



Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) Joint Programme

Call for Proposals 2013 AAL-2013-6

ICT-based Solutions for Supporting Occupation in Life of Older Adults

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Call 6 for Proposals to the Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme (AAL JP)

The AAL Joint Programme will launch its Sixth Call for Proposals with the topic "**ICT-based Solutions for Supporting Occupation in Life of Older Adults**".

Focus of the Call

Call 6 aims at the development of ICT-based solutions which enable older adults to continue managing their occupation – at work in an office, a factory or any working environment; in a first or subsequent career, in paid or voluntary occupation including local social activities – while preserving health and motivation to remain active.

Occupation in the context of this Call 6 is defined as paid and unpaid activity that results in benefit for the community, society and economy. The AAL Joint Programme is looking for ICT solutions to promote, enhance and sustain:

- paid activity (including but not exclusive to professional, entrepreneurial/small business and self-employment)
- unpaid activity (e.g. volunteering, knowledge sharing, counselling).

The AAL Joint Programme aims at innovative and ICT-based solutions delivered through applied research and development activities, which are financially sustainable and underpinned by a credible business case at proposal submission stage¹. Projects are expected to target market needs and demands. Find more information on the topical areas which are in the scope of the present Call 6 in the chapter entitled "Description".

Introduction

The aim of the AAL Joint Programme is to provide innovative ICT-based solutions including **products, systems or services** to enhance older adults' quality of life and to strengthen the industrial base in Europe. The main goal is improving the autonomy, participation in social life, skills, and employability of older adults. Projects funded under the AAL Joint Programme shall address identified wishes and needs of the end-users², and shall be transnational, collaborative and cost-shared between private and public funding.

¹ For more information see the chapter entitled "Framework for 'Business Model Development' under the AAL Joint Programme" in the Guide for Applicants.

² For more information see the chapters entitled "Framework for 'End-user Involvement' under the AAL Joint Programme" and "Guideline for Ethical Considerations in Projects Co-funded by the Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme" in the Guide for Applicants.

AAL projects should aim at introducing their solution to the market maximum 2-3 years after finalisation of the project.

The AAL JP is a common funding activity of 22 Partner States with the financial support of the European Commission, based on article 185 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Therefore, project proposals submitted for funding to the AAL JP should have a European dimension (i.e. the proposed project cannot be accomplished in equal quality on an individual national level) and solutions shall be adaptable across Europe. As cultural, organisational, and market diversity are important for the uptake of ICT-solutions, proposals are encouraged to take these factors into account and include them in their piloting activities. Funding contracts of individual project partners will be concluded with the relevant national funding authority.

Previous Calls in the AAL JP focused on the following topics: Call 1 asked for proposals related to “management of chronic health conditions”, while the focus in Call 2 was ICT-based solutions advancing “social interaction of elderly people”. Call 3 focused on “ICT-based Solutions for Advancement of Older Persons’ Independence and Participation in the “Self-serve Society”. Call 4 asked for proposals focused on “ICT-based Solutions for Advancement of Older Persons’ Mobility”. Call 5 aimed at “ICT-based Solutions for (Self-) Management of Daily Life Activities of Older Adults at Home”, which encompassed important dimensions of the broad topic of Home Care. For more information about previous calls cf. www.aal-europe.eu/calls. Main topics of these calls are not addressed in Call 6.

Rationale

Today’s older adults have a positive self-image and bright expectations for their future. Some would like to continue working³, yet with greater room for leisure time; some intend to increase their voluntary engagement⁴, while others wish to change their field of activity and take up a completely new profession or career. Yet, in many cases, the active older adult is still confronted with a “deficit model of age” that – often unsubstantiated – assumes that occupational efficiency and general learning ability decline with age. This implies that older adults are less innovative, less productive and less able to work under pressure than their younger colleagues. Empirical evidence suggests that the biggest challenges for older adults are indeed physical strain, mental stress and smaller age-related limitations⁵. This is accompanied by increased skills and competence based on work experience and changing values and attitudes towards work and career. Developments in technical and organisational means to retain the knowledge, expertise and abilities of older adults in the workforce – on a paid or voluntary basis - will help to lessen any potentially detrimental effects of demographic ageing on economic development.

Occupation is the act of being engaged in something. Occupation is crucial for giving people a purpose in life. For many older adults the loss of purpose in their lives catalyses a

³ *Active ageing and solidarity between generations – A statistical portrait of the European Union 2012*

⁴ *Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) 2012*

⁵ *Goldenworkers (2012)*

downward spiral in both quality of life, mental, physical, social and spiritual well-being, which in turn presents as both healthcare and social care challenges. Not to mention the challenges posed to families and carers. The literature clearly establishes that maintaining purpose and occupation in life becomes increasingly difficult with advancing years, with or without mental and/or cognitive impairment.

At the same time, there is mutual benefit to the individual and to society from the continued contribution of older adults. Contributions can come from different sources, through paid or unpaid activities. In the field of paid work, e.g. ageing in the work place and extending working life beyond retirement, solutions could be assistance systems for processes in the industrial production or maintenance in offices, care settings and other situations. Meanwhile, physical assistance systems have a high level of flexibility and adaptability. This enables situation-specific support of the older adult, in accordance with his or her needs and qualifications. In the sector of unpaid work, e.g. volunteering, knowledge sharing, learning and training through adaptive, context-sensitive systems of information and instruction are possible approaches.

With targeted investment in technical assistance, the place of occupation may offer opportunities for the promotion of health and well-being. This will not only benefit individuals of any age, but also companies or institutions, the community and society as a whole. Besides recuperative and preventive effects on occupational health, further positive spill-over effects relate to motivation, capacity to assume other roles or activities in the post-employment phase (paid or volunteered). Further the general compatibility of family and career, employers' attractiveness for potential applicants in an increasing competition for skilled personnel is in the focus.

Description

A call themed "Occupation in Life" is designed to target the preservation of cognitive and physical capabilities of older adults when performing their useful activities. Technical assistance and improved organisation would assist employees or customers, in particular those at advanced age, to continue a meaningful career and participatory life. From a macro perspective, the call will contribute to safeguard an innovative and productive European economy as well as society, and help companies or institutions acquire a positive position in the market of AAL, which will further grow due to global demographic change.

Possible applications may range from a system of information to assistance systems for processes in the industrial production. Various requirements are vital for the technical implementation. For example, systems for cognitive assistance should be capable of environment perception, situational interpretation, and reactive behaviour.

There are technologies, which are already available and can contribute to this topic. However there is still a need to combine these solutions with the support of the social sciences, users or other stakeholders like professional organisations in order to develop useful applications and build realistic services. Since ultimate success depends on market needs and user acceptance, professional organisations or companies could be included throughout the development process as end users.

One of the major challenges will be the adaptation of technological solutions and developments to existing or re-designed structures in the occupational place. Dependent on the specific type of place and the existent degree of technical assistance (e.g. robots, tele-systems or other support systems), new solutions may require different types of technologies with different maturity levels without stigmatizing the user. Especially in small and medium sized enterprises, extended work lives and the knowledge transfer from experienced to younger employees will be of vital importance. Yet, larger companies and organisations are equally interested in retaining knowledge and experience, which renders longer working lives and the effective transfer of know-how into an important business case. In this context, it is important to identify the most relevant utilisation scenarios and the economic sectors with a high demand for AAL solutions.

This specific topic overlaps with other high priority areas of the AAL-JP, especially health, social care and social integration. However, with occupation in focus, it creates specific opportunities for knowledge-based societies across Europe and generates high business potential throughout Europe.

The application areas can be, but are not limited to:

- Adapting the way of working by thinking about new concepts for flexible systems in a dynamic labour market to keep seniors motivated and active in work or other meaningful activities
- Developing, adapting and/or re-designing the place of occupation to age-specific conditions to sustain occupational health, while coping with the specific environmental conditions
- Coping strategies or processes (e.g. stress or time management) and technologies (e.g. for handling heavy or small things) that can help older adults adapt physically and cognitively with their tasks (e. g. at work, in community activities or voluntary organisations) maintain their quality of life and envisage the work-life balance
- Improving occupational lifestyle preserving health (e.g. through personal risk assessment) and supporting behavioural changes (e.g. through smart advisory tools)
- Training devices according to physical capacities and usability demands, in/outdoors
- Developing means for learning and training of older workforce
- Addressing intergenerational knowledge transfer to use skills and competencies based on experience

Expected Impact

The expected impact of the Call includes social, mental and physical health and economic aspects (wider economy, region, local authority, public sector services). In particular:

- Increasing independence of older adults to manage their occupational activities.
- Reduce entry barrier between European countries and produce standard solutions easy to adapt by any member state.
- Strengthening the industrial base in Europe, through developing emerging products, services and systems which meet the needs and wishes of end-users and have a high potential for a viable business case.

- Facilitating new European cooperation, including end-users and other stakeholders in the value chain⁶.
- Contributing to the aim of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA) to increase by 2 the average number of healthy life years in the EU by 2020.

The solutions to be developed should not target a rationalisation of personnel. The ultimate objective is to optimise the interaction and create synergies between human and technical systems. In addition, due to the complexity in many management and production processes, full automation is specifically out of scope.

General Prerequisites for Solutions Aimed at in Call-2013-6

The following points outline the general prerequisites for solutions aimed at under this call and should be addressed in the proposal:

- Projects should adopt a holistic, inclusive and user centred approach, in their aims as well as their organisation and expertise. In order to increase motivation and interest using ICT-based solutions it is necessary to focus on personal satisfaction, wellness, convenience and comfort, rather than illness, impairments and limitations. It is assumed that solutions that offer a lifestyle choice will generate more acceptance and positive interest thereby stimulating the development of a sustainable market for such solutions.
- Solutions have to be equipped with simplified, intuitive or personalised interfaces which are adaptable to changing end-users' abilities and requirements. Important issues are design for all⁷ and accessibility for older adults.
- Solutions should be broad in nature and implementations easy to adapt by any partner state and not only to be usable in the pilot case.
- Solutions should be applicable to more than one context and adaptable to different needs as people age.
- The innovation concept of the AAL JP is based on creating markets by developing solutions which meet the needs and wishes of end-users (for definitions see notes below). Therefore, essential involvement of primary end-users from the outset of the project to its end is deemed to be essential for the success of the projects as is development of commercial aspects throughout the project.
- Concerning the user needs, a distinction has to be made between needs of the secondary end-users, as e.g. employers or organisations, and the older adults. Motivational aspects have to be taken into account. Attitudes towards the use of technologies also vary accordingly.
- Proposals have to describe how end-users will be involved in the development process (for more information see Guide for Applicants, chapter 12), and how they

⁶ Considering the pilot European Innovation Partnership on active and healthy ageing, <http://ec.europa.eu/active-healthy-ageing>

⁷ The term is synonymous to universal design and inclusive design.

will be provided with the necessary capacities for effective use of the solution in question after project's end.

- Existing standards have to be used. If standards are not available, they should be developed together with interoperable systems.
- Proposals must present a work plan specifying the innovation process from development and validation of the concept through iterative feedback by users (including pilot testing) to the final prototype, supplemented by a business case for sustainable market development (for more information see Guide for Applicants, chapter 13). Proposals should describe the complete service-model required for the ICT-based products and systems in relation to the AAL JP user-groups (for a definition of user groups, see notes below).
- Proposals must be creative and ambitious and go beyond the “state of the art” compared to solutions presently available on the market. Providing an information website or giving access to an information repository will not be considered fulfillment of this requirement.
- Proposals must consider the different national ethico-legal frameworks of relevant countries and stakeholders for the proposed AAL solution where applicable.

In addition to these content-related pre-requisites, the following formal prerequisites must be met:

- To be eligible for funding through AAL Call 6, proposals must fulfil the national and consortium-level eligibility criteria (see Consortium-level Eligibility Criteria in chapters 5 and 6 of the Guide for Applicants).

For further details regarding these pre-requisites, please consult the Guide for Applicants.

Evaluation procedure and funding allocation

All eligible proposals will be evaluated and scored by a European panel to establish a ranking order. Proposals scoring above the required threshold will enter into the procedure for allocating co-funding from the AAL Joint Programme. Funding contracts for individual project partners will be concluded with the relevant national funding authority.

Notes

The AAL-programme is an ICT-innovation programme focusing on the needs and wishes of end-users (definitions below). ICT is understood in the same broad sense as in FP7.

Definition of end-users in this call of the AAL Joint Programme:

- Primary end-users are older adults who are using AAL solutions.
- Secondary end-users are persons (families, friends, neighbours...), companies or organisations that are accessing or using AAL solutions for the benefit of primary end-users.
- Tertiary end-users are institutions and private or public organisations that are not directly in contact with AAL solution, but who play a role in providing, financing or enabling them. This group includes the public sector service organizers, social security systems, insurance companies.

Basic Information on Call AAL-2013-6

- Date of publication: 31 January 2013
- Closure date: 30 April 2013, 17h00 Central European Time (CET)
- Indicative total funding⁸: **41.762 M€**
This amount includes a contribution of up to 19.462 M€ by the European Communities.
- Consortia submit one common project proposal with one partner acting as coordinator.
- Project proposals will be evaluated centrally by independent European experts.
- Selection of proposals will be based on the evaluation and other criteria specified in chapter 7 of the Guide for Applicants.
- Approval of the list of selected proposal by the AAL General Assembly is expected for September 2013.
- Funding of individual project partners will follow the respective national rules; reference to the national rules can be found at <http://www.aal-europe.eu/get-involved/calls/call-6-supporting-occupation-in-life-for-older-adults/>
- Funding decisions by national funding institutions is expected for December 2013.

Characteristics of AAL JP Projects

- Aim at ICT-based solutions to identified user needs
- Demonstrate realistic business case with time-to-market perspective of maximum 2 to 3 years after end of the project
- Project total budget: 1 - 7 M€
- Maximum funding from the AAL Joint Programme: 3 M€
- Significant involvement of industry and other business partners, particularly SMEs are encouraged. The efforts by industry and other business partners is expected in total to be 50% or more (in person months).
- Proactive end-user involvement throughout the life of the project

Consortium-level Eligibility Criteria

- Submission of a complete proposal through the AAL electronic submission system before the deadline, as specified in the Call for Proposals
- English as the language of the proposal
- Consortium composition of at least 3 independent eligible organizations (legal entities), from at least 3 different AAL Partner States participating in the Call for Proposals
- Consortium must include at least one eligible for profit business partner
- Consortium must include at least one eligible for profit SME partner which can be the business partner
- Consortium must include at least one eligible end-user organization
- Size of the consortium: 3 – 10 partners
- Duration of the project: 12 – 36 months
- Adherence to the specifications for structure and technical details (e.g. page count) of the proposal submission.

⁸ See the last chapter for an overview of the AAL Partner States' financial commitments.

National Eligibility Criteria

- Eligible for funding are only organisations that are explicitly included in the national eligibility criteria published as part of the Guide for Applicants.
- It is highly recommended to contact the AAL National Contact Persons (NCP) prior to submission of a proposal (list of NCPs and contact data can be found on the AAL JP website www.aal-europe.eu).
- In some countries, establishing contact with the NCP prior to the submission of the proposal is a requirement for being eligible for funding.

In addition, the project may eventually include organizations not requesting funding or organizations that are not eligible for funding according to national eligibility rules or organizations not residing in any AAL Partner State⁹. Such organizations may be associated to the project without funding from the AAL Joint Programme, but they cannot be crucial for the project's implementation. They will not be taken into consideration when assessing the project proposal against the eligibility criteria and project characteristics stated above.

Guide for Applicants

Please consult the Guide for Applicants for detailed information on:

- how to submit a proposal
- the application pre-requisites
- the evaluation and selection processes
- the evaluation criteria
- the consortium level and national eligibility criteria
- the national funding rules
- details on where to obtain further information.

⁹ *The participation of organisations residing outside an AAL Partner State is restricted to organisations residing in a Member State of the European Union that currently does not participate in the AAL Joint Programme, i.e. Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Slovak Republic.*



AAL Partner States' Funding Commitments

AAL Partner State	Commitments
Austria	1,500,000 €
Belgium	1,000,000 €
Cyprus**	200,000 €
Denmark	500,000 €
Finland*	0 €
France	1,000,000 €
Germany	3,000,000 €
Hungary***	200,000 €
Ireland	500,000 €
Israel	500,000 €
Italy**	1,100,000 €
Luxembourg FNR	300,000 €
Luxembourg Luxinnovation	300,000 €
Netherlands	1,800,000 €
Norway***	€
Poland	500,000 €
Portugal	400,000 €
Romania	1,000,000 €
Slovenia	200,000 €
Spain (ISCIII)**	300,000 €
Spain (MINETUR)**	1,750,000 €
Sweden	1,000,000 €
Switzerland	4,000,000 €
United Kingdom	1,250,000 €
Total commitment by AAL Partner States	22,300,000 €
Expected EC contribution for AAL Call 6	19,462,000 €
Expected total funding commitment	41,762,000 €

* Finland does not participate in this call (AAL-2013-6).

** The indicated funding is still subject to a national decision process

*** Decision regarding participation in call AAL-2013-6 is pending

Please Note: The EC co-funding is granted to the AAL States (or member organisations) listed above on top of the indicated commitment. The final allocation depends on the call outcome.