

## Successful 7<sup>th</sup> edition of AgeingFit, the European event fostering innovation for well-being in older age

**AgeingFit brings together players involved in the innovation process from the idea to market access going through regulations and evaluation. The event aims at presenting the latest innovative products and services in the industry to enable healthy ageing.**

The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of AgeingFit was held on March 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> in Lille. This edition has brought 600 participants from 27 countries. 88 speakers animated the conference programme, hosted events and discussed the latest trends in healthy ageing.

The exhibition area gathered 36 exhibitors and 29 pitches of innovative projects. The event created more than 1,200 connection opportunities through the partnering platform, without taking into account the informal networking.

### HEALTHY AGEING, A TOPIC FOR THE FUTURE

Despite the strikes, the conference rooms were packed and interactive. More than 70 international experts were invited to take part in the 2023 AgeingFit conference programme. The programme was built around 5 tracks – access to market, nutrition, biology of ageing, long-period care infrastructures, home adaptation – and a plenary session. The diversity of the themes allowed to provide a global picture of the healthy ageing innovation and prevention trends.

The plenary session officially launched the event. The topic of the discussion focused on the transition from

healthy ageing towards a life-long prevention approach. The panellists highlighted the conditions required to make our healthcare systems reach this objective. The speakers Carl-Johan Robertz (Medical Innovation Director – Ramsay Santé Innovation Hub), Wim Van Boghout (Group Chief Innovation Officer – Korian), Piret Hirv (Manager – Estonian Connected Health Cluster) and Peter Varnai (Partner, Health and Life Sciences – Technopolis Group), and the moderator Marc Lange (Secretary General – EHTEL) discussed the complexity of identifying the players who should take initiatives to bring prevention to the next step. Part of the solution lies in the identification of the major milestones to take in order to: on the short term, deliver more integrated and personalised care, and on the long term, make budget changes in our healthcare systems.

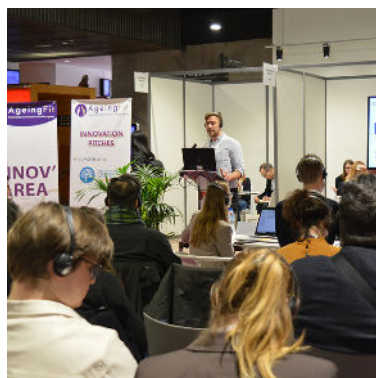
Prevention and life-long approach also imply an acceleration in the ageing and frailty research. There is a crucial need to have better knowledge of the molecular mechanisms which would allow to identify and apply personalised behavioural approaches throughout the life of people. Case studies of latest research in the field were presented during the session “Biology of ageing and healthy lifespan expansion: Examining what we do



and do not know about the ageing process". Nutrition also plays a key role, highlighted by the panellists of the session: "Practitioners' perspectives on nutrition: Dietary practices and needs of older adults". Enabling personalised nutrition is essential to reach an overall better physical condition allowing healthier ageing. Innovators who attended the conferences benefited from concrete advice to put all chances on their side. It was the case for the sessions: "Entrepreneurs' checklist for successful scaling of healthy ageing innovations" and "What are the current proposed business models for prevention products and solutions?". What came out of these conferences is that entrepreneurs must understand in depth the ecosystem in which their solution will operate. The tough questions must be asked very early on and they have to be answered pragmatically. Project leaders must be prepared to go beyond their innovation and pivot to reach their audience.

## THE MOST INNOVATIVE PROJECTS IN THE HEALTHY AGEING SECTOR

During those two days, 29 start-ups presented their projects in different categories: physical activity and nutrition, monitoring and prevention, technical aid, textile innovation, age-friendly environment, financial services, mental and cognitive health. AgeingFit is a stepping-stone in Europe and further: for this 7<sup>th</sup> edition CABHI (Center for Aging + Brain Health Innovation) supported the pitch competition and delivered a prize for the three first companies, including privileged access to a North American networking event.



**Good Boost**, represented by Ben Wilkins was awarded as the most innovative project. Good Boost is a social company which develops a digital technology to offer therapeutic exercise programmes which are accessible to every musculoskeletal conditions. Their

terrestrial and aquatic re-education programmes are built to be beneficial and fun for people suffering from musculoskeletal disorders, including arthritis and back pains.

*«The AgeingFit conference has been a great opportunity to have so many collaborative conversations with other outstanding innovations and organisations working in healthy ageing. We're delighted to have won the gold prize for the most innovative project in Europe and the collaborative conversations that have been generated, we're excited for the 2024 AgeingFit conference!»*

**Ben Wilkins, CEO, Good Boost**



**WeWALK**, represented by Jean-Marc Feghali came in second and earned the silver medal. WeWALK's objective is better security, more independence and inclusion for the visually impaired community. They develop a mobility technology: when you're walking, WeWalk

vibrates to warn you of low-ground obstacles which a cane could miss.

*«Presenting our UKRI (UK Research and Innovation)-backed project at AgeingFit was a truly productive experience, especially given the event's highly relevant audience. From investors to developers, our introduction to France's silver economy was accelerated, further bolstered by our silver medal win. On behalf of Gokhan and the WeWALK team, I reiterate our gratitude to AgeingFit and UKRI's Healthy Ageing Challenge for facilitating such an enjoyable experience. Indeed, we are now better equipped to support our international visually impaired community.»*

**Dr Jean Marc Feghali, Head of Research and Development, WeWalk**



Finally, Heather Duncan's **BlackWood Homes and Care** took the bronze medal. The BlackWood Homes and Care's healthy ageing programme Peoplehood consists in 16 projects aiming at helping the inhabitants of three neighbourhoods to live five more years in good

health.

*«AgeingFit was a great opportunity to reach an international audience and talk about Peoplehood. The pitching process was fully supported throughout and the whole process was helpful and informative.»*

**Heather Duncan, Programme Lead, Peoplehood**



# AgeingFit 2023

## key figures



**600**  
delegates

from



**27**  
countries



**36**  
exhibitors



**88**  
international  
speakers



**29**  
innovations projects  
selected to pitch



**1,200**  
connections thanks to  
the partnering system

## ORGANISERS



### **Eurasanté - [www.eurasante.com](http://www.eurasante.com)**

Eurasanté is a tech transfer, an incubator and a cluster manager in life sciences, nutrition and healthy ageing sectors located in Northern France. Eurasanté assists firms in their setting-up process in Northern France and is a service provider for technology transfer, innovative R&D collaboration and partnering opportunities. It helps researchers, start-ups & companies with their development projects. Eurasanté runs 3 incubators: the Bio-Incubator (health), Euralimentaire (foodtech) and Eurasenior (silver economy). It leads the Eurasanté Park, a 300-hectare site of excellence at the heart of the largest university hospital campus in Europe. Eurasanté also organises four european healthcare-related partnering events that aim to increase and improve interaction between academia and industry: AgeingFit (Healthy Ageing), BioFIT (Life Sciences), MedFIT (MedTech, Diagnostic, Digital Health) and NutrEvent (Food, Human and Animal Nutrition).

### **[www.france-silvereco.fr](http://www.france-silvereco.fr) | @Francesilvereco**

France Silver Éco exists since 2009 at the initiative of the Economy, Finances and Employment Ministry with the Health Ministry support. The association represents the unifying actor of the healthy ageing sector. It gathers and animates the national ecosystem. Its ambitions are to facilitate the innovative industry development and a qualitative economy in the healthy ageing sector, to settle a references portfolio for the prevention of the dependence in France and finally to sustain the professionalisation of the public purchases department and develop the innovative public purchase strategies.

### **[www.eurobiomed.org](http://www.eurobiomed.org) | @PoleEurobiomed**

Founded in 2009, Eurobiomed tops European rankings in all stages of innovation: education, basic, translational and clinical research, technological innovation centers, start-ups and industrial success stories. Together, the +420 Eurobiomed members are a driving force in regional development and offers solutions for businesses and research organisations in the health sector to help them innovate, finance, develop and achieve their strategic and business objectives.

### **Clubster NHL – [www.clubster-nsi.com](http://www.clubster-nsi.com)**

Clubster NHL – Nutrition, Health, Longevity – is a French competitiveness cluster federating 350 members in the Nutrition, biotechnology, healthy ageing and health sectors. We foster collaboration between academia, private companies (start-up, SMEs and large companies), clinicians and final users. Our aim is to help our members to design, develop and finance their innovative products and processes.

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