



Toini Palo & Elina Ala-Nikkola (eds.)

# Successful Co-creation in Practice and Possible Pitfalls



## Successful Co-creation in Practice and Possible Pitfalls

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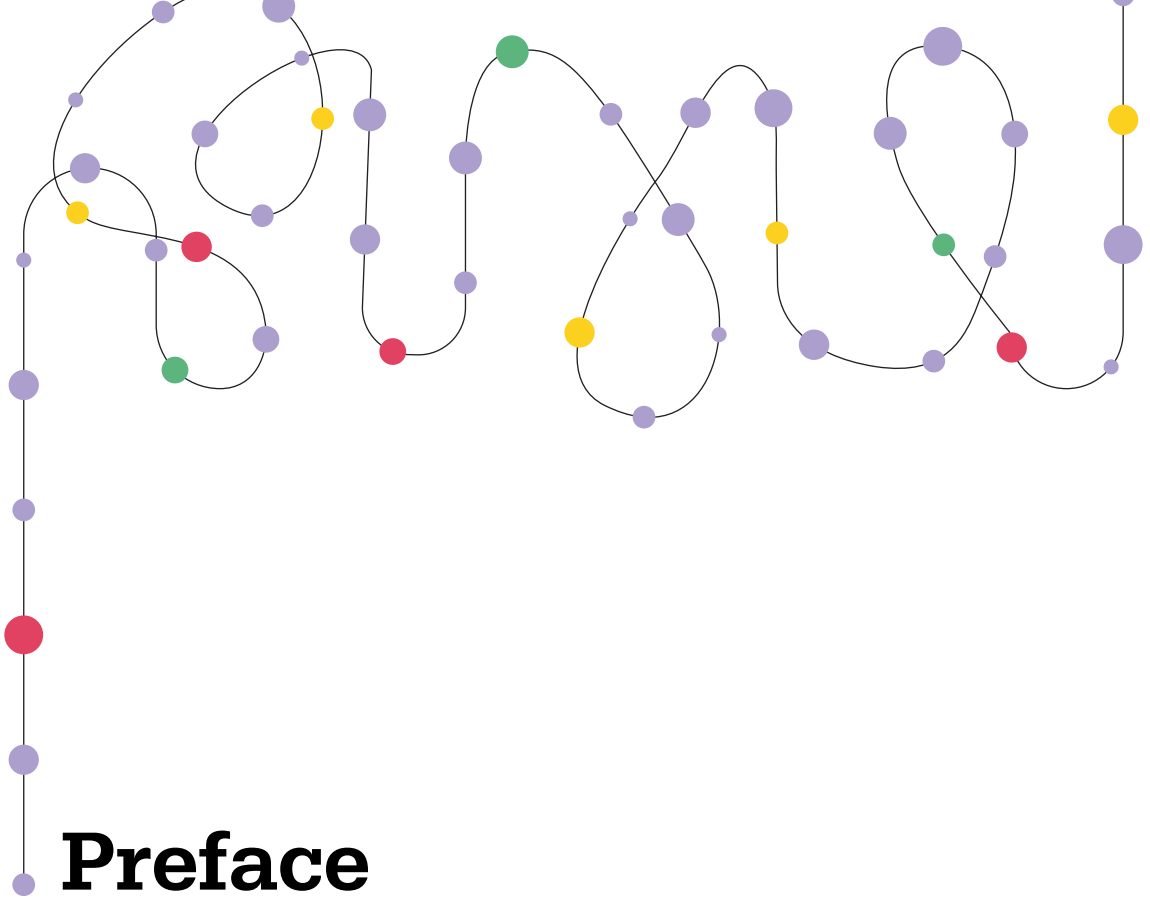
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# Preface

Changes occur rapidly in organisations' everyday life and operating environment. They highlight areas for development that require innovative thinking and solutions. Co-creation aims to establish a common understanding to ensure a smooth daily operations and improve the quality of life. Co-creation provides a space for developing new ideas, proposals for improvement and achieving optimal results through active and multi-voiced dialogue.

This compact collection of articles equips you with concrete tools and new perspectives for co-creation – from planning to implementation and follow-up stages. The information included in this publication is beneficial to people in all walks of life, including volunteers.

The first article introduces you to the principles of co-creation and gives you advice for engaging different parties in co-creation. The co-creation process is described step by step from initial planning to final evaluation. Each step of the process creates and reinforces a common understanding of the

progress of the development process, its objectives, and the potential uses of the results.

A person planning and facilitating a co-creation project must also be able to identify possible issues, so-called “pitfalls,” that they could face during the process. These pitfalls are discussed in the second article in this collection. The risk of pitfalls can be avoided through careful preparation and joint planning. This publication offers tools that will help you succeed.

The second part of the publication consists of ready-made templates that you can use to plan and launch a co-creation project with your collaborators as well as in the planning, implementation, evaluation and reporting of the project. These practical tools help both the process facilitator and the owner to ensure all parties know their roles and targets and to avoid possible pitfalls.

The publication was produced in the Design Thinking and Co-creative Learning through Transdisciplinary Simulation-based Education project. It is based on an article about successful co-creation (Harra, Lintula & Pulkkinen 2023: Onnistuneen yhteiskehittämisen toteutus), learning material on an inclusive approach to work supporting co-creation (Ala-Nikkola 2025: Osallistuva työote kehittämisen tukena) and material supporting user-oriented product development available in the TUTTUnet online service. This publication compiles the key ideas and takeaways of these materials and presents them in an easy-to-use format. It helps you get started and implement your co-creation process successfully. If you need support for the implementation of the process, you should consider collaborating with universities of applied sciences, as they are excellent co-creation project facilitators. Do not hesitate to contact a university to open new doors for your process.

We hope you find this guide useful in your co-creation journey!

In Helsinki, 19 December 2025,  
Toini Palo, Anna Kaipainen, Miia Rolamo,  
Elina Ala-Nikkola & Leila Lintula

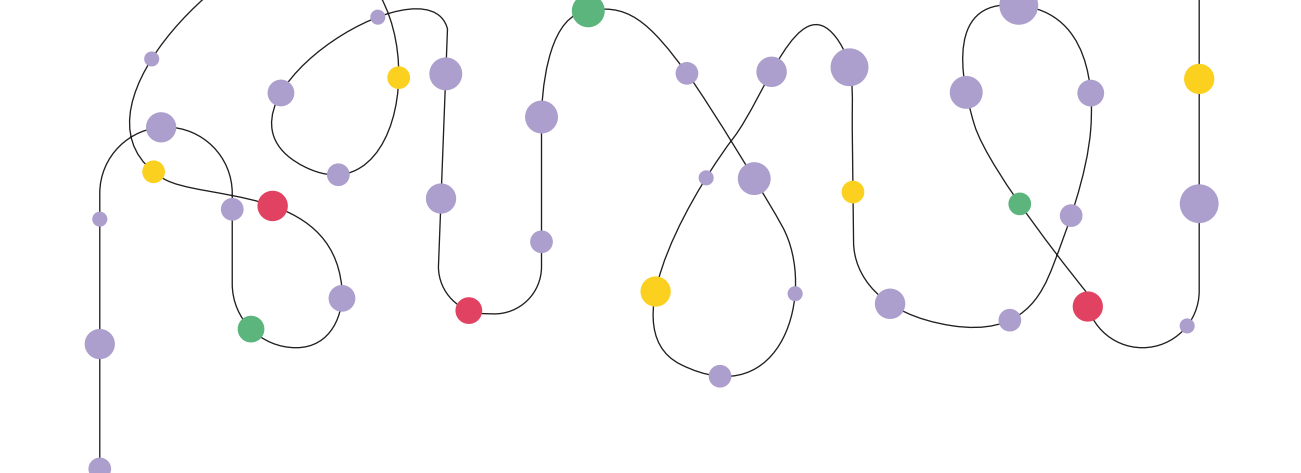
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Harra, T., Lintula, L. & Pulkkinen, M. 2023. Onnistuneen yhteiskehittämisen toteutus. In Harra, T. Kaipainen, A. & Lintula, L. (eds.) 2023. Käyttäjystävällisen ikäteknologian aallonharjalla. Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulun julkaisuja, Taito-sarja 123. Helsinki: Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulu. <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-328-407-4>

The background is a solid purple color. It is decorated with abstract white line art. This art consists of various sized circles, some overlapping, and a series of connected dots that form a winding path across the page. The dots vary in size, and the lines are thin and elegant.

# Part 1 – Articles



Toini Palo, Leila Lintula, Miia Rolamo & Anna Kaipainen

# Successful co-creation in practice

Everyday processes and work are becoming increasingly diverse and complex in all sectors. This is particularly true for development work, in which results and consequences are often difficult to predict and prepare for. Thus, we need tools to support decision-making and plan sustainable solutions and approaches that help us harness a wide range of perspectives, information, insights, and experiences to effectively address each issue on hand. Based on a democratic approach, co-creation has been proven to be an effective tool, especially in situations, where several actors are required to commit to the implementation of new solutions or a change.

## What is co-creation?

Co-creation is a method of development, in which various parties work together from the very beginning to develop services, products, working methods or solutions based on real needs. It is essential that parties approaching the object of development from different perspectives are involved in the co-creation process. These varied perspectives enable the open sharing of relevant information, experiences and ideas and help create a diverse understanding of the case on hand. The

object of co-creation is studied, shaped, and tested together to ensure optimal results and meaningful solutions that meet the established needs.

In co-creation, different organisations innovate products and services together with users to ensure the products and services developed can better meet the users' needs. Co-creation supports user-oriented and customer-oriented development alongside producer-centred activities. The users' needs are at the core of cross-disciplinary co-creation. New ideas, proposals for improvement and best solutions emerge through active and multi-voiced dialogue. Product or service users, university experts and students as well as innovative companies should be involved in the process. For example, customers and other product or service users, employees, and companies participate in co-creation. University students and experts enrich the co-creation process with their innovative thinking and multi-disciplinary understanding of the future, and they have good co-creation facilitation skills. (Harra & Lintula 2018.)

Universities often have established cooperation models for co-creation and process facilitation with a diverse group of partners. Co-creation enables the development of products and services in a user-oriented manner. As a result, the client receives concrete feedback from the end users, allowing them to improve the quality of the object under development. Every co-creation event is unique. At the end of the co-creation process, the client either implements the product as it is or continues its development through co-creation, moves on to the testing process or discovers that the product is not ready for the intended market.

In the past few years, co-creation has become a trend that is being supported by various global programmes developed by operators such as the United Nations and the European Union's



## FORMS OF WORKING TOGETHER

**Co-creation**

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**Collaboration, co-occupation**

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**Co-configuration**

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**Co-design/joint planning**

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financial programmes dedicated to development projects. Co-creation has many related concepts.

Co-creation differs from normal cooperation, in which operators work together according to common, pre-established rules (for example, football match or race). In co-creation, the rules are decided with the parties involved on a case-by-case basis. Coordination is an efficient way to move things forward. In coordination, there is one key person, the coordinator, who makes sure that the participants do their share, and the common goal is achieved. Co-creation supports joint decision-making, with the process planned and objective set together by the parties. (Denning & Yaholkovsky 2008.)

Co-creation always involves working in a group; however, it differs from traditional group work. In the latter, the objective is to divide the work into parts to streamline working. In group work, one person is often responsible for leadership and decision-making. In co-creation, leadership, the process, and decision-making are shared responsibilities and working is always guided by the following principles:

- Strong emphasis on listening and self-expression.
- Holding space for different opinions, values and views.
- Allowing all participants to contribute to the process.
- Creating additional value and a common solution together.

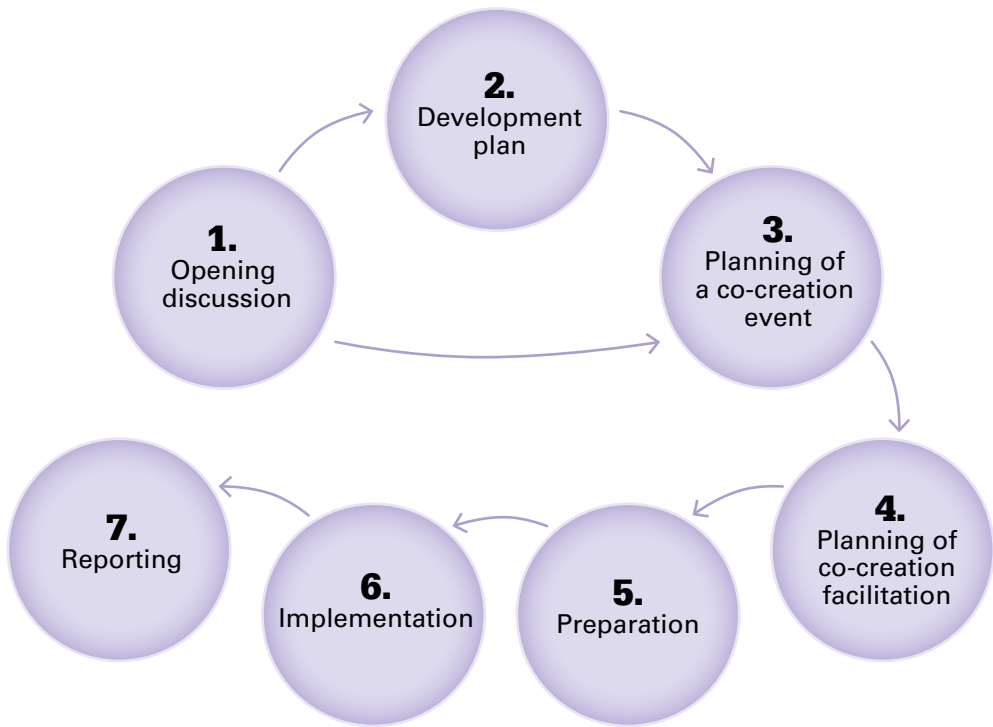
## **Face-to-face, remote and hybrid co-creation**

In addition to traditional in person events, co-creation can also be organised completely or partially remotely. This allows co-creators to join the discussion, even if they cannot attend a meeting in person, or participate in co-creation at different times. Offering the opportunity to contribute to co-creation remotely gives people, who would otherwise not be able to participate in a meeting, for example, service housing residents or their working relatives, an access to the process. It also expands the geographical scale of co-creation.

Careful preparation is important when planning a remote or hybrid co-creation process. In a remote or hybrid process, special attention must be paid to persons who need support with participating in the process, using the technological aids or expressing their views and experiences. In 2018– 2021, Metropolia carried out the “6Time HIPPA– wellbeing and better service housing through digitalisation” project, followed by the “HIPPA-Remote – Remote services for product developers to support the living of elderly people” project in 2021–2023. These projects utilised co-creation processes in many ways. Based on these pilots, we developed a common model for co-creation process organisation. The process stages are always the same regardless of the method of implementation (face-to-face, remote or hybrid). This article is based on our experiences and the feedback received, and it discusses aspects which those planning and implementing a co-creation process should consider.

## **Overall process of co-creation**

Co-creation can be utilised in many types of development projects. The co-creation process includes several steps. The process begins with the process owner, i.e. the client, and the process facilitator meeting, followed by the preparation of various plans to support the development. The final stage of co-creation is preparing a report, which includes process evaluation. The co-creation work can consist of a single co-creation event or a longer process with the goal of developing a product’s technical properties, for example. Most things



*Figure 1. Co-creation process: 1. Opening discussion 2. Development plan 3. Planning of a co-creation event 4. Planning of co-creation facilitation 5. Preparation 6. Implementation 7. Reporting*

developed through co-creation are so complex that finding an effective solution requires multiple co-thinking and information collection sessions. The seven steps of co-creation have been outlined in figure 1.

To facilitate the planning of co-creation content and the process framework, we have created forms for each step of the process to make the implementation more manageable ([Part 2, Templates](#)). These forms can also be used in remote and hybrid processes. All the forms are available free of charge, and you may use them as you see best.

The process owner, i.e. the client, and the process facilitator are the key actors in the co-creation process. The process owner ensures that all parties involved in the process share a common understanding of the objective of the co-creation process.

They are also responsible for the progress and direction of the product and service development based on the information obtained through the process. The process facilitator helps the owner set a clear objective and is responsible for facilitating the different stages of co-creation in practice. The process owner and facilitator could also be the same person, however, in most cases, it is more reasonable to assign these roles to two different people to ensure the objectivity and agility of the process.

Next, we will introduce the co-creation process step by step. In this case, the process owner and the process facilitator are two different people.

## **1. Opening discussion to launch co-creation**

Before the co-creation begins, it is recommended to have a thorough opening discussion with the client. The purpose of the discussion is to get to know each other and have the process owner (client) and the process realiser (facilitator) commit to the collaboration by establishing a common understanding of, first and foremost, the objective of the co-creation process.

We have created a template for facilitating the opening discussion (see [Part 2, Opening discussion](#)). The template questions help the process participants establish a shared idea of the client organisation and its goals for the development. At the same time, the client can set their expectations for the collaboration and its gains.

During the opening discussion, the parties go over the client's past experiences of co-creation processes. They should also discuss the product or service under development and its intended benefits for the user. This could be an existing product or service the functionality of which the client wants to improve. Alternatively, the client could be developing a completely new service and need more information for its development from users. Through co-creation, the client can find new uses and operating environments for a product or service or test new technology. In addition to getting an overview of the project and setting of objectives, the parties prepare a schedule for the process, discuss resources, and determine who will continue the planning.

## 2. Preparing a development plan

If a longer co-creation process with a wider scale is needed, the facilitator should prepare a development plan together with the client organisation (see [Part 2, Development plan](#)). In the development plan, the parties agree on the measures to be taken in addition to the co-creation event. The plan should include potential testing procedures, piloting or commercialisation and marketing measures, for example. In addition, the object, objective and purpose of the co-creation process should also be described in detail in the development plan. Collaboration of a larger scale requires the identification of potential risks related to the process, preparation of an implementation plan with a schedule, and preparation and approval of various documentation ensuring the equality and fairness of the collaboration.



The significance of the development plan is emphasised when the material produced as part of the co-creation process and its results are utilised in research or monetary compensation is paid for the implementation of the co-creation process. Where the co-creation process involves questions of data privacy and confidentiality, the development plan is binding on all parties and protects their rights and obligations.

### **3. Planning of a co-creation event**

Our experience has shown that thorough preparation has a great impact on the success of a co-creation event. The co-creation process facilitator plans the event content and



implementation based on the opening discussion held with the client. When planning the event, the facilitator considers the objectives of the event and the different considerations to be made when organising a face-to-face, remote or hybrid event.

To make event planning easier, we have prepared a template for co-creation event planning (see [Part 2, Planning of a co-creation event](#)). This template helps you make sure that all the crucial aspects have been taken into account in a structured manner. With the client, agree in good time in advance where and when the event will be held and who will be invited. To achieve the set objective and support the co-creation process, it is a good idea to prepare questions that provide structure for the event and help you stay on the topic. Ensure the success of the co-creation event by agreeing on the division of duties and methods to be used in advance.

In the case of a remote or hybrid event, it may be necessary to use multiple working platforms simultaneously. When using virtual co-creation environments that the participants are unfamiliar with, you should reserve enough time for everyone to get used to the environment and its functions. The discussion and co-creation platforms used for the co-creation event should be selected and their integration should be coordinated so that the work can proceed flexibly from one stage to another. The participants' digital skills should also be considered when selecting the platforms to be used. If possible, avoid the need for personal user credentials and platforms that require the user to log in. (See also Ala-Nikkola & Raivio 2024.)

#### **4. Planning of co-creation facilitation**

A separate plan must be prepared for co-creation facilitation (see [Part 2, Planning of co-creation facilitation](#)). Facilitation means goal-oriented guidance to help those participating in the co-creation process to achieve the objective set, for example, brainstorm new ideas or find a solution to an established problem. The facilitator can plan the facilitation alone or together with the client. The most important thing, however, is that the client knows their role and responsibilities and the concrete agenda of the co-creation event before the co-creation event. Therefore, it is a good idea to go over the plan with the client before the event. It is important to make sure that the



client trusts the facilitator's expertise and competence to select the right co-creation working methods to reach the set target.

The facilitator leads the co-creation event. There could be more than one facilitator, who take turns managing the process, but their responsibilities should be decided in advance. The facilitator provides the framework for the process and keeps it moving forward. They make sure that everyone is given an opportunity to contribute to the discussion and the working atmosphere is safe at all times.

The facilitator uses various methods, tools and means to make work in pairs or small groups more efficient, for example. We have created a facilitation plan template (reference) to make facilitation planning easier. In the template, you write down which facilitator is responsible for each stage of the co-creation event and their duties as well as the methods and tools they are to use. In recent years, several co-creation tools have been released online. For example, the open innovation and co-creation platform [Innovillage](#) and Metropolia University of Applied Sciences' [Osallistuen töissä material \(in Finnish\)](#) are available to the public free of charge. When selecting tools for co-creation, it is necessary to take into account the objective of the co-creation event, its participants, the time available, the space and materials used as well as the competence and resources of the facilitators. The facilitator may also create new tools for the event.

The implementation stage of co-creation consists of five steps: greetings and introduction, preparation, value creation, reflection of results and discussion of follow-up, and wrapping up the event and socialising. These five steps are discussed in more detail below in point six (Implementation of a co-creation event). A schedule must be prepared for each step to ensure the process is completed within the envisaged timeframe.

Since co-creation is a complex and multi-stage process, the facilitator cannot take care of everything alone. Another person is needed to monitor the time spent on each task. When working in small groups, assistants are often needed to prepare the discussion and move it forward by asking questions. In addition, the ideas and solutions emerging during the event and small group discussions must be documented for final reporting.

## **5. Preparing for a co-creation event**

At the preparation stage, the client prepares a brief on the product or service under development, which serves as the feed for the co-creation event. The brief should be to the point and contain only relevant information about the product of service. For example, the client could share their experiences of the benefits and shortcomings of the product and feedback received from current users. The brief should discuss information about the client organisation and its objectives for the co-creation process established in the opening discussion. The brief is not the client's advertisement or sales pitch.

If necessary, a non-disclosure agreement is concluded with the client and a privacy policy, privacy notice and consent form concerning the co-creation process are prepared for the participants. This allows the process realiser to ensure that the participants are aware of the nature of the event and what is expected of them. Participation is always voluntary, and the knowledge, views and opinions of every participant are respected and valued. No identifiable information about the participants should be included in the final report or other publications concerning the co-creation process.

At the preparation stage, the co-creation process realiser and client agree on who will recruit the participants, book the event

space and acquire the tools and supplies, as well as prepare and send the invitations, privacy policy, privacy notice and consent form to the participants in advance, and how these tasks will be carried out. In the case of a remote or hybrid event, if platforms subject to a charge will be used, the organiser must take care of access rights agreements at the preparation stage at the latest. Certain free platforms have user limits or offer specific functions subject to a charge. This must be taken into account.

## **6. Implementation of a co-creation event**

The information of the participants is collected with a list of participants. The same form can be used to have the participants consent to the filming or recording of the event, for example. If a participant does not consent to being filmed, their choice shall be respected, and they will be cropped out. To ensure smooth start to the event, the participants should be asked to submit their information and any consent forms when they sign up for the event.

To make sure all participants feel equally respected and valued as experts, it is recommended to avoid putting emphasis on their titles, professions or educational background. This gives an equal emphasis on experiential knowledge and scientific facts. Creating a safe space with a feeling of equality is essential, as the objective of co-creation is to improve a specific product, practice or procedure. Giving all interested parties an opportunity to share their opinion is crucial. This can also help create a more relaxed working atmosphere. When there are a lot of participants, giving everyone a name tag has proven to be an effective way to give people the floor and ensure everyone is heard.

The same agreements and commitments that are used in a traditional co-creation event are also used for remote and hybrid events, but the documents are signed electronically. Ensuring equal participation and making sure everyone is heard is always a challenge in co-creation but it is particularly difficult when the event is held fully or partially online. To make the event run smoother, common ground rules should be established at the start of the event. These could include rules about the usage of mobile phones, whether the web cameras



and microphones should be turned on or off, how to ask permission to speak, and the culture of dialogue.

A remote or virtual event can be more taxing than an in-person event. Attention should be paid to scheduling breaks and setting the rhythm for each stage of the event. The facilitators should keep a keen eye on the participants and monitor their alertness level during the event. The facilitators are responsible for making sure that the entire agenda is discussed on schedule and that everyone is given an opportunity to voice their opinion.

The co-creation event follows the facilitation plan (see [Part 2. Planning of co-creation facilitation](#)), consisting of five steps. Each step is of key importance to the success of the co-creation process. The steps are:

1. greetings and introduction (incl. feed)
2. preparation
3. value creation, i.e. working towards the objectives of the co-creation process
4. reflection of results and discussion of follow-up
5. wrapping up the event and socialising.

The length of the co-creation event depends on the development task in question, how many participants there are and who the participants are. Scheduled breaks make the event longer. In a two-hour event, the participants can usually maintain a stable level of alertness and take an active part in the work.

The co-creation event begins by welcoming the participants and explaining them the purpose of the event. A short presentation (brief/feed) at the start of the event helps the participants understand their part in the co-creation process. The presentation is usually given by the client. This ensures the information is correct and the message is effective. The facilitators and other persons assisting in the process should also introduce themselves and explain their roles and responsibilities in the process.

At the preparation stage, the client introduces the product or service under development and explains why they have initiated this co-creation process. The aim is to give the participants detailed information about the benefits of the product as well as its current shortcomings from the users' perspective. This helps the participants understand the issues or problems to which they are expected to find solutions and ideas. At this point, the participants should be involved in the conversation. You can ask them to share their personal experiences and views of potential solutions or services.

The value creation stage is the actual co-creation stage. In this context, value creation means a process based on collaboration

with one's peers, aiming to meet the objectives set for the co-creation event by the client, i.e. create added value, through collaboration. Various methods have been developed for this working stage (see e.g. [Innovillage](#)). To find the best and most effective working method for your process, carefully consider the purpose of the co-creation process and who the participants are.

The facilitators help the participants in their task. The participants can work alone, in pairs or in smaller or larger groups. Even though the focus of the event is co-creation, the participants should also be given space to consider the issue themselves. For example, before working in pairs, the participants could be given a few minutes to write down their ideas. Working in pairs is a safe way to start co-creating, and the results can be shared and discussed in small groups. A common understanding of the object of development is established by discussing the small groups' results together as one large group. This gives room for many kinds of thoughts, ideas and observations. The results are either written down or photographed. Finally, the results are summarised.

At the reflection stage, both the participants and the client evaluate the results and their relevance, applicability and usefulness with regard to the product or service under development as well as the overall success of the co-creation event. It is important that the participants learn which results the client has found useful and how the client will continue to develop them in future. The facilitator and the client write a short summary of the event and the follow-up development of the product or service. The event is wrapped up by evaluating its success through a feedback survey or discussion (Harra, Mäkinen & Sipari, 2012). Finally, the participants and the client are thanked for their cooperation.

## **7. Co-creation reporting**

The facilitator has the main responsibility for reporting on the co-creation process, but other team members can also contribute to reporting (see [Part 2, Reporting](#)). The report should state the time and place of the co-creation event and the event format (in-person or remote). In addition to the number of participants, their expertise should be described generally

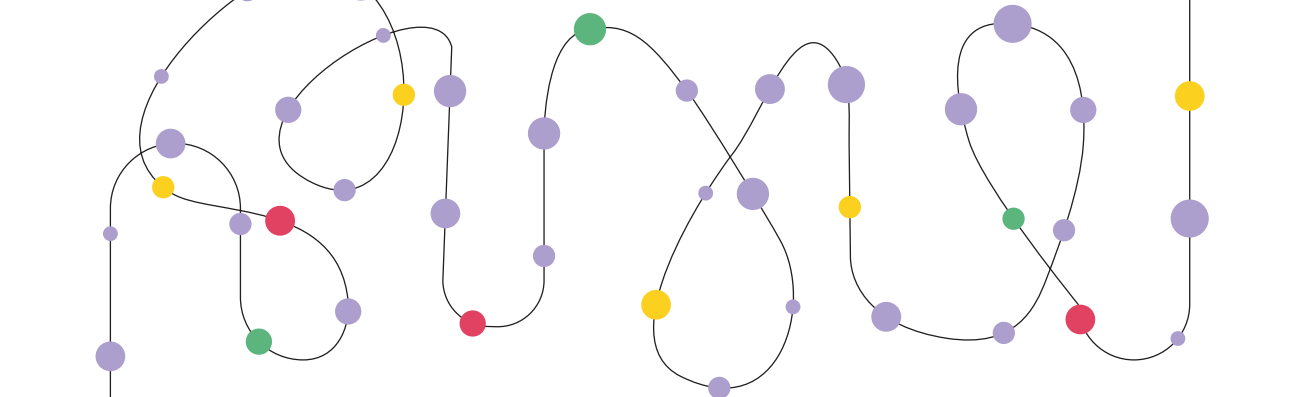
without including identifiable information. The report should indicate whether participation in the event was voluntary and whether the participants have been asked to consent to the collection of their information. If a non-disclosure agreement has been concluded, it should be mentioned in the report. The report should include a short description of the co-creation event, specifying its purpose and objective as well as the questions to which the client was seeking answers.

The main point of the report is to give an account of the outputs and results of the co-creation process. The answers to the questions that guided the co-creation discussion must be documented. The report should be prepared as soon as possible after the event, while the information is still fresh in mind. A compilation of feedback received from the participants and the client is included in the report. The inclusion of feedback helps the client understand the significance of co-creation but also its challenges.

The final part of the report contains the follow-up measures agreed on or recommendations for further development as well as the process realisers' evaluation of the success of the co-creation process. The evaluation could be based on the plans for organising and facilitating the co-creation event as well as the results of the evaluation conducted at the end of the event. This should provide a comprehensive idea of the success of the co-creation process. The final report is sent to the client.

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Elina Ala-Nikkola

# Possible pitfalls of co-creation – what could go wrong and why?

Co-creation is an efficient working method, as it usually leads to an outcome that works for the user. By following the step-by-step co-creation process outlined in the previous article and utilising the templates at the end of this publication, your process is likely to be successful.

However, sometimes a co-creation process fails to deliver. When planning the process, it is important to identify what could go wrong – the pitfalls that must be avoided to finish the process successfully. In this article, I go over the most common pitfalls and effective ways to avoid them based on my own and my colleagues' years of experience of various co-creation processes.

## **Conscious choice to co-create guarantees success**

Sometimes it is obvious that a process owner i.e the client, choose co-creation as a working method because it is a trend or it is expected to do. It is important to remember that co-creation serves as a means towards a goal and is not itself the objective. If a process owner decides to launch a co-creation project for

the wrong reasons, the risk of failure and sham participation increases.

Co-creation can save time in certain stages of development, but it is also more time-consuming than working on an idea alone at one's desk. Therefore, when considering the initiation of a co-creation process, it is crucial to take a moment and make a determined decision to launch the project. The following questions help make a determined decision:

- Why do we want to develop this area through co-creation? Will we achieve our goals better through co-creation? Why?
- Which stages of development will be included in the co-creation process and which will be left out? In other words, which areas will be developed in a large group and which in a smaller group or by individuals working alone? Why?
- Does the co-creation process have a realistic chance of success, i.e. is it actually possible to reach and engage the group of people we want to participate in the process? Who are these people?
- What kind of resources can we allocate to co-creation? What resources are needed: time, employees, tools?

### **Avoid the pitfall of sham participation**

The advantage of co-creation in relation to other development methods is that it gives users a key role in the development process and leads to customer- and user-oriented solutions. This reduces the risk of "misses", contributes to more informed decision-making at the different stages of product, service and procedure development, and increases customers' and users' commitment to and satisfaction with a product, service or other outcome of the co-creation process.

The process also often results in a more agile launch thanks to the information and knowledge obtained through the process, accelerating the later stages of product development. The participants in the co-creation process also contribute to agility. The persons who take part in the process become more familiar with the object under development and have a stronger feeling of ownership towards it. Consciously or subconsciously, they

are more likely to talk positively about the product or service to their network upon its launch.

That sounds pretty perfect to me. Could something really go wrong? One of the deepest pitfalls is the risk of sham participation. In co-creation, the participant feels that they play a key role in the process and their views and words are important and heard. But what happens if nothing happens after the process? Nothing was developed and the participant will never learn why. Or alternatively, the final product, service or procedure developed differs from the results of the co-creation process.

It is only natural that sometimes the product development team chooses a solution that is not the one developed through co-creation. There could be many reasons for this: changes in the operating environment, financial limits, changes in personnel or lacking communication.

The feeling of sham participation is an individual experience of a person participating in the process. Individuals communicate about the product or service being developed to their network and are themselves its end-users. The experience of an individual spreads and easily becomes the experience of a larger group of people. In particular, if an individual experiences the feeling of sham participation repeatedly in multiple co-creation processes, they will gradually lose their confidence in co-creation – and the organisation that initiated the process.

The best way to avoid the experience of sham participation is good communication between the client and the process participants, especially at the end of the process and after it. The participant has given the process their time and brainwork. In return, the client informs them of the means, methods and schedule of further development based on the insight obtained. This will take place at the end of the co-creation event, but the participants should also be kept up to date on the progress made at the implementation and launch stage of the product or service.



### **More participants – threat or opportunity?**

One of the benefits of co-creation is that it provides an opportunity to develop solutions that no one would have come up with alone. Engaging multiple participants with diverse backgrounds broaden the client's horizon. Co-creation enables the development and success of creative, innovative and systemic solutions.

But here also resides the risk of failure. The first possible pitfall is rushing the process. Although the best ideas can spring up quickly, in most cases, discovering the most precious gems takes time. A person's creativity becomes stunted if they are forced to come up with innovations in a too short period of time. Therefore, it is important to recognise at the planning stage how complex or demanding the innovation process will be. How much time should the participants be given to co-create? How many co-creation events are needed to perfect the most optimal solution? Should alternative methods of information collection and participation be considered?

Another problem challenging innovation and creativity is the excessive pursuit of a consensus (Halonen 2024). In co-creation, it is of primary importance to make sure the participants feel psychologically secure and do not hesitate to voice their opinion. This way, the most vocal or fastest thinkers do not dominate the discussion, but everyone is given an opportunity to take the floor. A competent facilitator plays a crucial role in creating a comfortable working environment: they build a sense of security between the participants and encourage them to also share their incomplete ideas. Here is a practical tip: do not jump into pair or group work immediately – allow the participants to think about the problem first on their own and, for example, write down their thoughts on post-it notes that are then collected and shared with everyone anonymously. This way of working helps make sure that a wide variety of ideas is shared. The principles of a safer space are at the heart of co-creation.

## **No clear objective**

Co-creation must always have a concrete objective. As described in the previous article, the objective is defined during the opening discussion with the client. The definition of the objective should not be rushed to ensure that all parties – the client, the facilitator and the participants in the co-creation process – are fully aware of it.

But what happens if the objective of the process is unclear? I worked for several years in the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences' Parru team, which is the organisation's internal support service. The team facilitates internal development processes with a co-creation approach and encourages the personnel to become facilitators themselves. As we were developing the operation of the Parru team, we noticed what happens when the objective of the process is not clear on everyone's mind:

- ⋮ **If the client does not know the objective of the process, it**
- ⋮ is impossible for them to lead it. The material developed
- ⋮ through co-creation does not meet the client's needs and
- ⋮ the process falls apart.

**If the facilitator does not know the objective of the process,** it is impossible for them to facilitate it. There is a risk of losing the thread of the process. The facilitator will be unable to guide the discussion towards the objective if they do not understand what it is. All the methods used in co-creation are selected based on the objective. If the objective is unclear, the methods do not support its achievement and the client does not get what they need. When the objective is clear, a competent facilitator can adapt to the situation and, for example, change the methods used at the co-creation event on the fly if they realise an alternative way of working would suit the participants better.

**If the participants do not know the objective of the process,** they may become confused and feel a sense of sham participation. When the participants know the objective and why they were chosen for the co-creation process, they will do their best to contribute to the achievement of the objective and feel that they have been truly heard.

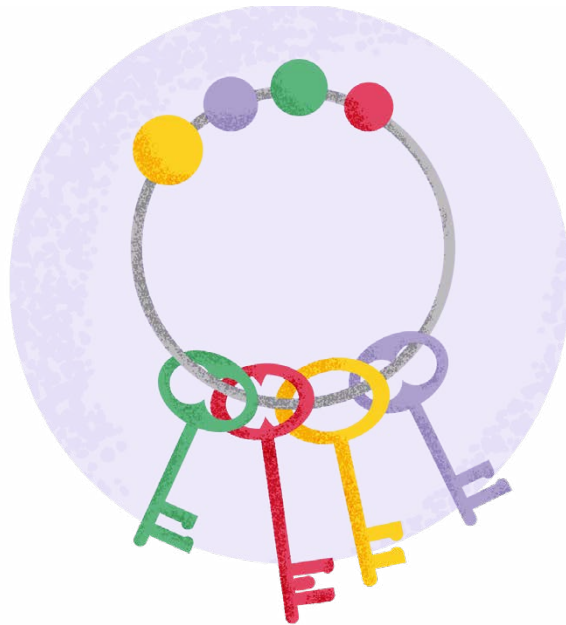
(Palojärvi & Pyrhönen 2024)

This shows that the opening discussion between the client and the facilitator plays a key role in the process, and it is necessary to hone the objective until both parties agree on the purpose of the process. It is equally important to communicate the objective effectively to the participants. In the case of longer co-creation process, it is a good idea to remind the participants of the objective and make sure it is still relevant as well as ensure the work is getting the client closer to its goal.

## **The client holds the keys to success**

The client, i.e. the owner of the co-creation process, defines the objective for the development and allocates and provides the resources needed. The client also has many other responsibilities in the process:

**The client owns the process and its objective.** Thus, they make sure the material obtained through co-creation is utilised in further development and the participants are informed of the progress of the process – including after the conclusion of the actual co-creation stage. It is important that the participants



hear about the impact of their work and the final solution chosen by the client. After the process is over, the client should inform the participants of the solution chosen and their reasons for this choice as well as what information obtained through the process was not utilised. This gives the participants a genuine feeling of usefulness and influence.

**The client must internalise the objective of the co-creation process and stick to it.** If the objective must be made clearer or adjusted, this should be done. However, it is important to communicate the changes to the process participants and discuss the matter over with the facilitator.

**The client contributes their own expertise to the process.** Sometimes, the development of a product or service is limited by legislation or other regulations, strategic documentation, or other boundary conditions. It is the client's responsibility to use their expertise to bring these conditions and limits to the attention of those participating in the co-creation process. Otherwise, the participants could stray off course and produce results that are useless. However, drawing the line between limits and freedom to create must be done carefully. It is important to allow creativity and innovation to flourish – especially in the early stages of the process.



**The client must balance between objectivity and subjectivity.**

If the client participates in the co-creation event, they must step back and focus on listening and learning. If the client is too vehement in expressing their opinions, this can make the participants withdraw and upset their sense of psychological security. A competent facilitator knows many tricks to help the client take the role of an objective observer. For example, the client can serve as the secretary or lead the final reflection part of the process.

**The client could also stumble by deciding the desired outcome of the co-creation process in advance.**

This is common in organisations' internal co-creation processes. Co-creation is not genuine if the aim is to "buy" the participants' acceptance of a premediated solution. This never works and simply undermines

the participants' confidence in the co-creation process and the client organisation.

**The process can fail if the client does not take responsibility for moving the process forward.** Especially in longer co-creation processes involving multiple co-creation events, the facilitator plays a significant and visible role. Without meaning to do so, the client may pass the responsibility for keeping the process going to the facilitator. My most obvious experience of such a case was when at the start of a co-creation event the client tried to leave for a coffee while the participants were working, even though their presence in the room would have been essential. The client should stay and monitor the participants' co-creation process to develop the process further after the event. Co-creation is not a process to be completely outsourced – the client's involvement is extremely important. Co-creation means close cooperation and dialogue between the client, the facilitator and the participants throughout the process.

### **Participants' needs are neglected**

There is no co-creation without any participants. And a poor choice of participants leads to a poor result. The participants are the heart of the co-creation process. It is important to thoroughly consider their needs and experiences in the different planning and implementation stages of the process.

Enough time should be spent on the identification of the right participants for the process in question. Consider the objective of the co-creation process and think who will be impacted by it. What kind of expertise or experiences could best contribute to the outcome? Next, find out where and how to reach these people and invite them to join the process. Is it possible to post a public invitation and would that be beneficial? As was mentioned in the previous article, it is important to identify the format of participation that best suits each group of participants. For some groups, remote participation is the only feasible option.

Based on my personal experience, for the participant, the most important thing is to gain something from the co-creation process in return. In many cases, a participant will leave the event happy when they have been given a genuine opportunity

to influence their own work or other aspect of their life. The feeling of significance also motivates a person to participate in co-creation, which could be a challenge alongside work or other daily responsibilities. Since their involvement in the process is important to the participant and they do it on their spare time, it is important that they do not experience a sense of sham participation.

The best way to avoid this is to identify at the planning stage which parts and aspects of the co-creation process and its outcome the participants can and cannot affect. Once this has been determined, it is crucial to inform the participants of their powers of influence at the start of the co-creation event. (Ala-Nikkola & Raivio, 2024). This allows them to set their input in proportion to the limits of their power, and they will not be disappointed after the process. For example, it is important to make the boundary conditions of the process clear to the participants. These include legal requirements or the strategic requirements set by the company developing the product or service that is the object of the co-creation process. It is also possible that the product development has already reached a certain point and it is the participants' responsibility to comment on it and test it in practice and not develop a new product from scratch.

### **Professional facilitator or beginner?**

The facilitator plays an important and visible role in the co-creation process. They serve as a link between the client and the participants, and their decisions have a significant impact on the success of the process. They build and maintain a sense of psychological security at the co-creation event and choose working methods that they deem best for the process in question. The use of too many different methods, strict time limits, or inability to create a safer space for co-creation can lead to the total failure of the process.

Everybody has to start somewhere, and beginners must also be given an opportunity to learn and prove themselves. You only learn to facilitate through facilitation – it must be experienced dozens if not hundreds of times. The more complex or economically, socially or culturally significant the project, the more careful the facilitator must be in their decision-making.

In my experience, the key abilities of a good facilitator are:

- The ability to set the objectives with the client and stick to them.
- The ability to change the plan on the fly. If the facilitator notices that the methods they have chosen do not support the achievement of the objective set for the co-creation process, they can adjust the methods flexibly. However, the objective must not be changed without consulting the client.
- They have many tricks up their sleeve and know how to take advantage of them. This makes switching methods on the fly possible.
- They know the basic principles of group processes. They can sense the group atmosphere and the participants' needs. This is essential for creating a psychologically safe environment.
- A good facilitator is both friendly and to the point: they build a safer space, while ensuring the work is done on schedule.

## **Conclusion**

Co-creation is one of the best ways to develop a product, service or procedure – it works in all sectors and supports multi-disciplinary development processes. Although it is important to identify and anticipate the pitfalls of co-creation, sometimes you only learn things the hard way. Mistakes are part of the process.

The golden rule of co-creation is to focus on creating a sense of genuine inclusion and involvement. It is the key to successful product, service or procedure development.

Personally, my greatest realisation about inclusion and participation has been that we are not only responsible for our own inclusion and participation but also for creating an inclusive environment for others. Everybody can contribute to building an inclusive working environment by looking each other in the eyes and giving positive feedback – truly listening to the other person (Ala-Nikkola, Isola & Raivio 2024).

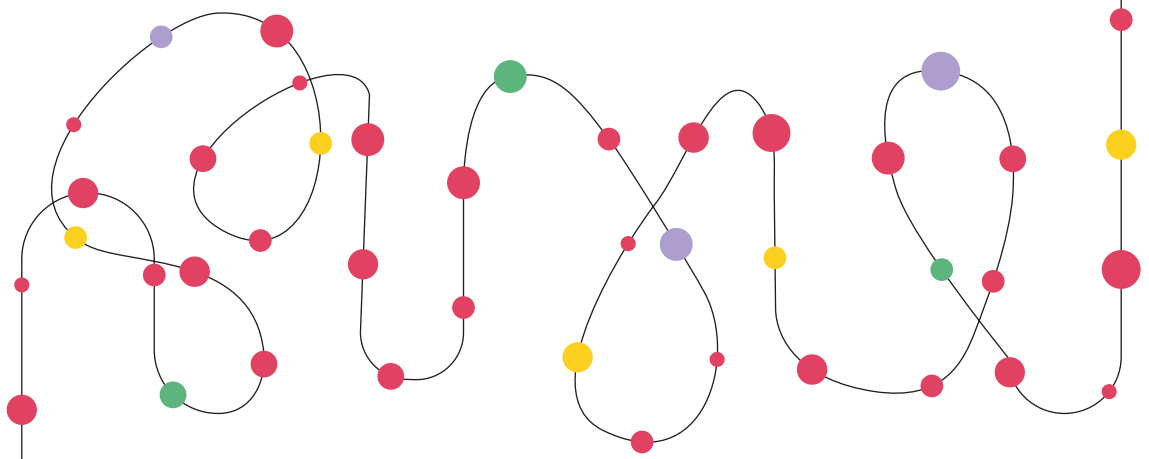
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The background of the entire page is a solid, vibrant red. Overlaid on this background are two intricate, abstract white line art designs. Each design consists of a series of thin white lines that form a path, punctuated by small white circles of varying sizes. Some circles are larger than others, and some are placed at the intersections or along the curves of the lines. The paths are non-linear, featuring loops, curves, and dead ends, creating a complex, organic feel. The top design is positioned in the upper half of the page, and the bottom design is in the lower half, with the text centered between them.

## **Part 2**

### **– Templates**



Toini Palo & Leila Lintula

# Templates to support the co-creation process

These templates and forms for preparing, planning and implementing a co-creation process were originally created as part of the ERD-funded “6Time: HIPPA – wellbeing and better service housing through digitalisation” project carried out between 1 August 2018 and 31 March 2021. They have been revised and modified based on experience.

These templates and forms are licensed under under [a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license](#).

*6Aika: Hippa – Wellbeing and a better service housing through digitalisation project was co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and implemented in collaboration by Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Oulu University of Applied Sciences, the City of Helsinki, the City of Tampere, and the City of Oulu.*

# Templates

- ✔ Invitation
- ✔ Consent form
- ✔ Openig discussion
- ✔ Development plan
- ✔ Planning of a co-creation event
- ✔ Planning of co-creation facilitation
- ✔ Reporting



# Invitation to co-creation event

You have strong expertise in

We have the pleasure to invite you to the co-creation event, to be held at

\_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_

Please be there on time.

In the co-creation event, we will familiarize ourselves with the

\_\_\_\_\_

product which may be helpful in supporting the daily life of the residents.

Participation in the co-creation event is voluntary. By signing in to the co-creation event you give your consent of voluntary participation.

The participants' data will be collected, processed and retained according to the Privacy Policy. The Privacy Policy can be found attached to this invitation.

Please let us know about your participation at the latest

\_\_\_\_\_

by email to by email to

\_\_\_\_\_

Kind regards

\_\_\_\_\_

*Join us with a relaxed, curious and cheerful mind!*



# Consent

I \_\_\_\_\_ voluntarily  
consent to participate in the co-creation/product or service testing by

---

I have received \_\_\_\_\_  
briefing note and familiarized myself with it.

I know that the data will not include any participant's personal data and that anonymized data may be later used in the development activities and in teaching. I know that to ensure the quality of the survey, interviews will be recorded and they will be stored in a locked space. The recordings will be eradicated after the end of the survey.

I have the right, at any time during the survey and without stating any reason, interrupt my participation or cancel my consent. Cancelling the consent does not result in any negative consequences to me, nor does it affect my position as a health care services customer. I am aware that data collected up until my interruption of participation or cancelling of consent will be used as part of the research data, if necessary, to avoid bias in the research results. Notification of interruption of participation shall be submitted to: \_\_\_\_\_

This consent form is signed in two original copies to each signatory.

---

Date

---

Date

---

Consent giver

---

Consent giver

---

Printed name

---

Printed name



# Opening discussion

Date

---

Name of client

---

Business identity code

---

Subject or solution to be developed

---

Contact person

---

Interviewer

---

## Company

When was the company established?

---

Company's previous experience of product development processes

What is the vision of the company for the service or product to be developed?

What kind of expertise does the client have?

What other support has the client received for their development work?

## **Target group of the product/service**

Who is the product/service intended for?

What need does the product/service address?

What kind of benefit does the user gain from the product/service being developed?

How does the product/service change the user's life or activities, or improve their well-being?

---

## The development focus

Is the product/ service new to the market/ new to the client?

At what stage of development is the product/service?

How should the product/service be developed? (e.g. more functional, more sustainable, more user-friendly)

Are new user groups or usage environments being sought for the product?

Is the product/service connected to smart technology?

Why does the client have a need to develop the product/service?

---

## Client's intent and commitment

What kind of support does the company expect?

Do the available forms of support benefit the client? (e.g. co-creation, testing, user trials)

How would the client like to co-develop the product? (e.g. with users or experts)

Has the client familiarized themselves with the general terms and conditions?

Does the client want to commit to the collaboration with an agreement?

Does the client want to prepare a development plan?



## Higher education collaboration

Expectations for students' RDI work (NOTE: the quality of work may vary)

What issues need to be considered in scheduling?

What kind of development resources does the client have (time, personnel, expertise, and financial resources)?

## Next steps

What will be done next?

Who will act as the contact person going forward?

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# Development plan

The purpose of this development plan is to support the planning and implementation of long-term and/or multi-phase development cooperation in collaboration with the commissioning company, the higher education institution, and a possible third party.

Company:

---

Business ID:

---

Address:

---

Date:

---

Development activities coordinator:

Testing/user trial environment coordinator, contact details UAS/municipality:

## Components of the development plan

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Development target and objective**
- 3. Purpose of development activities**
- 4. Targets outside the scope of development activities**
- 5. Organisation of the development activities**
  - 5.1. Required documents
  - 5.2. Coordination of co-creation planning and implementation
- 6. Schedule**
- 7. Implementation plan**
  - 7.1. Co-creation implementation plan
    - 7.1.1 Participants to be invited
    - 7.1.2 Phases of co-creation implementation
    - 7.1.3 Co-creation data collection
    - 7.1.4 Analysis of co-creation data
    - 7.1.5 Reporting of co-creation results to the company
  - 7.2. Testing and user trial implementation plan
    - 7.2.1 Purpose of testing
    - 7.2.2 Participants of the testing planning event
    - 7.2.3 Phases of the testing planning event
    - 7.2.4 Implementation of testing and user trial
    - 7.2.5 Testing and user trial data collection
    - 7.2.6 Analysis of data
    - 7.2.7 Reporting of results to the company
  - 7.3. Commercialization and marketing implementation plan
- 8. Approval and finishing criteria**
- 9. Documents**
- 10. Risks**
- 11. Signatures**

## 1. Introduction

An introduction to the development plan the following will be described: what will be done, when and where; the actors and their roles; the general objective of development activities.

## 2. Development target and objective

**The company describes the product or service to be developed:** its purpose and intended impact, and on what aspects data will be collected.

**Objective of the development activities.** Concrete description of the purpose of the development activities, e.g. more developed product, information on the development of the product, on usage environment and users' needs, the usability of the product, the markets and the product's commercialization potential.

**Questions (1-3) on the development of the product or service, drafted in collaboration.**

The following questions should be answered with the help of the development activities. The questions may provide a framework for data collection.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**3. Purpose of development activities**

The purpose of development activities describes what will be done to develop the product or service. One or more of the following options may be selected.

Co-creation to develop the product

Co-creation to plan testing/ user trial

Other, what \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Targets excluded from the development work**

In this development work, the following aspects of the product/service are not developed:

In the development work, the following aspects of the product/service are not examined:

The development plan will be updated if any new development needs arise during the development activities.

---

## **5. Organisation of the development activities**

The company is responsible for presenting initial questions to the coordinator and the expert team, aimed at developing the product or service. The questions are discussed in collaboration.

In co-creation and testing and user trial, as well as in commercialization and marketing, the company is responsible for presenting the product/service. In testing and user trial, the company is also responsible for training the participants and the delivery of devices to be used, their maintenance, user interface, insurances and, if needed, additional instructions for use.

The development activities coordinator gathers a multidisciplinary expert team and is in charge, together with the team, of the company collaboration as planned, and the progress of development activities as well as the drafting of the required documents

In all cases, the development activities coordinator is responsible for the activities to be carried out in an ethically appropriate manner so that, for example, human rights and research ethical principles are respected and complied with. If necessary, the coordinator is responsible for the application of the research permission for the co-creation, testing or user trial, and the drafting of the report to the ethical committee. This development plan will be annexed to the research permission application. The research permission must be obtained before the development activities may start. Also the briefing note on the development activities, the consent form and privacy policy are annexed to the research permission application.

---

## 5.1 Required documents

The following documents are required for the development activities (DA) and/or the research permission (RP):

Invitation (DA)

Briefing note (DA&RP)

Consent form (RP)

Non-disclosure agreement (DA)

Privacy policy (GDPR) (DA&RP)

De minimis initial form from the company (DA, only with EU projects)

Signed company cooperation agreement (DA)

Other, please  
specify

---

## 5.2 Coordination of co-creation planning and implementation

Development  
activities coordinator

---

Expert team member

---

Expert team member

---

Expert team member

---

The above-mentioned team agrees on the following matters: planning, implementation, equipment, schedule, booking of locations, catering and inviting the needed persons to the event, as well as the documents required for the development activities and the research permission.

## 6. Schedule

The schedule may be specified when the plan and the preparatory works have been finalized and the needed permissions have been obtained.

<b>TASK</b>	<b>START</b>	<b>FINISH</b>
Co-creation planning		
Co-creation implementation (data collection)		
Testing / user trial planning		
Testing / user trial implementation (data collection)		
Planning of other tasks		
Staff and students onboarding		
Analysis and report of the data collected		
Results reported to the company		

## 7. Implementation plan

### 7.1 Co-creation implementation plan

Time and location:

---

Link to online environment:

---

#### 7.1.1 Participants to be invited

Participation in co-creation is voluntary. The invitation includes the matters of the event's briefing note. It explains the purpose of the event and describes the course of the event. The invitees are asked to familiarize themselves with the privacy policy attached to the invitation. The invitation explains that by signing in to the event, the person gives his/her consent of a voluntary participation. In the beginning of the co-creation event, the participants sign - consciously and voluntarily - the consent form or otherwise give their consent to the co-creation data collection. The co-creation data will be anonymized and the results are reported in such a way that an individual participant's responses cannot be identified.

Co-creation increases the participants' understanding and produces information to help better understand the product/service to be developed, and the needs and expectations related to it, from different perspectives. For example, the company receives information of the needs, attitudes and usage environments of the users, as well as the development needs, usability and usefulness of the product/service to the user and usage environments. The users receive information on the potential of the product/service to improve the users' well-being, safety and quality of life.

What stakeholders and how many will be invited:

---

## 7.1.2 Phases of co-creation implementation

Co-creation event consists of the following phases:

1. **Introduction**
2. **Tuning in**
  - Getting to know the product/service
  - Getting to know the users' needs and the usage environment
3. **Value creation:** Usability and usefulness of the product/service to the user and usage environment
4. **Reflection and feedback:** Identifying the development needs and solving the key challenges
5. **Conclusion and agreeing on further action**
6. **Reporting the results to the company**

These phases may be modified if necessary.

## 7.1.3 Co-creation data collection

During co-creation, data to help further develop the usability and applicability of the product/service is collected. Choose the methods to be used or add another method below, if applicable:

observation

interview

survey

group interview

focus group interview

Other methods, please specify how, for example, by digital methods (e.g. Jamboard, Zoom)

---

## 7.1.4 Analysis of co-creation data

Data collected during the co-creation is analysed by the UAS, using scientifically proven analysis methods. Qualitative (interviews and observation) data is analysed by content analysis methods. Quantitative data is analysed by simple quantitative methods (frequency and percentage).

## 7.1.5 Reporting of co-creation results to the company

The co-creation coordinator ensures that the co-creation results are anonymously reported to the company in such a manner that individual participants cannot be identified. In the results, the company is given recommendations on development targets and factors strengthening the usability of the product.

## 7.2 Testing and user trial implementation plan

Time and location:

---

Link to environment:

---

Testing and user trial plan is drafted together with the company and it can also be done by co-creation in such a way that also users and other relevant parties take part in it (see point 7.1)..

### 7.2.1 Purpose of testing

In the planning phase, the purpose of testing has to determined:

testing the technical functionality of the product/service

testing the usability of the product with the help of a supervised and controlled testing event in a simulation environment, standardized environment or authentic environment

user trial in authentic, natural environments of the users

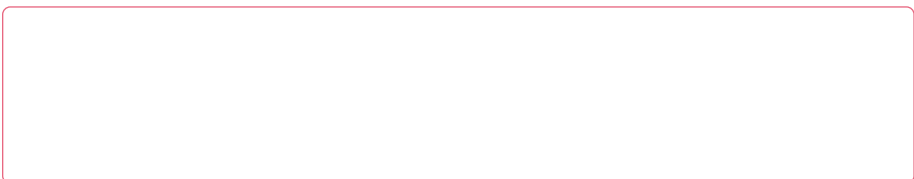
## 7.2.2 Participants of the testing planning event

What stakeholders will be invited and how many:



## 7.2.3 Phases of the testing planning event

1. Getting to know the team's activities and members
2. Getting to know the product/service
3. Solving the key challenges of the testing/user trial planning and implementation:
  - a. Definitions and number of testers
  - b. Size, period and location, methods of data collection
  - c. Data collection methods observation, interview, survey, group interview co-creation
  - d. Analysis methods (content analysis, quantitative analysis)
4. Division of tasks, responsibilities and timetable of testing. The company is liable for the following, in the beginning of testing:
  - a. Devices and software are available
  - b. The technical functionality of devices and software has been tested and the product is deemed functional and safe prior to the usability testing.
  - c. Before the user trial, usability has been tested in a simulation or standardized environment or otherwise in a supervised and controlled environment, and the product has been deemed usable.
  - d. The time and location of the usage training have been agreed and the products are left with the testers at the training event. (time and location)
  - e. How and by whom assistance and maintenance are provided, during the testing (name and contact details):



5. Agreeing on further action.

## 7.2.4 Implementation of testing and user trial

The company initiates the testers/user trial participants (administrators of the user trial, students and/or staff of the test environment) to the use of the product/service. The staff of the test environment introduce the end users to the use of the product/service. The product/service is tested and used in an agreed manner for an agreed period of time, and testing data is collected in a systematic manner during the testing. After the user trial, the product is returned to the company.

The testing and/or user trial coordinator collects the documented participation consent form from the persons participating in the event. The participant may interrupt his/her participation at any time without stating any reasons. Interrupting the participation does not cause any harm to the participants and the interruption does not have an effect on the services of the user. ([Consent form, Annex 2](#))

## 7.2.5 Testing and user trial data collection

During the testing and user trial, data is collected in an agreed manner. On the basis of the data, the company is submitted an opinion on the technical functionality of the product/service, its usability, usefulness, applicability and ethicality.

Data is collected anonymously, without identification data, No personal data of the testing and user trial participants is collected and all results are reported in such a manner that participants may not be identified. Every testing or user trial participant will be given a briefing in writing. In addition, the users are orally explained the purpose of the user trial, description of its course and matters related to the collection, retention, processing and disposal of data. ([Briefing note, Annex 1.](#))

## 7.2.6 Analysis of data

The testing and user trial coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the collected data is analysed by using scientifically proven analysis methods. Qualitative (interviews and observation) data is analysed by content analysis methods. Possible quantitative data is analysed by simple quantitative methods (frequency and percentage)

## 7.2.7 Reporting of results to the company

The testing and user trial coordinator ensures that the results are reported to the company in such a manner that individual participants cannot be identified. With the results, the company is given recommendations on the development targets of the product/service and factors strengthening its usability, usefulness and ethicality.

### **7.3 Commercialization and marketing implementation plan**

The commercialization and marketing implementation plan is drafted together with the company, and it can also be finalized by co-creation, including users and other relevant parties. The implementation plan should include the targets, purpose, implementation method and schedule of the service (see points 7.1.1–7.1.7).

## **8. Approval and finishing criteria**

The development process starts when the company has approved the development plan. Co-creation, testing and user plan require a granted research permission if residents and staff of, for example, senior centres are involved.

The development process, as defined by this development plan, finishes when the company has received the conclusion report and given the project feedback on the service implementation and the recommendations made on the basis of it.

The development process must be finished or interrupted if it does not correspond to the objectives of the project, as agreed with the company, The cooperation is also interrupted if the conditions of the research permission are not complied with.

## **9. Documents**

Conclusion report on the product's or service's:

co-creation

testing/user trial

commercialization and marketing

Other, please specify



## 10. Risks

One potential risk is not to have all the desired participants to actually participate in the development work (co-creation, testing and user trial, and commercialization and marketing). As an anticipatory measure, a written invitation and a briefing note are distributed well in advance through several communication channels. To secure voluntary participation, the participants are asked to give a written consent.

## 11. Signatures

Any information on the product/service, acquired during the services, shall not be forwarded in such a manner that the company or product could be recognized, without the company's permission.

Date	Signature
_____	_____
	Director/manager UAS/municipality
Date	Signature
_____	_____
	Company and its representative
Date	Signature
_____	_____
	Director Testing/user trial environment
	_____

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# Co-creation planning form

## Client Organization

Name:

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Address:

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Contact person:

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Email:

---

Phone:

---

## Date and Venue of the Co-Creation Workshop

Time:

---

*For remote implementation, time is also reserved in advance for checking connections.*

Venue:

---

Address:

---

Room name or number:

---

## Participants

Expert groups to be invited to the co-creation / user trial event (no names):

## Purpose of the event

The purpose of the co-creation/ user trial event. E.g. to create a framework and an initial plan for the user tests, testing or commercialization of a product / service

### Object of co-creation

### Purpose of co-creation

## Objective of the event

Questions in the development plan - answers to these questions are sought in the co-creation / user trial planning event.

## Questions guiding the co-creation implementation off the co-creation / user

The guiding questions for the implementation (3) are prepared together with the client. The questions help keep the discussion focused and guide its course in a way that generates rich information about the subject being developed from different perspectives.

1.

2.

3.

---

## **Preparation of schedule and responsible persons**

Preparation of invitations

Implementation of invitation

Preparation of registration

Communication with participants

Preparation of information letter and consent form

Catering

---

## Division of responsibilities in the co-creation event

Facilitators

Note-taker

Technical support

Assistants /Timekeeping

## Equipment needed

E.g. list of participants/consent forms, computer, flap display and markers.

---

## **INPUT data**

E.g. presentation of the product/ service

## **Preconditions**

E.g. checking the required agreements and permissions, voluntary nature of participation and that no personal data is released for the use of the company.

Is a non-disclosure agreement needed? If yes, an NDA shall be sent to the participants prior to the event.

E.g. what are the risks related to the implementation of the event and how they are anticipated?

E.g. factors related to the termination or interruption of the development activities, if, for example, the collaboration does not correspond to the set objectives.



## Documentation of the event

E.g. the company receives a summary report of the co-creation / user trial planning event.

## IT matters

Person in charge of the remote connections, checking the connections and the distribution of material.

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# Co-creation facilitation form

## Welcome and presentations

### Schedule

---

#### Tasks

1. Presentations
2. Purpose of the event

#### Methods and means

#### Facilitators' division of tasks

Facilitator

Facilitator

## Tuning in

### Schedule

---

#### Tasks

1. The client presents the product/service and its challenge
2. Sharing the participants' own experiences and observations related to the solution in question

**Methods and means**

**Facilitators' division of tasks**

Client representative

Facilitator

**Value creation**

Working phase for achieving the agreed co-creation objectives.

**Schedule**

---

**Tasks**

1. Listening to all participants' perspectives on the subject being developed.
2. Enhancing a shared understanding as a basis for development.

**Methods and means**

**Facilitators' division of tasks**

Facilitator

Facilitator

**Reflection and feedback**

**Schedule**

---

**Tasks**

1. Participants' assessment of the result's significance/usability and usefulness in advancing the subject being developed.
2. Client's assessment of the result's significance/usability and usefulness in advancing the subject being developed

**Methods and means**

**Facilitators' division of tasks**

Facilitator

Facilitator



## Conclusions and further action

### Schedule

---

### Tasks

1. Agreeing on further action
2. Thanking the participants and closing the event

### Methods and means

### Facilitators' division of tasks

Facilitator

Facilitator

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# Co-creation reporting form

## Time and location

Time of  
co-creation

---

Location/  
remote  
connection of  
co-creation

---

## Objective of the co-creation and the guiding questions for the co-creation

## Participants

How many people and locations if needed? What expert groups?

## Consent and background information

Note: the co-creation event is based on voluntariness and personal data of participants shall not be forwarded. The participants have, by their signature, confirmed their voluntary participation in the event and the approval of the privacy policy, and their consent to the collection of their data and filming in the event.

It is stated here if the company has required the participants to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

## Short description of the co-creation

## Results and feedback of the co-creation

Answers to the questions and matters discussed in the co-creation

Feedback from the participants



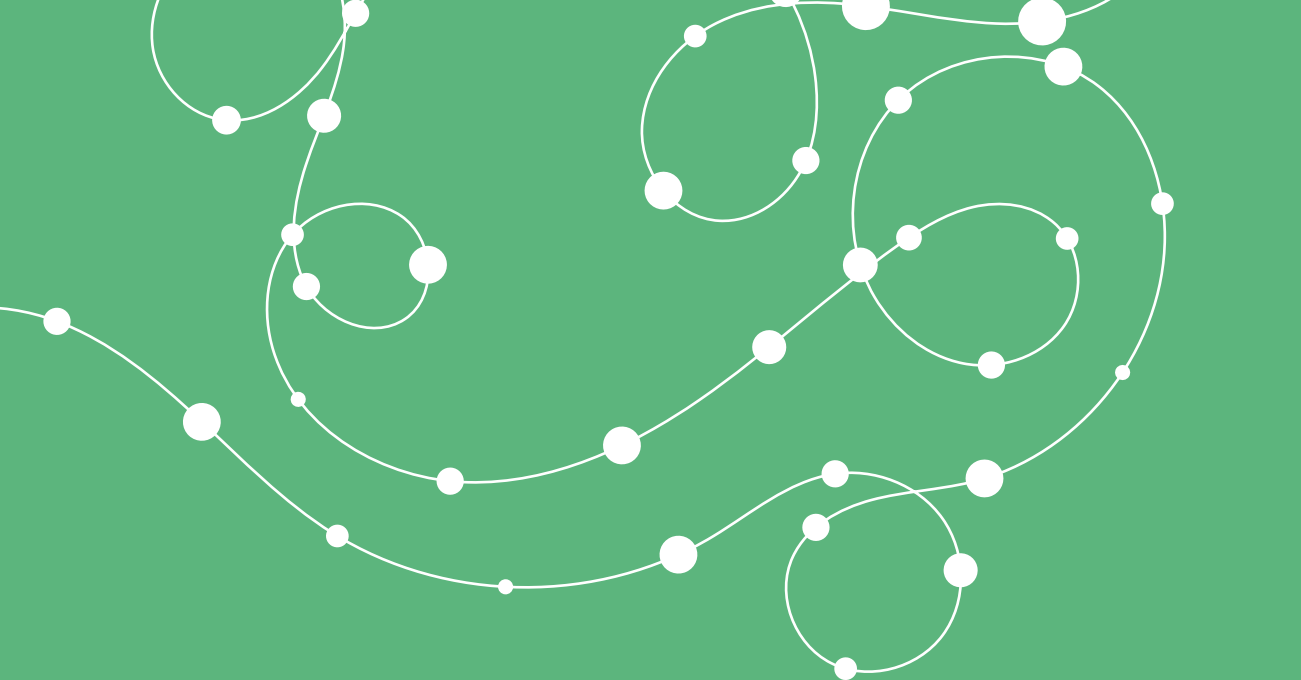
### Feedback from the company

### Conclusions of the co-creation and further measures

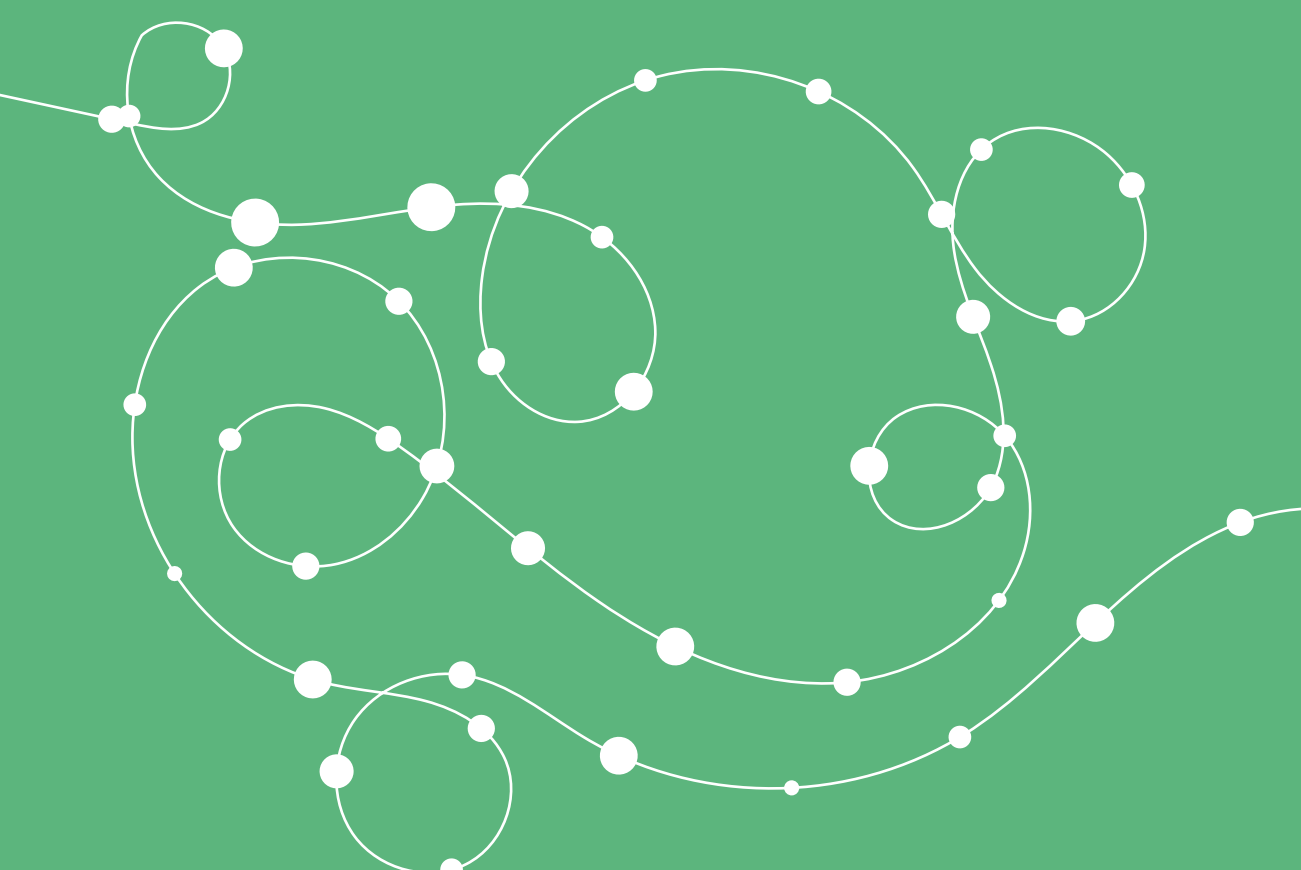
Description, schedule and persons in charge of further measures

Assessment of the success of co-creation

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# Authors



**TOINI PALO** (formerly Harra) (D.Soc.Sc, Licentiate in Philosophy, Occupational Therapist) has studied therapeutic collaboration and enabling client participation in occupational therapy in her doctoral thesis (Harra, 2014) and prepared a practical theory based on her research. Toini has been involved in the development of co-creation principles, processes and tools in national cross-disciplinary projects on improving the user-friendliness of digital solutions, for example. In international university development projects, methods of co-creation have been applied to various uses and environments. Toini has written several publications, podcast episodes and templates related to co-creation and taught co-creation to occupational therapy students at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences for many years. Currently, Toini is a senior lecturer and researcher in the Future Proof Health and Wellbeing Innovation Hub at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences.

**ANNA KAIPAINEN** (Physiotherapist, Master's Degree) is a specialist in rehabilitation. She has worked as an expert and project manager in several national and international development projects, in which she has actively promoted the principles of co-creation, inclusive procedures, and cooperation between stakeholders. In her work, Anna has focused on cross-disciplinary cooperation, user-oriented development, as well as promoting interaction between research, education and practice. By bringing together different actors, her aim is to reinforce the ability of local communities and international networks to develop solutions that support a healthier lifestyle and more sustainable future. Currently, Anna is an expert and project manager in the Future Proof Health and Wellbeing Innovation Hub at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences.

**MIIA ROLAMO** (Master of Health Sciences, gerontology) has participated in the development and implementation of co-creation processes and tools in the HIPPA-Remote project of Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. At the moment, she works as a senior lecturer in the Bachelor's Degree Programme for Applied Gerontology and as an expert in the Center of Excellence in Ageing at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

**ELINA ALA-NIKKOLA** (Master of Culture and Arts) has developed several operating models through co-creation both as the process owner and as a facilitator for various organisations in dozens of co-creation processes. Elina is the author of several publications on an inclusive approach to work, including the *Osallistuen töissä* online publication (2024) and produced the *Osallistuen* podcast together with Anne-Mari Raivio. In her master's thesis, Elina studied the impact of the growing strategic importance of participation on municipal cultural producers' work. Currently, Elina works as a development manager in the Future Proof Health and Wellbeing Innovation Hub at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences.

**LEILA LINTULA** (Master of Health Care) is a retired occupational therapy lecturer. She has participated in the development and implementation of co-creation processes and tools in Metropolia University of Applied Sciences' gerontechnology projects. She has contributed to publications on co-creation projects carried out with various companies, which are available in the TUTTUnet online service. Her most recent online publication, *Käyttäjävälillisen ikätekniikan aallonharjalla* (2023), discusses user-friendly gerontechnology.

An illustration of three diverse people standing together against a purple background. On the left is a woman with long black hair, wearing a red vest over a blue patterned shirt and black pants. In the center is a man with brown hair and a beard, wearing a yellow sweater and dark pants. On the right is a woman wearing a red hijab, a yellow coat, and a green dress. They are all smiling and holding a large white rectangular sign. The sign contains the text 'The best co-creation happens together.' in a purple, italicized font. At the bottom of the image, there is a decorative pattern of white circles connected by thin white lines, resembling a network or molecular structure.

*The best co-creation  
happens together.*