

# Engaging Older Adults through World Cafés

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03. Dec 2019

**SIFO: involving citizens in deliberative processes**

# Context: the Assisted Living project

- Multiple aims
  - Implement RRI as research process; develop technological solutions; increase dignity through process and products
- Pluridisciplinary
  - Computer science; nursing sciences; occupational therapy; ethics; sociology
- Plurisectorial
  - Academia; SME; services
- International
  - UK, DE, NO

# Object: assistive technology

- Users: older adult (with cognitive reduction)
- Context: home (or not extensive care institution)
- Type of tech
  - Home monitoring
  - Condition I: dependent on SME
  - Condition II: machine learning
- Underlying thought:
  - Users are best at deciding what they want & need

# Original idea: large forums

- Partner review on engagement methods
  - Small groups
  - Brief sessions
  - Well-known settings
  - De-personalize / externalize
  - Separate next-of-kin and older adults
  
- Gave new format: dialogue café



Recommendations for involving people with dementia or mild cognitive impairment and their informal caregivers and relatives in the Assisted Living Project

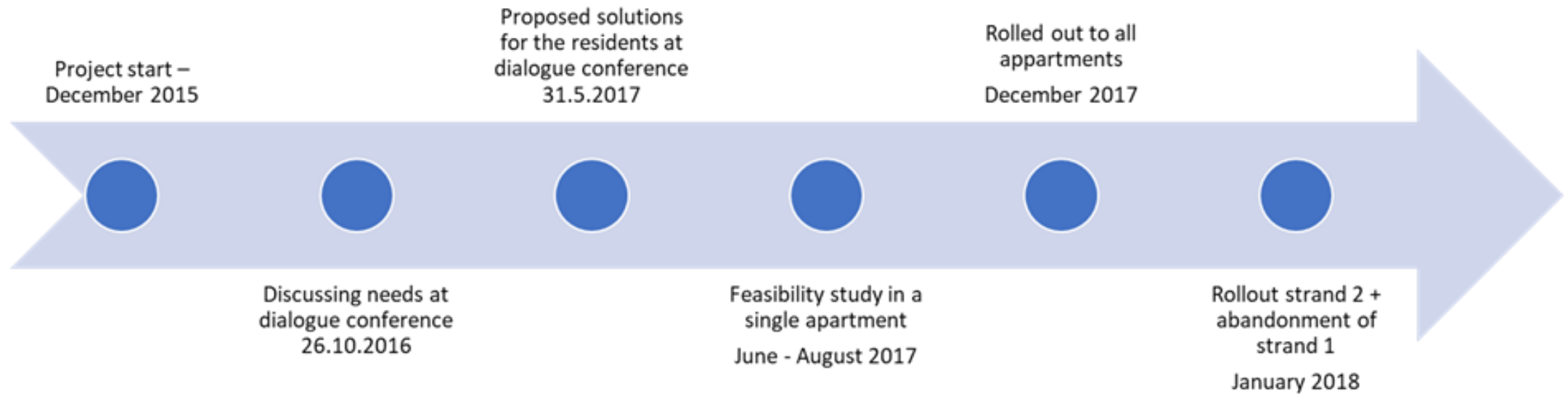
Dr Mari-Rose Kennedy & Professor Ruud ter Meulen



- Stepwise recruitment process
- The researchers discussed the content prior to each of the five dialogue cafes including; aim, content, scenarios of Helmer and Nora, and written instructions were developed
- The researchers performed a 'dry-run' cafe to prepare and make adaptations prior to each cafe
- The researchers had a pre-meeting one hour before each cafe
- The researchers had a meeting after each cafe
- Group leaders and reporters made written reports from each cafe
- The written reports were discussed in a project meeting and put to ground for planning the next cafe
- One resident was invited into the preparation of the 5th dialogue cafe, together with engineer, technical adviser and researchers to discuss how to present machine learning



# Role of Dialogue Café in development



# Themes and purposes for the 6 cafés

1. Exploratory café – understanding the users and their needs.
2. Dissemination of the potential of future solutions via examples.
3. Evaluate low-tech existing solutions – the residents view.
4. Recruitment of users for a field trial of existing technology
5. Recruitment of users for a field trial to provide data for Machine Learning studies
6. Closing the project

# Challenges in everyday lives:

1. **Falls** – the fear of falling, injury and not getting help.
2. **Being outdoors** and access to fresh air. Being safe when out of the house was crucial.
3. **Ability to orient oneself at night**. Dark environment and possibly impaired vision may influence navigation/orientation at night.
4. **“Button-phobia”**. Technology can be difficult to use, due to small buttons and unfamiliar interfaces, passwords, and codes.
5. **Social contact** with others can be challenging.
6. **Safety** at home. This is multifold and associates to not always getting help when required and within short time, access to their apartment by helpers even if the door is locked.
7. **Sleeping** sufficiently and well. Challenges include the difficulty to fall asleep, waking up frequently during the night, and/ or waking up too early in the morning.
8. **Self-sufficiency** and autonomy. Even if the residents do feel relatively autonomous and self-sufficient, their daily routines need to conform to the schedule of others.



# How did the Dialogue Cafés work?

- A meeting point for the different disciplines
- A social event for the participants
- Computer science felt it valuable
- Focus on needs > very open
- Several disciplines / sectors with different participatory methods
- Field trial > none of the test persons needed the system (and the system didn't work)
- Little stringency between format, purpose and expected outcome
- Challenge in limiting ourselves to one place for inclusion & testing