the initiative are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lean approach proved to be very effective because participants tended to focus more on technological aspects rather than spending time to better understand what customers really want. • With regard to the GtML, the pitch events highlighted that, even though the market and investment readiness of some projects were poor, well-structured business coaching in how to pitch can make a difference in terms of the quality of the pitch deck and the effectiveness of the presentation. • In the LSA delivered online, the approach based on the case study and the breakout rooms proved to be effective. Splitting up the projects into two groups allowed the contractor to save time to be dedicated to the group exercise and, at the same time, to create a cosier environment that made the debate easier. Besides, participants in each sub-group were encouraged to interact with their peers and work all together on the same case supported by the coach. In this way, we managed to establish a more stimulating and interactive online training session.
Launch Date & Duration	Launch date: 1 st July 2019 – 31st Decemcer 2022;
Partners/Sponsors	APRE
Further Information	http://www.aal-europe.eu/aal2business-toolkit-has-been-published/ and toolkit can be downloaded via: http://www.aal-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Toolkit-AAL2BUSINESS.pdf
Contact	Marco Franchin, META Group; m.franchin@meta-group.com ; Mailbox: Av. des Arts 6, 1210 Saint-Josse-ten-Noode, Brussels, 1000