

# EXTENDING CREATIVE PRACTICE

## FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

By

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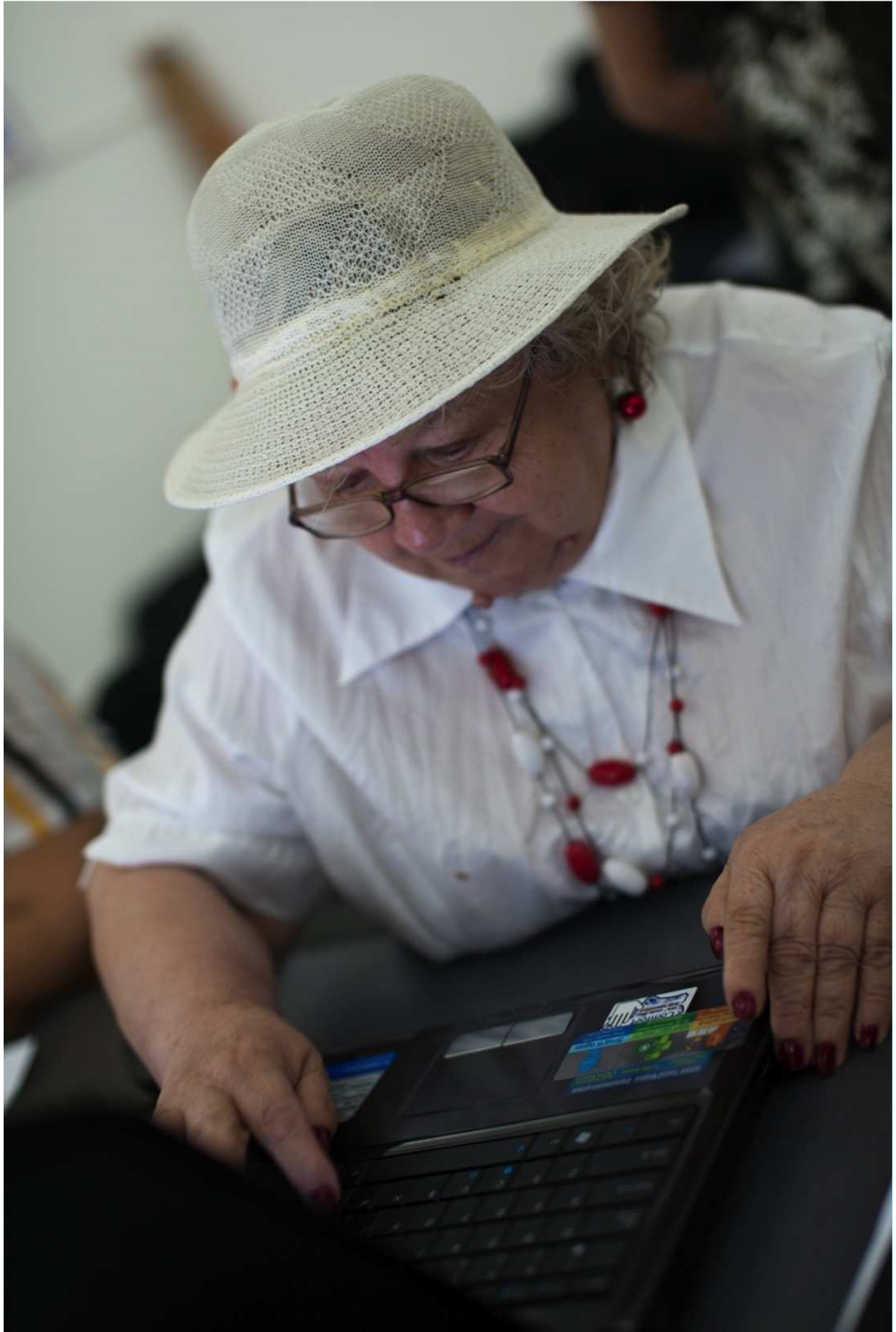


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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Project summary description
- The digital agenda – e-Inclusion and older people
- The partners
- The evaluation approach and methods
- Findings and impacts
- Conclusions and recommendations.

## 1 Introduction

Extending Creative Practice was a pilot project funded by the EU Grundtvig Adult Learning programme. The project involved 5 partners from 4 European countries: Finland (Laurea), Romania (The Progress Foundation), Slovenia (Mitra) and the UK (DigiTales and CUCR, Goldsmiths). The project involved DigiTales training trainers from each of the partner organisations in the DigiTales digital storytelling method. These trainers then used the method in working with older people with the primary aim of increasing their ICT skills and therefore digital inclusion. Goldsmiths role was to evaluate the piloting of this in each of the countries and draw out common themes, differences, learning and key findings.

### ***1.1 Context: e-Inclusion and older people in Europe***

The 2006 Riga Ministerial Declaration provided the following definition: ‘e-Inclusion’ means both inclusive ICT and the use of ICT to achieve wider inclusion. It focuses on the participation of all individuals and communities in all aspects of the information society; e-Inclusion policy therefore aims at reducing gaps in ICT usage and at promoting the use of ICT to overcome exclusion and improve economic performance, employment opportunities, quality of life, social participation and cohesion.<sup>1</sup>

In 2007, the European Commission launched the 2010 e-Inclusion Initiative<sup>2</sup> to raise political awareness on e-Inclusion, encourage replication of e-Inclusion success stories throughout the EU, and pave the way for future actions.

The European Union’s population structure is changing and becoming progressively older: at the beginning of 2010, there were 87 million people aged 65 and over in the EU, more than 17% of the total population. In response to demographic challenges being faced within Europe, the EU designated 2012 as the ‘European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations’. The overall objective of the European Year is to facilitate the creation of an active ageing culture in Europe based on a society for all ages. As European citizens live longer and healthier lives, governments are looking for ways to involve older people more in society and to keep them active.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministerial Declaration, Ministerial Conference on ICT for Inclusion, Riga, Latvia; 11 – 13 June, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> COM(2007) 694 final

The European Commission adopted in mid-2007 a Communication on ‘Ageing well in the information society’. This presented an action plan for information and communication technology (ICT) and ageing, with the goal of accelerating the introduction of new technology-based solutions for: ageing well at work, in the community and at home through the introduction of a wide range of ICT initiatives.

Existing research shows that generally the use of ICT falls as a function of age, decreasing in each of the EU Member States. This pattern is particularly prevalent among older women, many of whom live alone in single households. The Digital Agenda for Europe (20), one of the flagship initiatives under the Europe 2020 strategy, aims to promote independent and safe living for the elderly and to encourage involvement in society.

The Digital Agenda has set a target for having 60% regular Internet use (at least once per week) among disadvantaged people by 2015 (the sub-population of socially disadvantaged people includes persons aged 55 to 74). In 2010 around 17% of the EU’s population aged 65 to 74 made daily use of the Internet; this share was 36 percentage points below the average for all age groups. The most common activities carried out by persons aged 65 to 74 (who had used the Internet during the three months prior to the survey) included: sending and receiving e-mails; finding out information about goods and services; seeking health information; and reading online newspapers or news websites. The majority of persons aged 55 to 74 who already gained experience using the Internet reported a low level of Internet skills in 2010.

**Percentage of households with access to Internet (by device for accessing via PC, digital TV, mobile devices).** Last update: 04-05-2012<sup>3</sup>

Romania	42%
Slovenia	65%
Finland	80%

The EU has developed 8 key competencies for lifelong learning which are described as being “a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. They are particularly necessary for personal fulfilment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment.”<sup>4</sup> These competencies are applicable to both younger people and “adults throughout their lives, through a process of developing and updating skills.”

Of the 8 key competencies the ECP project, combining as it does creativity and ITC, directly relates to six of them:

- **communication** in the mother tongue, which is the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts;

<sup>3</sup> From - <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/setupModifyTableLayout.do>

<sup>4</sup> [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/education\\_training\\_youth/lifelong\\_learning/c11090\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11090_en.htm)

- **digital competence** involves the confident and critical use of information society technology (IST) and thus basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT);
- **learning to learn** is related to learning, the ability to pursue and organise one's own learning, either individually or in groups, in accordance with one's own needs, and awareness of methods and opportunities;
- **social and civic competences.** Social competence refers to personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and all forms of behaviour that equips individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life. It is linked to personal and social well-being. An understanding of codes of conduct and customs in the different environments in which individuals operate is essential. Civic competence, and particularly knowledge of social and political concepts and structures (democracy, justice, equality, citizenship and civil rights), equips individuals to engage in active and democratic participation;
- **sense of initiative and entrepreneurship** is the ability to turn ideas into action. It involves creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. The individual is aware of the context of his/her work and is able to seize opportunities that arise. It is the foundation for acquiring more specific skills and knowledge needed by those establishing or contributing to social or commercial activity. This should include awareness of ethical values and promote good governance;
- **cultural awareness and expression**, which involves appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media (music, performing arts, literature and the visual arts).

## **1.2 Older people and the digital divide**

Existing research shows that digital exclusion compounds and exacerbates other forms of exclusion. The inequalities of the information age are encapsulated in the term 'digital divide' which refer to inequalities in access to technology (equipment and internet services), and the skills needed to make use of technology, (access to opportunities to use technology).

### **Towards active ageing<sup>5</sup>**

The 'digital divide' amongst older people<sup>6</sup> impacts negatively on their inclusion in society, civil participation and other opportunities for active ageing. People's experience of the places they reside, change as they grow older. Their needs, experiences and ability to move around local environments changes profoundly, as does their ability to partake in all that their villages, towns or cities have to offer. However, ageing should be considered a positive experience. Longer life should be accompanied by continuing opportunities for health,

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<sup>5</sup> World Health Organisation (WHO) (2002) Active Ageing. A Policy Framework. A contribution of the World Health Organization to the Second United Nations World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, Spain, April 2002 ([http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/WHO\\_NMH\\_NPH\\_02.8.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/WHO_NMH_NPH_02.8.pdf))

<sup>6</sup> ONS research shows that older households are significantly less likely to have an Internet connection. In fact they are only half as likely. Among one-person households below the state pension age, 79 per cent have Internet access. Among one-person households above the state pension, only 37 per cent do so. (See Randall, C (2010) *e-Society*, Social Trends 41, Office for National Statistics. See also Berry, R. (2011) *Older people and the Internet. Towards a Map of Digital Exclusion*. The International Longevity Centre - UK (ILC-UK)

participation and security. The World Health Organisation has adopted the term 'active ageing' to express the process by which we can achieve this vision: "Active ageing is the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age"<sup>7</sup>. Here the word "active" refers to continuing participation in economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs, not just the ability to be physically active or to participate in the labour force. Active ageing aims to extend healthy life expectancy and quality of life for all people as they age (Hanson 2004)<sup>8</sup>. Extending Creative Practice has focused on contributing to the active ageing of older people as through the project participants have been offered opportunities to take part in both on line and off line participation and social interaction.



### **The third and fourth age**

As the ageing population grows there has been some debate amongst those researching and studying the older population. Rather than using the term 'older people' it may be more useful to think of old age as having several life phases with different qualities. Proposals have been made, for example, to distinguish between the 'young old the old, and the oldest old'<sup>9</sup> (e.g., Neugarten, 1974; Suzman, Willis, & Manton, 1992) and between the Third Age and Fourth Age (e.g. Baltes, 1997; Laslett, 1991)<sup>10</sup>. Third Age refers to the life period of active retirement, which follows the first age of childhood and formal education and the second age of working life, and which precedes the fourth age of dependence.

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<sup>7</sup> World Health Organisation (WHO) (2002) Active Ageing. A Policy Framework. A contribution of the World Health Organization to the Second United Nations World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, Spain, April 2002 ([http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/WHO\\_NMH\\_NPH\\_02.8.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/WHO_NMH_NPH_02.8.pdf))

<sup>8</sup> Hanson, J. (2004) 'The Inclusive City: delivering a more accessible urban environment through inclusive design'. RICS Cobra 2004 International Construction Conference: responding to change. York.

<sup>9</sup> Neugarten, B. L. (1974). Age groups in American society and the rise of the young-old. *Annals of the American Academy of Politics and Social Sciences*, 187-198. Suzman, R. M., Willis, D. P., & Manton, K. G. (Eds.) (1992). *The oldest old*. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>10</sup> Baltes, M. M. (1998). The psychology of the oldest-old: The Fourth Age. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 11, 411-415. Laslett, P. (1991). *A fresh map of life: The emergence of the Third Age*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.



### 1.3 The ECP Delivery Partners



The delivery partners are distinctly different and whilst this represents a challenge for evaluation, it has also meant that the method has been piloted in diverse contexts. The following sections detail the different national contexts and approaches taken to piloting the DigiTales method in the three delivery partner countries.

#### **Romania – The Progress Foundation<sup>11</sup>**

The Romanian partner trained 14 Librarians in the digital storytelling method at the ‘train the trainer’ workshops in London. They asked librarians nationally to apply to participate and from these carefully selected their trainee trainers, requiring both digital skills and a wide geographical coverage. These trainers also knew that they would be tasked with cascading the project both through delivering pilot workshops with older people, and with disseminating the methods to colleagues. To date 101 older people have participated in ITC and digital storytelling workshops in 12 out of 41 regional libraries. This is due to be extended in August 2012 to eventually include 505 of the Romanian regional libraries.

The DigiTales aims were confluent with the work of the Progress Foundation in that they have, through the library system “including elderly people in ICT initiatives over the past 5 years”. The national context with regards to older people and digital / social exclusion is described as one where older people have little consumer power and few activities that are geared towards them. Many have relatives who are abroad but without ICT skills find their contacts are limited. In fact lack of ITC skills is described as “one of the main causes for the rupture ever-growing between generations”.

One of the key findings from the piloting of the project in Romania has been that delivering the digital story telling method needs to be supported with an introduction to basic IT given

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<sup>11</sup> For more information see - <http://www.progressfoundation.ro>

that for many of the participants it was their first experience of using computers. The Librarian trainers therefore developed this module to deliver along with the digital storytelling content. The digital training was delivered in 1.5-3 hour sessions over 4 - 7 usually consecutive days. However a number of trainers commented that this needed to be longer especially in relation to the ITC content and given that the participants were older people. It was also noted that a high staff ratio was needed. The practice of recording and reflecting on sessions was not only useful for the evaluation but has helped the trainers in developing and honing their methods of delivering the training.

The trainers stressed the need for time, for responding to individual needs and skills levels, and repeating learning steps, whilst many of the participants correspondingly commented on the patience of the trainers.

The libraries plan to continue offering digital training sessions. A staff member commented that "as a result of the good feedback received from the community, Progress Foundation will partner with the Biblionet program ([www.biblionet.ro](http://www.biblionet.ro)) and will organize in August 2012 a series of Training the Trainers sessions on the digital storytelling methodology, where librarian trainers from other counties across Romania may apply in order to get trained in producing digital stories. All costs for these courses (up to 24 participants) will be covered by the Biblionet program." Through ECP, Biblionet has recognised the ability of the method to involve libraries in using information technology to nurture and record the cultural heritage of communities. The focus will be for librarian trainers to continue to work towards decreasing the digital divide for senior citizens; in the last 2 years libraries across the country have trained more than 1000 senior citizens in using ICT. The ECP Project Manager added "DigiTales will help broaden the competencies and skills of elderly and contribute of a better quality of life for them."

### **Slovenia - Mitra**

Mitra is non-profit association working for the development of audiovisual culture and intercultural dialogue. Formally established in July 2009, but practically working as an informal group since 2006, Mitra supports the use of digital visual language in order to prevent social exclusion and create space for creative expression by people from different backgrounds. Mitra aims to increase digital democratisation and interaction between younger and older people, culturally diverse people and create media space to explore and articulate minority issues. They work closely with national and regional TV documentary departments in Slovenia. As well as conducting three sets of digital storytelling workshops, Mitra's contribution to the project included the production of a documentary film about the Extending Creative Practice project. This was shown at the final conference as well as being broadcast on Slovenian national television. The documentary captured the projects process and included testimonies from older people who had taken part. The project also attracted attention from regional and national media and a feature about the project was broadcast on National Television news. Mitra also organised the European Showcase Conference and final coordinating meeting in Maribor - European Cultural City 2012.

The Slovenian Partners trained 9 trainers in the digital storytelling method at the 'train the trainer' workshops in London. The trainers were associates of the partner organisation Mitra. Mitra held 3 workshops in three different cities: Radovljica (west north of Slovenia);

Ljubljana (capital of Slovenia); and Maribor (east north, European culture city). The trainers ran 3 workshops with a total of 33 older people who each made a digital story.

Mitra formed partnerships with Academia, a Slovenian private adult education institution who were able to provide ICT facilities and support, and Push (which translates as 'Snail') an organisation providing residential care for older people with special needs.

In Slovenia all the partner organisations expressed a strong interest in continuing with the programme and delivering more workshops. Mitra are therefore continuing to pursue further funding in partnership with Slovenian partner organisations.

### **Finland - Laurea**

Laurea were the Extending Creative Practice Partners in Finland. Laurea University of Applied Sciences is based in the Helsinki region. Laurea carry out professionally orientated education, regional development and research activities by following the Learning by Developing (LbD) operational model. Laurea employs approximately 500 personnel and has approximately 8 000 students, including approximately 1200 study students in their adult education programmes.

The DigiTales aims were confluent with the work of Laurea in that their organisational values are community, creativity and social responsibility. They also have synergy with the aims of national government policies which includes an objective ensure that every individual has access to the Internet. And as part of this policy it is an aim for every library and elderly care centre to provide ICT training for the elderly.

Laurea's work with the elderly aims to support older people in coping at home and to enhance their quality of living. Laurea's objectives include working with the elderly, developing innovative "welfare technology" or e-wellbeing services. ECP built on, and had clear synergies with, the 'Caring TV' project. The aim of the Caring TV-project (Safe Home Project 2008-2011) was to develop an interactive e-service. Caring TV is a service-oriented concept developed by Laurea University of Applied Sciences, Videra Oy and the city of Espoo in 2005. It is based on client friendly and interactive programs and e-services. Caring TV offers an easy way to get both expert and peer support. Caring TV's participatory programming aims to support capabilities of the aging and increases social interaction. Caring TV uses video conferencing technology where communication takes place via the TV or computer. In practice, this means that the clients have a touch screen, which is easy to use and a small camera connected to the TV. The advantage of the conferencing technology is a secure channel as well as natural and interactive atmosphere of guidance.

The Caring TV® was employed in the ECP project in order to get older people involved. Caring TV was a method through which introductory information instructions about the method used in digital storytelling was shared. In this way, the participants were able to prepare a digital story in advance of a workshop at the university. After the workshops some of the digital stories were shared with other Caring TV clients through the Caring TV channel.

Here the method developed through experimentation. 4 workshops took place, 13 elderly people took part and 43 students were trained. All of the elderly, except one, in this project were clients of Caring TV.

Initially Laurea experimented with the possibilities of using the method in conjunction with both the Caring TV platform and the University's Social work training. The first training session one was done partly through Caring TV and in face to face contact at the university and in old people's homes. The following two workshops were at the university and the instructions were given to older people via Caring TV in advance and by mail. Trainers delivered training sessions as part of their *Social Media and Empowerment* and a *Senior Citizenship* courses for Social Service Degree students. These courses include modules on innovative, interactive and outreach, audio visual methods and technology. Here student trainers were responsible for organising the workshops.

The synergy between the Caring TV aims and those of ECP meant that elderly people were able to create self generated content for Caring TV. The DigiTales that were subsequently broadcast on Caring TV were received with enthusiasm by older clients who stated in feedback that felt that this was very important to save the memories for younger generations and that the digital storytelling method is a 'brilliant' way to do it.

Laurea used also digital storytelling as part of the World Design Capital (WDC) - event, which The Metropolitan area (Espoo, Helsinki, Kauniainen and Vantaa) is hosting. Espoo's responsibility lies on Welfare issues. The UAS was one of the places that people could visit as part of this initiative and have a programme of events. It involved the nurses, social workers and physiotherapists. These WDC – active age events were 6-7.3.2012. The Laura students run their DigiTales workshops over these two days. There was an "open hour" to see how to make digital stories for every elderly visiting this WDC-active age event.

## 2 Evaluation methodology

In order to evaluate we set the following project aims and objectives against a series of indicators and methods for gathering evidential data, thereby creating an evaluation framework<sup>12</sup>.

### 2.1 Project aims and objectives

Objectives	Aims
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<p>1. Reducing the digital exclusion of older people by increasing their ability to use computers and the internet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities to acquire expertise in the digital story telling methodology through digitals</li> <li>• Developing and extending working practice with elderly people</li> <li>• Training local people through training trainers</li> <li>• Raising awareness of elderly digital exclusion</li> </ul>
<p>2. Addressing social isolation by extending digital democratisation and empowerment through local participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaining greater awareness of how the method can be applied in different contexts through work in Slovenia, Romania and Finland</li> <li>• Developing and extending working practice with elderly people</li> <li>• Raising awareness of elderly digital exclusion</li> <li>• Training local people through training trainers</li> </ul>
<p>3. Fostering intercultural and intergenerational dialogue on a local, international and European level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training local people through training trainers</li> <li>• Creation of accessible archive of films</li> <li>• Producing and disseminating a documentary film</li> <li>• Partnership working and exchange of expertise and experience</li> </ul>
<p>4. Developing and sharing good practice within and beyond the Partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner meetings</li> <li>• Gaining greater awareness of how the method can be applied in different contexts through work in Slovenia, Romania and Finland</li> <li>• Developing and extending working practice with elderly people</li> <li>• Learning directly from expertise and knowledge in interactive distribution</li> </ul>

## **2.2 Methodology and approach**

The overall aim of this evaluation was to capture the value of the project for all involved that is the partners, trainers and participants. As the project was piloting the effectiveness of the digital storytelling method as a way of engaging older people with IT, we had a particular interest in what worked and what didn't work, with the aim of beginning to frame an adaptable delivery model. Therefore the purpose of this evaluation is to:

- Meet project requirements
- Produce a record that synthesises the work of the partnership, its outcomes and achievements and highlights any emerging good practice
- To support future work that builds on the piloting of this model.

CUCR's approach to the evaluation set out to be participative, formative and summative; that is holding up a mirror to the project processes, providing a space for intercultural dialogue regarding the challenges and benefits of participatory media, and identifying lessons and informing future work for a wide range of stakeholders concerned with the digital divide and the potential of digital story telling across partner countries.

CUCR's role in the partnership was to utilise their experience of evaluation in order to share evaluation methods with practitioners, and to evidence and disseminate the potential benefit impact of media evaluation methodologies in the UK to other countries. CUCR therefore undertook a series of evaluation activities that were detailed in the project

evaluation framework (see appendix 1). This document set out the project objectives against a set of indicators and methods by which data would be collected and achievement assessed. At the inception meeting in Slovenia partners were asked about their experiences of evaluation, and their expectations of the evaluation in order to inform the design and delivery of this. We also identified partner organisations challenges and the potential learning that could emerge from the project. Partners agreed common procedures for recording project activities and their impact and targets.

The evaluation activities relied on the participation of the delivery partners as they would have an active presence at the points of delivery. Therefore to support this CUCR developed a set of evaluation tools which included:

- Session logs
- Partner baseline forms
- Case study formats
- Participant feedback forms.

This information was enhanced by the CUCR team also employing the following methods:

- Session observations
- Site visits (Romania)
- Interviews with staff
- Trainee trainers feedback at training sessions
- Project updates
- Partner meetings
- Review of project material
- Verbal feedback from participants
- Review of the participants digital stories.

Through gathering all of this evaluation material an interim report was produced, which was shared with the partnership. This contributed towards sharing progress and learning to date. Evaluation activities then continued alongside delivery. This report therefore presents findings from the collation and analysis of all of the project data.

### **3 Project experiences, themes and learning**

In this section we map the project aims and objectives against examples and themes that have emerged from evaluation activity. We consider the objectives in relation to participants, trainers and wider communities and the benefits to them.

#### **3.1 From digital exclusion to digital inclusion**

- For most of the participants this course represented a shift from exclusion to inclusion. The combination of an engaging methodology, skilled and patient trainers and the

development of creative partnerships and patience of the trainers meant that older people were engaged and supported in crossing the barriers which had limited their access to, and use of ICT prior to the project. Many participants reported being very keen to continue with ITC beyond the sessions, for example by investing in their own laptops. The sample that completed feedback questionnaires reported very high increases in confidence as well as increases in skills levels.

- Slovenian participants described how the workshops exceeded their expectations and that they realised that “it is never too late to learn”.
- In Finland participants were surprised at the level of progress they could make in a short time with little help. This was a boost for their confidence.



### **3.2 From social isolation to participation**

- One of the resounding themes which emerged from the final conference in Maribor was the strong friendships which had been built between participants and trainers through the workshops. Digital storytelling is an effective process which works well in the warm and welcoming atmosphere created by trainers and which also provides fertile ground for friendships flourish. This is encapsulated in a statement from a Romanian participant who said ECP “put us together, and we danced and laughed and created stories and it changed our lives”.
- Given that the Romanian context is one in which there are few activities for older people, the course was attractive and unusual. Many participants came from rural locations and so geographical isolation as well as digital isolation was an issue. This social exchange was as important to the participants as the creative learning process. A

number of people reported their groups as 'feeling like a family' and therefore the social aspects of the learning environments were a primary motivation. For the majority the experience was positive and therefore there was hope that there would be continuing participation, for example attending the library, attending further courses and maintaining links with the librarian trainers and other participants.

- In Slovenia and Finland trainers and participants commented on the value of coming together meet other older people and make new friends. Participants set up and exchanged e-mail addresses with the aim of continuing to keep in touch. The opportunity to come together in a creative activity was valued and sharing this helped develop friendships. However, In the Finnish context where older people often experience geographical isolation, (for example living ten or twenty miles from their nearest neighbours), organising group workshops was challenging and resource intensive, for example providing transport for participants.

### **3.3 Intergenerational and intercultural dialogue**

- The project brought about intercultural and intergenerational exchange throughout its lifetime. At the outset of the project participating partners had the opportunity to exchange experiences of their national cultural context regarding the aging population aging such as geographical isolation, out migration of a younger generation and the provision of social activities for older people. Intergenerational exchange was central to the process bringing about mutual respect and appreciation. The training sessions in London, attended by the trainees, and the final conference in Maribor were moments of intercultural exchange between partners, trainees and older people where stories were shared and mutual encouragement was in evidence.