

Towards a Manifesto for Living Lab Co-creation

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Abstract. There is a growing interest in Living Labs for innovation and development in the field of information and communication technology. In particular there seem to be a tendency that current Living Labs aim to involve users for co-creative purposes. However, the current literature on Living Lab co-creation is severely limited. Therefore an Interact workshop is arranged as a first step towards a manifesto for Living Lab co-creation.

Keywords: Living Labs, co-creation, workshop.

1 Co-creation in Living Labs

Living Labs is an approach to user-centred innovation and development, where the users are involved within a familiar context; preferably their every-day environment. Living Labs has lately generated a great deal of interest in Living Labs within the field of information and communication technology (ICT); particular seen in the near explosive growth in the European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL) which now includes more than one hundred Living Labs across Europe [1].

The concept of Living Labs is still evolving, but an important emerging trend is to see Living Labs as a way to tap into the creative potential of the potential users of the innovation. Instead of being recipients of the outcome of innovation and development, users may be engaged in co-creative innovation processes of a Living Lab [2]. Co-creation typically is seen as creative collaboration between users, developers and stakeholders.

ENoLL have been particularly clear about the importance of co-creation in Living Labs [1]. Co-creation may be seen in relation to user-driven innovation and open innovation, even though these concepts are only partially overlapping.

We are only at the beginning of exploring how Living Lab participants may be involved in targeted and beneficial co-creation processes, and the current state-of-the-art is severely limited. A recent literature review showed that co-creation is a Living Lab characteristic reflected in about half the existing literature on Living

Labs. However, even though co-creation clearly is an emerging Living Lab trend, there is – apart from a few notable exceptions (e.g. [3] and [4]) – a lack of descriptions of processes and method supporting Living Lab co-creation [5]. The interest in Living Lab co-creation is dramatically increasing, but at present there exist no explicated set of processes and methods to support such co-creation.

2 Workshop Objective and Relevance to the Field

The workshop objective is to explore Living Lab practices for co-creation, and on this basis develop a manifesto for Living Lab co-creation. Currently, the experience and knowledge of Living Lab co-creation seem to reside among Living Lab practitioners rather than researchers, and it is particularly important to engage Living Lab practitioners in the workshop.

The main idea of the workshop organization is to use the preparatory period to conduct an exploration of Living Lab co-creation practices, and then to reach a draft manifesto for Living Lab co-creation at the workshop itself. The draft manifesto will be refined after the workshop, in dialogue with all contributors.

The workshops' relevance to the HCI-field is high due to the increasing importance of Living Labs for user-centered innovation and development. HCI research and practice can offer valuable methods for Living Labs, whereas Living Labs can provide a fresh innovation-centered approach that has not been in the focus in the HCI field traditionally. The workshop ambition to explicate the experiences and knowledge of practitioners may potentially have important implications also for the research conducted in the field of HCI.

In order for the work of both Living Lab practitioners and HCI researchers to be adequately adapted to the requirements of co-creation in Living Labs, it is necessary to create meeting places like this workshop to exchange experiences and develop new knowledge.

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