

PRESS RELEASE - MARCH 2024

AgeingFit 2024: The European event fostering innovation for well-being in older age

AgeingFit held its 8th edition in Lille on March 11th and 12th, 2024. The event brought together care structures, industries, start-ups, researchers, and investors, all involved in the development of innovations, from idea to market launch, through regulation and evaluation.

AGEINGFIT: A 360° APPROACH TO INNOVATION FOR WELL-BEING IN OLDER AGE

In the current context, the Silver Economy is emerging as an innovative and necessary response to the challenges posed by an increasingly ageing population. From medical advances to technological solutions and adapted housing models, the healthy ageing sector is at the heart of a societal transformation. It offers a wide range of products and services designed to improve the quality of life of senior citizens, while meeting the challenges inherent of this demographic change.

International meetings to promote healthy ageing

To meet this pressing need for innovation, it is essential to bring together all the players in the sector and to facilitate their meetings and collaborations. The aim of AgeingFit is to promote international exchanges, and thus facilitate the creation of links and partnerships between the various players in the field. This international event brings together a wide range of speakers and is a catalyst of excellence for ideas and concepts that know no boundaries. This was underlined by *Yael Benvenisti* (CEO of Mediterranean Tower Ventures), who praised the convention for offering a wealth of opportunities to discuss with specialists in the sector.

Encouraging the discovery of new ideas

In an ever-changing environment, it can be challenging for small and medium-sized enterprises as well as large corporations to discover new concepts in the field of healthy ageing can represent a major challenge. That's why AgeingFit aims to promote innovation for well-being in older age. To this end, the event is organised into four main activities over a two-day period to allow for maximum interaction and information flow. These activities include an exhibition area, conferences, an innovation pitch competition, and one-on-one meetings.



THE 8TH EDITION OF AGEINGFIT: FOCUSING ON DEVELOPMENTS FOR HEALTHY AGEING

Over the two days, **65 international speakers** shared their experiences and led the conference programme through **4 thematic tracks**: “Developing innovations in the Silver Economy”; “Preventing, diagnosing and treating age-related conditions”; “Innovation in residential and home care” and “Social and societal innovation for ageing well”.

The first day was marked by a plenary session “Making the Silver Economy a reality: Changing perspective to make ageing a source of new economic opportunities”. This opening session focused on the economic dimensions of ageing, exploring how we can transform the perception of ageing as a social burden into a source of stimulating economic opportunities.

Four conference tracks at the heart of healthy ageing

AgeingFit 2024 was more than just a business convention - it was an immersion into the world of healthy ageing. The thematic tracks went deeper, combining innovation and strategic thinking. *Jordi Ferrer* of Ship2B Ventures (an impact investment fund) took part in the panel on accelerating healthy ageing through innovation and funding, where bold ideas merged with discussions on the evolution of financing and the challenges to overcome: *“Health systems are already at their limit. Care is expensive and more and more people need it. We need to change quickly and be there for the future”*.

Another session then focused on tackling neurodegenerative diseases and promoting active ageing. Experts such as *Mark Ross* from Heriot-Watt University shared exciting breakthroughs in research and the importance of physical activity. Exercise appears to be at the heart of the fight against neurodegenerative diseases, according to this expert: *“Physical exercise improves the production of T-cells, which are essential for boosting the immune response. However, neurodegenerative diseases aim to deteriorate these T-cells, thereby compromising the proper functioning of the immune system”*.

The care innovation pathways explored the integration of technology in residential and home care environments. *Geert Houben* from Cubigo, a platform that connects staff, residents, and families in care facilities, discussed solutions to the workforce shortage, and highlighted the critical role of technology in improving care.

Finally, the section on social innovations captivated the audience with discussions on technologies for the mental health of the seniors and solutions for isolated rural areas. Speakers such as *Ad van Berlo* from Smart Homes (a knowledge centre for home automation and smart living) and *Shahnaz Hassan*, consultant psychiatrist at Iron Rose Wellbeing (an organisation that promotes the well-being of carers and older people) presented innovative approaches to tackling these specific challenges. Ad van Berlo also presented two projects: the Smile application (aimed at socialising people with neurodegenerative diseases) and the VR2Care Home Kit (for creating virtual social spaces). *“The aim is to bring people together remotely, promote physical activity in the community and ensure the safety of users”*.

AgeingFit 2024 has created a dynamic platform that brings together innovative ideas and strategic thinking, strengthens the commitment to healthy ageing, and opens up new perspectives for the future of the Silver Economy. A key event where the future of healthy ageing is taking shape.

Another Innovation Pitches edition: three winners supported by CABHI!

AgeingFit’s 8th edition also featured a pitch competition. Over two days, **20 start-ups presented their projects to a panel of experts**. This activity is a real springboard even for structures beyond Europe, in particular with the support of CABHI (Center for Aging + Brain Health Innovation). The Canadian innovation centre awarded **Biel Glasses**, promoted by *Jaume Puig Adamuz*, as the overall winner of the competition. The start-up offers smart glasses that adapt reality to the remaining visual capacity of visually impaired people, solving mobility problems and improving personal autonomy. The first three winners also received free access and virtual stands at the CABHI Summit 2024 digital event. **PhenomX Health**, represented by *Jérôme Michaud*, a Swiss start-up specialising in digital health, whose mission is to improve the well-being, vitality and longevity of one billion menopausal women, and **Cubigo**, represented by *Lizzy Evens*. The solution connects staff, residents, and families within the care structures. *“Women’s health has traditionally been the subject of little research, with less than 4% of R&D investment worldwide. [...] That’s where we come in, offering science as a service with the aim of best supporting*



women through their transition and healthy ageing.” Jérôme Michaud, Chief Operating Officer & Co-Founder at PhenomX Health

“I’m responsible for some strategic projects, including research and development on ageing well, focusing on data and mobile AI”. Lizzy Evens, Strategic Project Manager at Cubigo

Exploring opportunities: Informal meetings and one-on-one meetings at the heart of AgeingFit 2024

During AgeingFit, participants benefited from several opportunities to interact and collaborate. In addition to one-on-one meetings, *Gisela Garcia-Alvarez*, and her colleague *Nieves Freire Barea*, from the Galician Health Cluster, emphasised the importance of simple exchanges on-site to meet many players in the sector. In addition, access to the exhibition area provided an ideal platform for exhibitors to showcase their innovations and exchange ideas. Companies were able to showcase their products and services, while some also offered demonstrations and trials.

Numerous initiatives organised by key players in the sector

AgeingFit joined forces with other Silver Economy events. This year, participants had the opportunity to take part in the regional **Silver Surfer** and **AMI HIPA** (Innovative Housing for seniors) awards ceremony. The aim of the «**Silver Surfer**» call for projects is to identify innovation for the ageing population, to find solutions that will make a lasting and tangible improvement to their daily lives. The 9th edition of the event focused on four themes: making everyday objects more ergonomic, facilitating exchanges, preventing malnutrition, and encouraging independence through mobility.

The projects selected by Silver Surfer are **Monka**, a platform that supports family carers, **L’adaptelier**, which adapts clothing for seniors to make dressing easier, and **Posos Link**, which facilitates the networking of people responsible for a patient’s care to avoid interference between certain medications. The three winners will receive funding to develop their solution, support from dedicated experts and a 6-month trial phase for their project. The favourite prize of this 9th edition is **Scoot mobil**, which is revolutionising mobility for people losing their independence with its scooters for seniors.

The aim of the 2nd **AMI HIPA** call for projects was to identify and promote innovations to improve healthy ageing both at home and outside, and to give entrepreneurs access to feedback from users. The three winners of this year’s awards are **Upper**, with Alyzée, the first comfortable lift chair for the seniors and their carers, **forESTIME**, a new brand of clothes made in Roubaix that are both chic and practical so that people can continue to dress independently, and **UNVOID**, which offers new storage solutions to help people remain independent and comfortable at home.

Participants were also able to take part in a conference entitled «**When digital innovation meets seniors!**», organised by Clubster NSL, and a conference organised by **Tast’Age** to present their forthcoming training course to combat malnutrition among the older adults.



ORGANISERS



Eurasanté - lille.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 4 incubators: the Bio-Incubator (health), Euralimentaire (foodtech), Eurasenior (healthy ageing) and Vivalley (sport & health). 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 five 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), MEDigIT (Digital Health) and NutrEvent (Food, Human and Animal Nutrition).

France Silver Éco - www.france-silvereco.fr

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.

Eurobiomed - www.eurobiomed.org

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 400 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-nsl.com

Clubster NHL – Nutrition, Health, Longevity – is a French competitiveness cluster federating 360 members in the Nutrition, biotechnology, healthy ageing and health sectors. We foster collaboration between academia, private companies (start-ups, 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.

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS



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