Innovation to Market Plan

In the context of EU project WE4AHA: Widening the support for large scale uptake of Digital Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing

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The Innovation to Market Plan is a deliverable of the WE4AHA Coordination and Support Action (CSA)\(^1\). The project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under the Grant Agreement n. 769705.

The present document contains a summary of the first release full deliverable ‘D3.2 Innovation to Market (I2M) Plan and updates’.

WE4AHA CSA is aimed at providing administration, external communication and coordination mechanisms for the benefit of the stakeholder groups and partners engaged in the development and implementation of the EIP on AHA itself and its horizontal initiatives, Blueprint, I2M and MAFEIP.

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<tr>
<td>AHA</td>
<td>Active and Healthy Ageing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blueprint</td>
<td>Blueprint Digital Transformation of Health and Care for the Ageing Society</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<td>EEA</td>
<td>European Economic Area</td>
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<td>EIP on AHA</td>
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<td>EU</td>
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<td>EUCU</td>
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<td>I2M</td>
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<td>KOLs</td>
<td>Key Opinion Leaders</td>
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<td>MAFEIP</td>
<td>Monitoring and Assessment Framework for the EIP on AHA</td>
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<td>REP</td>
<td>Repository of Innovative Practices</td>
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<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and medium sized enterprises</td>
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<tr>
<td>WE4AHA</td>
<td>Widening the support for large scale uptake of Digital Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSA</td>
<td>Coordination and Support Action</td>
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*Table 1: Abbreviations*
Executive summary

The ageing of the population together with the growing burden of chronic conditions and multi-morbidity are steadily increasing demand for health and care. This means health and social care systems have to develop a different approach to enable more effective care delivery and to confront the complexity of different services which patients are now expected to navigate.

The Communication\(^2\) released by the European Commission on the digital transformation of health and care has stressed that the utilisation of digital solutions, all of which provide the necessary means to deliver efficient and cost-effective care, is central to the success of this transformation.

During last years, several initiatives and cooperation structures have flourished to address demographic change and draw lessons on how the EU can successfully build an innovation ecosystem to tackle the ageing of the EU’s population.

In particular, the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Health Ageing (EIP on AHA) was launched by the Commission as a pilot under the Innovation Union flagship initiative of the Europe 2020 strategy with the aims to increase by two the average number of healthy life years of Europeans by 2020, while simultaneously achieving a triple win by (i) improving the quality of people’s lives, (ii) supporting the long-term sustainability of health care systems and (iii) creating economic opportunities for innovative businesses\(^3\).

Over the years, the EIP on AHA has helped to build a strong and growing network of likeminded stakeholders, provided prominence to proven solutions, opened up new markets, and influenced both local, regional and national policies.

As noted in the recent European Commission Staff Working Document which is summarising the Partnership’s achievements and setting the basis for future actions\(^4\), the EIP on AHA provides a valuable platform to work with leading innovators on the supply side who are developing new digital services and products and with pioneers on the demand side of health and care innovation, notably from the regional and local healthcare authorities that are responsible for health and care services delivering to citizens across the EU.

The WE4AHA Coordination and Support Action

In this context, the WE4AHA CSA, funded under the H2020 Programme, aims to advance the effective, large-scale uptake and impact of Digital Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing (AHA), building on a comprehensive set of support and promotion services. Through WE4AHA’s centralised administration, coordination and external communication activities, the relevant stakeholders are mobilised to further develop the EIP on AHA and promote and implement its horizontal initiatives: Innovation to Market (I2M), Blueprint Digital Transformation of Health and Care for the Ageing Society (Blueprint) and the Monitoring and Assessment Framework for the EIP on AHA (MAFEIP).


\(^3\) European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (2011), Strategic Implementation Plan (http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/active-healthy-ageing/steering-group/implementation_plan.pdf).

The Innovation to Market Initiative and Plan

The I2M initiative is destined to identify measures (beyond funding) that could contribute to help innovative SMEs and start-ups to scale up their solutions (products or services) and explore market opportunities across the EU. It aims to improve the match between the demand side and the supply side within the AHA, by engaging in a dialogue and organising a series of activities meant to involve both sides of the market.

To support the large-scale uptake and therefore impact of digital innovations for active and healthy ageing, WE4AHA is proposing and will support a series of activities and services, called the “Innovation to Market Plan” in order to facilitate relationships and mutual understanding between the supply and the demand side of the AHA sector. Prior to the Plan, WE4AHA had identified gaps and barriers hindering the rolling out and upscaling of innovation solutions onto the European markets.

The I2M activities are addressed both to buyers and providers of solutions for AHA. More specifically, the initiative, within the EIP on AHA framework, targets suppliers that are already operating at a national / regional level and have ambitions to scale-up their digital health and care solutions in a cross-border context. It also focuses on buyers and supports them in addressing their unmet needs for AHA solutions.

The I2M activities, prioritised basing on stakeholders’ indications and time and resources availability, will be implemented until the end of the EIP on AHA mandate (2020) by the WE4AHA upon agreement and guidance from the European Commission. The others will remain at the level of recommendations as I2M legacy for possible further execution.

Where to find more information about the Innovation to Market

Further information about the I2M, launch of activities, organised events and initiatives will be regularly published on the EIP on AHA Portal (https://ec.europa.eu/eip/ageing/home_en) and deepened in the I2M dedicated page (https://ec.europa.eu/eip/ageing/innovation-market-i2m_en).
1. Background

The overall goal of the European Commission is to reach out to a large number of regions that invest in digital innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing (AHA) to benefit millions of people in Europe and increase the uptake of innovative solution. Such ambition is reflected in the European Blueprint on Digital Transformation of Health and Care for the Ageing Society which was originally presented and discussed at the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP on AHA) Conference of Partners in December 2016 and updated at the end of 2018⁵.

For the European Commission’s goals to be achieved, it is necessary to pursue joint collaborative efforts across different multi-stakeholders’ organisations that can maximise efforts and attain large-scale, sustainable deployment of digitally-enabled innovative solutions for improved health and care delivery to the ageing population.

Addressing the demand side of the digital transformation of health and care, the Commission will help Member States and regional authorities develop their capacity to engage in this transformation and receive technical assistance⁶. To this aim, the EC is and will leverage on the achievements and assets of existing programmes and EU initiatives such as: the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, the European Institute of Technology’s Knowledge and Innovation Community on Health, the Member State Steering Group on Health Promotion and Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases, the EU Expert Group on Health Systems Performance Assessment, the Active Assisted Living Joint Programme community, as well as the Internet of Things platforms for digital health and care under the Digitising European Industry initiative.

To this purpose, the European Commission has recently released a study⁷ to identify and mobilise the relevant organisations involved in the scaling up of innovation in Europe, qualify and quantify their investment in implementation of innovative solutions for active and healthy ageing and establish collaborative commitments ensuring that impact from these investments in innovation are maximised.

By helping to maximise the potential of the digital internal market with a wider deployment of digital products and services in health and care, the proposed actions also aim to stimulate growth and promote the European industry in the domain.

These suggestions for action are thus clearly related to the currently running coordination and support action WE4AHA in which the Innovation to Market Initiative aims at exploring the opportunities for cross-border scaling up of digital health and care solutions in the AHA domain. The Initiative, aligned with the objectives of the Communication on Digital Transformation on Health and Care in the Digital Single Market, has engaged key opinion leaders and relevant stakeholders from the EIP on AHA community (i.e. Action Group members and Reference Sites) as well as SMEs and startups active in designing, developing and delivering AHA digitally-enabled solutions. They have been involved

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through a participatory mechanism focusing on the definition of measures that might improve the national and cross-border deployment of those solutions at a large scale.

The insights and suggestions for actions gathered through such process represent the ground on which the Innovation to Market Plan has been designed. This Plan will support the stakeholders from the demand side (purchasers) and from the supply side (in particular SMEs and start-ups), in order to trigger more and larger investments in digitally-enabled solutions for AHA, and to develop a mutual knowledge leading to more relevant solutions for the current needs and challenges that the EU health and care systems are facing.

In this direction, the Innovation to Market Plan is strictly linked to the other two cross-cutting initiatives that feed the EIP on AHA and support its two foundational pillars (Action Groups and Reference Sites), namely the above mentioned Blueprint, which is conveying the shared policy vision of the Partnership on how innovation enabled by a Digital Single Market can transform health and care provision and contribute to the European Silver Economy, and the MAFEIP impact assessment tool, which provides all organizations in the health and care sector with the capacity and knowledge needed to support evidence-based decision-making processes and enable better selection and prioritisation of investments (Figure 1).

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**Figure 1: EIP on AHA cycle 2018-2020**

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This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Grant Agreement No. 769705.
2. Methodology: the I2M co-creation process

The objective of the I2M Plan is to overcome barriers for innovation uptake and the scaling up of AHA solutions. To achieve the overall aim of the I2M Initiative, the Plan identifies which actions could be pursued by the EIP on AHA community and the European Commission in order to support the growth and competitiveness of EU innovative companies.

The Plan has been generated through a participatory process, as illustrated in Figure 2.

During the data collection phase, insights from stakeholders have been gathered combining two main sources of information:

1. Within the WE4AHA CSA, the results of a survey and a series of qualitative interviews, addressed to SMEs and start-ups that had benefitted from EU funding, aimed at capturing information around market gaps observed within the European AHA sector. These organisations were invited to express their views on the relevance of potential supporting actions that could be launched to facilitate the growth of their business and the identification of new AHA market opportunities across Europe;

2. Within the "Large-scale sustainable deployment of digitally-enabled innovation for health and care delivery to the ageing population" study⁹, the findings of a parallel survey addressing public purchasers (regional/local public authorities, payers) of digital enabled innovative AHA solutions. The survey aimed at detecting the plan of investments in digital-enabled solutions in the next near future and understanding the key challenges and barriers the buyers have identified on the European AHA market.

![Figure 2. Steps towards the I2M plan elaboration](image)

Most barriers, gaps and challenges identified and investigated in the subsequent analysis phase have resulted to be mainly related to:

- Communication flow from supply to demand,

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- Communication flow from demand to supply,
- Highly Fragmented market,
- Lack of harmonisation in the European regulatory framework,
- Type of organizations involved,
- Funding needs.

On the basis of the findings of such analysis, the elaboration of the I2M Plan rested upon a co-design methodology, specifically the active involvement of Key Opinion Leaders previously identified among the surveyed stakeholders and who are indeed acknowledged as co-authors of the I2M Plan.

The present Plan has been developed and progressively revised and enriched according to the feedback received by interested stakeholders from the supply and demand side through different “validation rounds”.

**Figure 3: Design thinking methodology**

The first validation round, the “I2M Stakeholder Forum” held in Brussels in June 2018, offered the opportunity to SMEs, start-up and purchasers, mainly represented by public procurers, to highlight real life experiences of barriers encountered when buying or supplying innovative solutions in a number of exemplary AHA scenarios.

In participative sessions, the Forum’s participants designed and delineated actions and services that would address current hindrances for scaling up innovations for AHA. Importantly, the Forum reached the conclusion that support services should not solely be aiming at the suppliers of innovation side but also at facilitating the buyers’ purchase process.

10 Source: [https://www.nngroup.com/articles/design-thinking/](https://www.nngroup.com/articles/design-thinking/).
Two other validation rounds, in the form of on-line meetings to facilitate the enlargement of the contributing stakeholders, took place at a later stage to validate, enrich and further refine the main results of the Forum.

The methodology applied, aligned with the Design Thinking principles as outlined in Figure 3, enabled joint ownership of the outcomes produced, aiming at a better adherence to the desired impacts. Hence the I2M Plan belongs to the AHA community of both suppliers and buyers and serve the interests of the quadruple helix.

The validation rounds’ identified challenges and call for actions have been grouped in the I2M Plan and declined into four areas of interventions.

The resulted list of actions, described in the following sections, should be considered as the whole set of services recommended by the stakeholders involved so far in the various events organised around the I2M Initiative. Basing on prioritisations criteria, as described in the Plan conclusive section, the recommended actions will be actualised upon agreement with the European Commission and taking into account the WE4AHA perimeter both in terms of financial resources and time constrains.

Within such perimeter, a set of short term I2M priority actions will be carried out by the end of 2020 whilst some of the activities proposed, whose impact and maintenance will overcome the current EIP on AHA mandate, should be intended as recommendations for possibly orienting future strategies and longer-term actions.
3. Innovation to Market Initiative and Plan: aims and actions

The I2M initiative is destined to identify concrete measures that could contribute to help innovative SMEs and start-ups to scale up their solutions (products or services) and explore market opportunities across EU. At the same time, it aims to improve the match between the demand side and the supply side within the AHA, by engaging interested actors in a dialogue and organising a series of activities meant to involve both sides of the market.

To achieve the overall aims of the initiative, the I2M Plan identifies a set of actions (Table 2) could be pursued by the EIP on AHA community and the European Commission in order to support the growth and competitiveness of EU innovative companies.

Concretely, the I2M Plan aims at:

1. increasing the awareness of the European healthcare stakeholders about the potential benefits of AHA technologies, encouraging their adoption and assisting them in the process, in order to support the growth and competitiveness of EU innovative companies,
2. facilitating the efficient communication to bridge the gap between demand and supply within the AHA market by engaging in a dialogue and provide the suitable means,
3. providing valuable skills and information on AHA to companies and healthcare managers as well as policy makers to facilitate the identification of market opportunities across the EU,
4. identifying relevant innovative practices that can be incorporated and replicated in the AHA ecosystem,
5. supporting potential AHA buyers in the systematic identification of unmet needs.

To meet those aims, the I2M Plan outlines which actions could be pursued by the EIP on AHA community and the European Commission in order to support the growth and competitiveness of EU innovative companies, filling the gaps, currently detected on the European AHA market, that hamper the large-scale cross-border uptake of digital innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing.

Table 2: I2M actions and Related Objectives

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<td>2. Expanding repository of innovative practices</td>
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<td>1. Matchmaking sessions</td>
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<th>Action line 3: Transfer activities</th>
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<td>1. Dissemination strategy</td>
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<td>2. Networks</td>
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<td>3. Actions on social media</td>
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Table 3 maps the different action lines according to the category of stakeholders they are going to address.
3.1. **Action line 1: Visibility and awareness activities**

3.1.1. **Adoption awards**

**Background**

Although a great number of “innovation awards” already exist, their impact is considered relatively modest since they rarely lead to successful scale-up of innovative AHA solutions for SMEs and start-ups. The adoption award rewards a tandem of both buyer and supplier for the adoption of an innovative solution. Hence it is not purely the technology that is given additional publicity but the process that both producer and procurer embraced to implement a new technology for AHA as well as the successful implementation that will help scalability of the initiative.

**Description**

**Objective:** To identify AHA uptake success stories, promoting successful tandem and give visibility and recognition to the first adopters of cutting-edge innovation in eHealth.

**Target participants:** AHA organizations (buyers/adopters) & Companies (suppliers)

The proposed action will empower the figure of “European adoption pioneers”, so their experiences and lessons-learned can inspire further organizations. The testimonies of successful outcomes are expected to encourage others to incorporate digital innovations (or an adapted version) in their own organizations. By knowing what other organizations have successfully incorporated, in collaboration with EU vendors, the risk decreases and should facilitate internal selling and positive decision making.

The implementation will be done through a competitive process, with a call open to European participants. With this approach there will be more opportunities (e.g. launch of recruitment, the live session, post-event dissemination, etc.) to promote the initiative and its outcomes and with better content.

Participants should entry by teams (adopter plus supplier), so the supplier can have also visibility and benefit from new commercialisation opportunities. The steps to be followed for the implementation of the Adoption Awards are illustrated in Figure 4.
The live event will be co-located within a major European event, to ensure a good attendance and that the audience is made up of relevant players in the field: research, business and policy stakeholders in the AHA sector.

**Expected results**

The I2M initiative will award “European adoption pioneers on AHA”, which experiences and lessons-learned can inspire further organizations. Such knowledge, coming both from the winner and finalists, will also feed the action “Online repository on resources and markets”, subsequently described, as it provides good market insights and examples of market penetration.

### 3.1.2. Expanding the EIP on AHA repository of innovative practices

**Background**

*All stakeholders, and in particular buyers/procurers, have a great interest to have access to rigorous information about validated AHA solutions. They also expressed their need of a catalogue of evidence-based and certified solutions to better plan their investment when defining the selection criteria associated to call for tenders.*

**Description**

**Objective**: To facilitate the adoption and scaling up of validated innovative AHA practices, enabling better planned and focused investments

**Target participants**: AHA organizations (buyers)

The I2M Plan proposes to address this need by establishing a structured methodology for collecting such information and make it available for consultation enriching the Repository of Innovative Practices of the EIP on AHA Portal.

In addition to the expected impact in terms of improved planning and management of AHA technology base interventions from the buyers’ side, and consequently better health outcomes for citizens, this will be a valuable opportunity for SMEs and start-ups to showcase their products and services with scaling up potential.

Adding value and content to the work already undertaken within the EIP on AHA Repository of Innovative Practices, additional innovations will be incorporated. New sources of information will be, for example, the I2M Adoption Awards candidate practices and those practices applying for twinning programmes within the WE4AHA framework.

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11 [https://ec.europa.eu/eip/ageing/repository](https://ec.europa.eu/eip/ageing/repository)
To select those innovative solutions, a set of specific criteria will be proposed and shared with external experts, agreed with the EC, in order to compile a scorecard.

Among these criteria, as an example, it will be crucial to determine how consolidated is the position of the product/service into the market, which can be assessed by scoring solutions according to a scale measuring different states of product/service maturity.

**Expected results**

The enriched repository will contribute to informing buyers better about existing solutions and avoiding spending time and financial resources in looking for something different from what already exists and might be compliant with the needs to be satisfied.

### 3.1.3. Needs showcase and solutions scouting platform

**Background**

The digital health and AHA market is difficult to navigate since it is quite young and, due to its technological nature, constantly evolving. The resulting lack of misty environment can discourage actors’ interaction and cooperation. This explains the necessity to create an online map that provides clear information and encourages interaction among the actors in the sector such as a permanent “marketplace” allowing easier exchange of information between buyers and suppliers and facilitating transactions.

**Description**

**Objective:** To facilitate the matchmaking between supply and demand by providing a tool for needs showcase and solutions scouting in AHA

**Target participants:** AHA organizations, suppliers, investors, regulatory and legal experts, business supporters, big corporations (pharma/MedTech companies) and healthcare organisations.

The planned activities include to leverage on the eHealth hub platform\(^{12}\), an online catalogue that identifies key European eHealth players.

The eHealth Hub Platform aims to enable stakeholders’ interaction to promote and facilitate business growth by showcasing demand side needs and interests and suppliers’ potential solutions, facilitating the possible matching and start of a business discussion.

The platform can be leveraged to the AHA market, boosting collaborative exchanges among the AHA ecosystem players.

SMEs and other AHA stakeholders will be encouraged to register to the platform so that they both increase their visibility and find new opportunities. By registering, the stakeholders will be presented among more than 400 players already displayed on the platform (data of September 2018).

**Expected results**

Easier identification of current needs of AHA stakeholders. Scouting of AHA solutions at ease, powered by the different search filters the platform offers. Savings in time and facilitated matchmaking between supply and demand is expected, as each party clearly identify needs and potential opportunities.

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\(^{12}\) [https://platform.ehealth-hub.eu/](https://platform.ehealth-hub.eu/)
3.2. **Action line 2: Knowledge brokerage and matchmaking services**

3.2.1. **Matchmaking sessions**

**Background**

*Organisations in the AHA sector have very specific requirements and workflows, and solutions often need to be tailored and adapted. Matchmaking sessions dedicated to specificities, unifying both the supply and the demand side, are of much greater value than generalist “forums”, preventing real synergies and exchange of relevant knowledge and experience.*

**Description**

**Objective:** To facilitate networking and matchmaking between demand-side stakeholders and AHA solution owners and developers. To support AHA organizations seriously looking to procure a digital health solution in the near future but not finding their perfect match in the market, either because there is no perfect or because the match is outside their field of vision.

**Target participants:** AHA organizations (buyers and suppliers)

This service aims at organising physical matchmaking sessions based on identified unmet needs between demand organisations and potential solutions’ suppliers, connecting buyers/procurers with close-match solutions and allow the solution owners to work on tailoring their offering to come as close as possible to a perfect match for the potential buyers.

The service also looks at needs that are still not well covered by the market because a suitable solution is not already or completely available, facilitating new business opportunities for SMEs that might increase the chances of success for a concrete adoption of a developing solution.

Matchmaking sessions can adopt two different formats:

**Speed matchmaking**

Leveraging the Adoption Awards event, as it attracts a number of AHA organisations from the demand and supply side, a networking session will be organised among the finalists, jury of experts and attendees. Time will be devoted for participants to meet, understand their needs and find potential collaboration opportunities and synergies.

**Need-driven matchmaking**

The steps to be followed for the implementation of the need-driven matchmaking sessions are those indicated in Figure 5.

*Figure 5: Implementation of the need-driven matchmaking sessions*

A call, providing details on nature of needs, selection criteria, deadlines, dates of the live event, requirements to participate, will be launched, in agreement with the EC, to be openly published and disseminated through the EIP on AHA channels.

Four needs will be selected to set the topics in the need-driven matchmaking sessions. Once the needs are selected, the recruitment for AHA demand stakeholders interested in the selected needs will start as well as the identification of companies that can provide the best possible solutions to the selected needs. A total of sixteen companies, selected through an open call, will be invited to participate in the live event.
The matchmaking event will consist in several parallel sessions focused on the previously identified needs, interested buyers/procurers and selected companies with close-matching solutions. The session will be co-located with a major event, such as next EIP on AHA Conference of Partners13, to ensure a good and qualified attendance. In its 6th edition, more than 350 participants attended, including the Action Groups and the Reference Sites.

Expected results

The action line is expected to result in suppliers getting a better understanding on their customers’ needs and how to align their technology to better solve their requests. At the same time, it is foreseen that AHA buyers will get to know several potential solutions to solve their needs. Ultimately, it will mean new business contacts for both parties and might result in commercial conversations.

3.2.2. Training sessions on AHA innovation adoption

Background

On several occasions, I2M stakeholders outlined that while a great number of trainings were available for the suppliers of AHA innovations, not such a great number were specifically addressing the needs of the buyers. Most buyers stated that they were not always adequately trained to even identify their own needs and guide their choices in terms of AHA innovations.

Description

**Objective:** Guide buyers/procurers along the AHA innovation buying process, covering the whole cycle starting from need identification to the adoption of the solution.

**Target participants:** AHA organizations (buyers/procurers)

This action includes two training sessions (online and physical) on innovation adoption funding for AHA buyers/procurers (i.e. unmet need identification, access to untapped sources of funding, IT partner scouting, scalability of pilots, and cultural change for innovation).

**Face-to-face training session**

Potential participants for the training sessions are AHA organisations interested in innovation adoption. Invitations will be sent to buyers attending the identified event to co-locate the training session.

To reach additional interested attendees, the EIP on AHA communication and awareness creation channels will be used to encourage participation of interested organisations.

The methodology for the training session will include both a “master-class” and a participative method to facilitate the sharing of experiences, good practices and common mistakes.

The training content will be mainly based on 5 circles of activity (Figure 6):

- **Needs identification.** Adopted solutions must contribute value to the organization, the business or to the clients. Otherwise, they will likely fail. Therefore, the adoption of a solution must start by identifying the underlying problem or need. The training will highlight the importance of identifying unmet needs before scouting solutions. How to do it in a systematic manner and ensure it is aligned to the organisational strategy.

- **Procurement process and access to funding.** Information about the general functioning of procurement processes will be provided.

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- **IT partner scouting.** Participants will be informed on what are the key aspects to consider when looking for an IT partner that matches their needs. Resources and references will also be provided about where they can start searching for solutions.

- **Cultural change and incentives for innovation.** The culture of an organisation is its DNA. Success of the adoption requires that the organisation and its management values are supportive when introducing changes such as adopting a new technology. The training will create awareness about the importance of organisational culture, cultural change and management support for the successful adoption of innovation.

- **Moving beyond pilots (scalability).** Pilots are increasingly being used by healthcare organizations to test the value of innovations. A percentage of these pilots are successful, meaning that organizations can directly assess whether the innovation improves value and/or reduces costs. However, most pilots are not widely scaled-up and adopted across the testing organization, in spite of evidence of success. Not incorporating an innovative solution that has proved successful is a waste for the organization that has invested time, money and opportunity costs in the pilot. Recommendations will be given to overcome such problems.

![Figure 6: The five main topics of the training on innovation adoption](image)

*Training Webinar*

After the physical training, a webinar will be organised to reach other AHA interested organizations. During the webinar, key insights will be presented in a more agile format. Still, enough time will be devoted for questions and answers after the main presentation.

**Expected results**

Increase the knowledge and the capability of the demand stakeholders in the management of innovative procurements. A final satisfaction survey will be sent to training participants to assess whether the insights provided have: increase their awareness on the procurement processes and offered them good practices on needs identification, partner scouting and innovation management.

### 3.2.3. Online training session for SMEs

**Background**

89% of the consulted SMEs and start-ups support this activity by aiming to facilitate the access to private investors (in such fields as venture capital, capital risk, private equity, and seed money). Almost all respondents point out the lack of capitalisation and funding as a key issue in the development of European companies and their internationalisation.

SMEs in particular are suffering from the so-called funding gap (Figure 7): even when successfully accessing funding, most SMEs lack long-term financing in order to successfully bring their products onto the market.

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Grant Agreement No. 769705
Innovation to Market Plan

Figure 7: Funding gap for start-ups and SMEs before accessing the market

Description

**Objective:** To train SMEs and start-ups on how to present a business value proposition in a clear and convincing way, being able to explain the potential of a business idea and catch the attention of investors.

**Target participants:** SMEs and start-ups (suppliers)

Being investment ready can make or break a business. Many of the solutions developed within the eHealth and AHA sectors are based on a large amount of research and R&D activities. For these solutions to be successfully brought to market, external funding is most often needed to finance the development of the product, build the clinical evidence and support its early commercialisation. It is therefore crucial for entrepreneurs to identify and approach the right investors. Lack of adequate training often result in a dangerous knowledge gap about equity as an alternative source of finance and, consequently, would seriously compromise innovative SMEs ability to be successful.

This action is designed to help suppliers to understand what is required for them to attract funding on access to private funding. The sessions are conceived as online training, as the target group have limited personnel, time and financial resources and respond well to the online format. It aims at training SMEs and start-ups on which are the key elements needed to present a business value proposition in a clear and convincing way, being able to explain the potential of a business idea and catch the attention of investors.

The two-hour training session will focus on:

- **Market analysis:** a short online session will accompany the SMEs in conducting or accessing market analysis for their product or solution for AHA and determine whether it really is innovative,
- **Access to private funding:** an interactive session will give advice and insights to innovators for pitching in front of investors,
- **Business plan support:** business modelling and lean start-up principles will be covered in this session,
- **Access to markets:** an overview of different reimbursement systems will be offered.
Expected results

SMEs and start-ups will be better prepared in order to obtain funding and remain on the market up until they achieve their first return on investments. The online training session materials will be uploaded on the EIP on AHA Portal for further use.

3.2.4. Online repository of reimbursement systems

Background

Several studies have shown that digital health companies face significant barriers that prevent them from reaching their potential. Specifically, the Commission has found that SMEs have difficulty with product registration, reimbursement, procurement, distribution channels, health technology assessment and access to R&D incentives.

In particular, reimbursement is a major focus for healthcare stakeholders in today’s cost-conscious healthcare environment. A good market and needs analysis, as well as successful funding for the first stages of innovation development, must be combined with a thorough knowledge of national reimbursement systems in order to secure market uptake. Companies that understand the reimbursement pathway for their new technology and can add real value compared to existing alternative solutions will be positioned to succeed in this changing marketplace.

Description

Objective: To facilitate the access to information on national reimbursement systems in the EU, supporting the suppliers in their price setting hence their chance of returns on investments.

Target participants: SMEs and start-ups (suppliers)

An online reimbursement system repository will respond to the most pressing needs of SMEs: a simple and centralised source of information guiding the users towards national guidelines and – whenever available – assessment methods for placing an innovative product or a service on the respective AHA market.

This service, that represents a recommendation for possible future implementation, should rely on work already undertaken by existing initiatives, combining the information available at European level and national level.

The implementation of the repository will possibly start with the identification and gathering of all available information on the national reimbursement systems of all EU Member States as well as, optionally, the four states included in the European Economic Area (EEA) and the other four participants of the European Union Customs Union (EUCU). This scoping work will take into account existing studies in the field as well as relevant running European projects such as the H2020 HTx project among others.

Reimbursement of AHA innovative solutions should be highlighted whenever possible.

Expected results

SMEs and start-ups will have access to one central source of information on their potential markets, saving them time and human resources in their search for business intelligence.

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14 European Commission / EIM (2009), Study on representativeness of SME business organisations in the Member States, Published on: 11/06/2009, [https://ec.europa.eu/growth/content/study-representativeness-sme-business-organisations-member-states-0.lt](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/content/study-representativeness-sme-business-organisations-member-states-0.lt).

15 The EEA includes Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. EUCU includes bilateral agreements with Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and Turkey.

3.2.5. **Online repository on resources and market**

**Background**

*While bigger companies are usually in the position to dedicate human resources to gathering intelligence about the AHA market, smaller firms often struggle in collecting essential information prior to the development of their innovations.*

**Description**

**Objective:** To centralise information of AHA resources and markets to decrease costs for SMEs and start-ups

**Target participants:** SMEs and start-ups (suppliers)

The efforts will be focused on preparing a content repository ensuring that it is easily accessible and searchable including resource and market insights with content truly attractive to companies to provide a route to more general and effective data sharing.

The implementation will start with the identification of relevant information on AHA market, as well as public and private funding opportunities. Other resources on market penetration such as innovative practices will be added when possible as well as business opportunities. This information will be categorised and uploaded on the EIP on AHA Portal enriching the content of the Funding Opportunities page.

This information will be provided on a European level, as considering national divergences will be out of the scope of the project due to resource constraints.

The repository content will be also enriched by the outcome of the WE4AHA foreseen map of the European Reference Sites, which will showcase for each Reference Site its key elements according to the local quadruple helix system. The new set of information gathered will be systematised and showcased for the specific use of firms, particularly SMEs and start-ups.

**Expected results**

The EIP on AHA Portal will be enriched with information on the AHA market opportunities, other than EC funding. On the other hand, offer a centralised and attractive repository of insights for SMEs prior to the development of their innovations, decreasing their transaction and information costs.

3.3. **Action line 3: Transfer activities**

**Background**

*As a result of the consultation made in the I2M Stakeholder Forum, SMES and start-ups are in the majority considering twinning activities as positive means to transfer innovative and successful procurement experiences.*

**Description**

**Objective:** Establish personal contacts in practical exchanges and visits to each other’s regions in order to transfer innovative procurement methods for AHA solutions.

**Target participants:** AHA organizations (buyers and suppliers)

The twinning scheme, as applied in the Active and Healthy Ageing domain, aims to de-risk investment in digital innovative ICT solutions by financing the exchange of knowledge and good practice in digital health solutions with high potential for replicability and scaling up.

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This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Grant Agreement No. 769705
The I2M twinning activities, will be combined with the Reference Sites twinning schemes already planned within the EIP on AHA framework, ten in total up to 2020, and aligned with the 3 priorities of the Communication on Digital Transformation of Health and Care\(^{18}\).

**Expected results**

EIP on AHA Reference Sites represent highly inspirational ecosystems, delivering creative and workable solutions that improve the lives and health of elderly people through the involvement of different players, including regional and/or local authorities, cities, integrated hospitals/care organisations, industry, SMEs and start-ups, research and innovation organisations. The ScaleAHA study\(^ {19}\) which ran between 2015 and 2017 and supported the European Commission in fostering scaling-up of innovations in active and healthy ageing by engaging stakeholders of the EIP on AHA has already demonstrated that twinning actions offer a model for approaching the question of scaling up innovation within the EIP on AHA. Immediate outcomes consisted in the enhancement of expert knowledge and competencies in both adopter and originator organisations and formulation of recommendations for strengthening scaling-up strategies.

By getting to know their counterparts in other European Regions, buyers will see for themselves how innovations for AHA are being sourced and adopted.

Up to 3 twinnings in the first 2019 edition\(^ {20}\) will focus on the transfer of innovative practices resulted from the successful match between the originators’ needs and the solutions offered by a SME or startup active in the AHA market.

### 3.4. **Action line 4: Dissemination**

**Background**

*One of the main opportunities identified in the upscale of innovations in AHA is related to the strong commitment of public entities. The public sector benefits from innovation. Innovation results in better ways of working, increased productivity and effectiveness as well as the management of risk.*

**Description**

**Objective:** To raise awareness and ensure maximum visibility of the success stories and actions among all identified stakeholders plus the broader public.

**Target participants:** AHA organizations (buyers and suppliers)

The impact of activities and measures covered by the I2M Plan can be maximised by additional dissemination activities. Therefore, it is necessary to:

- **Enlarge the target audience:** dissemination activities will target all previously identified stakeholders of EIP on AHA, i.e. among the buyers: local, regional and national public procurer; hospitals, care homes and start-ups, SMEs and large companies,
- **Identify of the main take-away messages:** announcements, activities result and evaluation, latest highlights, news from related projects, success stories and lessons learned,
- **Establish a communication plan:** tools and channels to be used to communicate with each stakeholder,

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Establish a timetable for communication and dissemination activities,
Determine a methodology: measure the impact of the dissemination action using clear goals, aims and targets.

The following products will be produced as part of the I2M specific dissemination strategy:

- Infographics: depicting the I2M Initiative aims and Plan activities,
- Articles: EIP on AHA Portal and LinkedIn,
- News: EIP on AHA Portal news section, promoting upcoming I2M events and highlighting results achieved and success-stories,
- Testimonials: written and/or filmed to be placed on the EIP on AHA Portal, LinkedIn, Twitter.

Expected results

Better informed buyer and suppliers about activities and measures will spur interest in EIP on AHA and opportunities at the European level in order to facilitate the adoption of AHA solutions. Specifically, the communication and dissemination activities described above will contribute to mobilise all identified stakeholders, raise awareness on I2M services, and highlight opportunities offered by EIP on AHA eco-system.
4. Conclusions and next steps

The Innovation to Market Initiative mainly targets innovative SMEs and start-ups that are already operating at a national and regional level and have ambitions to the scale-up their digital health and care solutions in a cross-border context. The elaboration of the I2M Plan started with the analysis of the barriers hampering the implementation and deployment of large scale digitally-enabled solutions for the health and care. Through a participatory mechanism that has seen the involvement of relevant stakeholders and Key Opinion Leaders among the members of the EIP on AHA community aimed at capturing their view on the AHA market, a number of gaps, to be overcome, have been identified leading to recommendations for specific actions.

Translating these challenges and proposed actions in an effective action Plan, the I2M Initiative has further animated the dialogue with the engaged stakeholders to identify and validate a set of services and activities which could address barriers previously identified. These services and activities, addressed both to AHA buyers and suppliers, have been grouped into areas of action shaping the I2M Plan.

The I2M Plan is a living document. Until 2020, the Plan will be updated over two future releases. An attentive monitoring of progresses of the activities implemented, in terms of consistency and soundness towards the I2M Initiative’s defined aims and objectives, will be assured to check divergences and to align the future releases accordingly. A continuous dialogue with the European Commission, previously identified Key Opinion Leaders and new active contributing stakeholders that will be further involved leveraging on engagement coordination measures promoted within the EIP on AHA environment, will facilitate the prompt identification of AHA market orientations and priorities to be addressed to foster the European cross-border uptake of AHA innovative digital solutions.