



RI4C2
Research & Innovation
For Cities & Citizens



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101035803

First Citizen Science projects

Report

DELIVERABLE 6.6
MONTH 36

D6.6 – First Citizen Science projects

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I. Preamble

Deliverable (D6.6) entitled "First Citizen Science projects" ***aims to showcase the Citizen Science projects that have been submitted into various European and national competitions.*** These projects represent pioneering efforts in harnessing public engagement to advance scientific discovery and problem-solving across different disciplines. By showcasing these initiatives, the deliverable D6.6 seeks to underscore their significance in advancing Citizen Science through collaborative efforts between researchers, citizens, and institutions.

The submitted Citizen Science projects address topics that mirror the thematic areas explored in our WP6 pilot Living Labs initiative (see D6.1 and D6.5). The Living Labs established within the RI4C2 project are integral components that link directly with the development of Citizen Science projects. A Living Lab is essentially a real-world environment or platform where stakeholders from different backgrounds—researchers, citizens, businesses, and public institutions—collaborate to co-create, test, and validate innovative solutions to societal challenges (Almirall & Wareham, 2008; Compagnucci et al., 2021). In the context of RI4C2, these Living Labs are specifically designed under the EC2U Virtual Institutes (VIs) framework, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (SDG #3 Good Health & Well-being, SDG #4 Quality Education and SDG #11 Sustainable Cities and Communities). For instance, the Good Health and Wellbeing (VI GLADE) Living Lab focuses on health-related innovations, aligned with Citizen Science projects aimed at advancing public health solutions. Similarly, the Quality Education (VI QE) Living Lab addresses education and cultural biases, reflecting Citizen Science efforts in educational research and innovation, among others. Additionally, the Sustainable Cities and Communities (VI SCC) Living Lab emphasises urban sustainability and indoor air quality, correlating with Citizen Science projects focused on environmental health and sustainable urban development. This alignment ensures that both the Citizen Science projects and the Living Labs initiative within WP6 are synergistically addressing critical societal issues through collaborative research, innovation, and community engagement.

To achieve the deliverable's objective, collaborative efforts have been initiated through two Living Lab events within the RI4C2 project: 1) The piloting of the Living Labs was initiated with the international conference "**Living Labs - Pathways for Open Innovation Ecosystems**" on September 26th, 2023, and 2) The official launch event, "**Living Labs for Citizen Science**," held

on February 16th, 2024, aimed to stimulate collaborative efforts among stakeholders to prepare and submit Citizen Science projects for funding. These events fostered interdisciplinary engagement and aimed to address societal challenges through innovative research and community participation. By fostering interdisciplinary engagement and community collaboration, these events not only propelled the development of Citizen Science initiatives but also laid the groundwork for their submission into competitive funding opportunities.

This D6.6 report is structured as follows: the subsequent section provides a concise overview of two recent events organised within WP6, highlighting the establishment and launch of three Living Labs, along with their selected themes. Section three details the European and national projects that have been submitted for funding, while the final section offers conclusions.

II. Living Labs within the RI4C2 project

As mentioned, to accomplish the goals of the project, two pivotal events were orchestrated, which were instrumental in fostering interdisciplinary engagement, facilitating knowledge exchange, and addressing pressing societal challenges through innovative research and active community involvement.

The piloting phase of the Living Labs started with the international conference "**Living Labs - Pathways for Open Innovation Ecosystems**" held on September 26th, 2023. This event served as an important step in exploring and refining the Living Labs concept, emphasising pathways for open innovation across diverse ecosystems;

Subsequently, the official **launch** event titled "**Living Labs for Citizen Science**," held on February 16th, 2024, aimed to foster collaborative efforts among stakeholders to prepare and submit Citizen Science projects for national and international funding.

Within WP6 we launched three Pilot Living Labs under the EC2U Virtual Institutes (VIs), which are designed to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The **three labs** focus on:

- Good Health and Wellbeing (VI GLADE) Living Lab (SDG #3) – **Healthy (Home) Office Habits**: The GLADE Living Lab focuses on health-related innovations and solutions;
- Quality Education (VI QE) Living Lab (SDG #4) – **Languages in Communities and Cultural Biases**: The QE Living Lab focuses on developing activities that are combining education, research and innovation for advanced studies related to the quality of education;
- Sustainable Cities and Communities (VI SCC) Living Lab (SDG #11) – **Perceptions of the building environment – Indoor environment and quality of air**: SCC Living Lab focuses on urban sustainability, community well-being and innovative urban solutions with a focus on indoor air quality.

The topics chosen for the Living Labs were determined through a broader process, in consultation with stakeholders from the local knowledge ecosystems of each university, who were identified as Citizen Science Champions (more details on the selection methodology and results can be found in deliverable D6.1). Involving stakeholders from all EC2U partner universities, the piloting of the Living Labs took the form of a conference ("Living Labs - Pathways for Open Innovation

Ecosystems", September 26th, 2023), where different experts provided best practices and opportunities to explore.

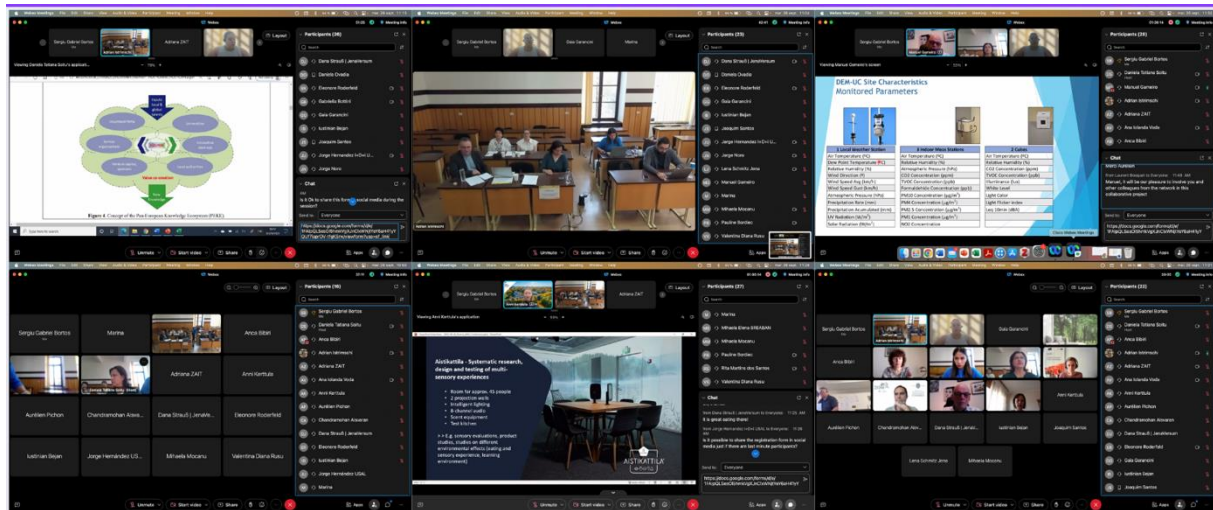


Figure 1: Living Labs conference: Pathways for Open Innovation Ecosystems

The **launch of the Living Labs** took place as an event, a conference, called "**Living Labs for Citizen Science**" which aimed to mark a pivotal moment in the convergence of research, academia, and societal needs, bringing together stakeholders from all these fields.

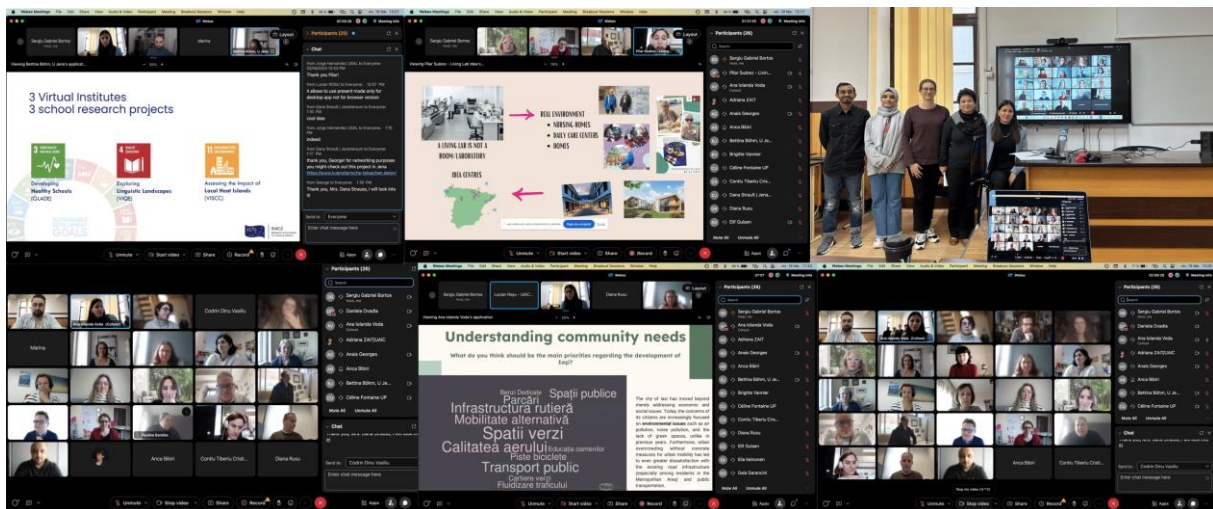


Figure 2: Living Labs launch event

The conference, held on February 16th, 2024, aimed beyond the official launch of the three Living Labs, to promote an interdisciplinary participatory approach, and to allow new opportunities for collaboration and networking to be explored. More details on the process by

which the themes of the three Living Labs in the project were identified and can be found in deliverable D6.5.

The Living Labs launch event served as a pivotal step to initiate and strengthen collaborations aimed specifically at preparing and submitting Citizen Science projects for funding. The primary objective was to foster partnerships among researchers, institutions, and community stakeholders to collectively address societal challenges through innovative research and participatory approaches. The event aimed not only to introduce the three Pilot Living Labs under the EC2U Virtual Institutes (VIs), aligned with the United Nations SDGs, but also to stimulate active participation in Citizen Science initiatives. By encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration and leveraging the expertise within the EC2U partner universities, the event sought to empower stakeholders to co-create innovative solutions that address real-world challenges. The conference thematic discussions aimed to align project ideas with funding priorities and community needs, ensuring that the proposed Citizen Science projects would be robust, impactful, and well-supported.

In essence, the Living Labs conferences were instrumental in laying the groundwork for collaborative research endeavours, emphasising the importance of community engagement and interdisciplinary cooperation in advancing Citizen Science.

III. Projects applications within the three Living Labs

The strategic progression from the establishment of Living Labs to the promotion of collaborative efforts in Citizen Science project development underscores the project's evolution and highlights the deliberate steps taken to advance research and innovation aligned with community and global challenges. Within WP6, several European and national applications were considered and have been submitted to different competitions. The submissions are part of a joint effort to secure support, recognition, and resources to further advance the goals of WP6 initiatives, including the development of the 3 Living Labs. Each application reflects careful consideration of the competition's requirements, strategic alignment with project objectives, and potential impact on advancing knowledge, sustainability, and community engagement across different domains.

A. European applications

1) Romania-France International Cooperation Programme (PN-IV-P8-8.3-PM-RO-FR-2024-0066)

Associated Living Lab: Good Health and Wellbeing (VI GLADE) Living Lab (SDG #3) – *Healthy (Home) Office Habits*

Name and (provisional) reference of the project: Flattening the Digital Learning curve for the Healthier Seniors/ Optimizarea procesului de învățare digitală pentru vârstnici mai sănătoși (DIGISHEALTH)

Status: Submitted

Project call: [România – Franța. Programul de Acțiuni Integrate Brâncuși](#)

Leading university and principal investigator: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, Ana Iolanda Voda (UAIC)

Universities and researchers taking part in the project as members of the research team or associated researchers:

- **University “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” of Iași:** Daniela Șoitu (UAIC), Adrian Iftene (UAIC), Cristina Tofan (UAIC), Claudia Dana Cojocaru (UAIC);
- **University of Poitiers:** Olfa Ben Ahmed, Prof. Christine Fernandez-Maloigne, Mathieu Naudin, Liliane Bonnal, Aurélie Gaillard, Morgane Plantier, John-Elio Nahas.

Budget: 52550 lei

Brief description of the project: The global population is undergoing a significant demographic shift, with the number of individuals aged 50 or older expected to double by 2050. Promoting digital literacy especially among seniors can decrease reliance on hospital resources, enabling early health changes detection through improved remote care infrastructure. The DigiSHealth project's *main goal is to enhance collaboration between Romania and France in lifelong learning, fostering the exchange of ideas and knowledge, to improve digital skills for seniors¹ in the healthcare sector.*

The project will pursue this goal through the following objectives:

- Objective 1 (O1). Identifying the perceived key barriers that inhibit the adoption and usage of digital health technologies by the 50+ senior population group.
- Objective 2 (O2). Identifying how General Practitioners (GPs), and other health and social care professionals can facilitate or increase the adoption of digital health technologies and usage by the senior population.
- Objective 3 (O3). Designing a frame of a digital tool addressed to 50 + seniors and their friendly interaction with the social and healthcare environment.
- Objective 4 (O4). Publication and dissemination of results.

The DigiSHealth project uses Citizen Science to empower seniors in digital health and advance research and development. By engaging seniors as co-creators, it enhances their digital health literacy and tailored solutions to their needs. Through Citizen Science, DigiSHealth enhances social connectedness among seniors and enriches discussions on healthcare innovation and accessibility. By sharing findings through publications and workshops, the project advocates for best practices in digital health literacy and informs policy recommendations for enhancing senior

¹ Through seniors we understand individuals aged 50 or older (Santrock, 2022)

care. Overall, DigiSHealth illustrates the transformative impact of Citizen Science in healthcare, empowering older adults, fostering collaboration, and addressing societal challenges in the digital era.

2) Democratic Empowerment for Networked Green Energy Transition (DENGET)

Associated Living Lab: Sustainable Cities and Communities (VI SCC) Living Lab (SDG #11) – *Perceptions of the building environment – Indoor environment and quality of air*

Name and (provisional) reference of the project: Democratic Empowerment for Networked Green Energy Transition - DENGET

Project call: HORIZON-CL5-2023-D3-03

Status: Submitted (not funded)

Leading university and principal investigator: University of Turku, Outi Korhonen

Universities/researchers taking part in the project as members of the research team or associated researchers: VEREIN INTEGRITY.EARTH, UNIVERSITATEA ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA DIN IASI, Aion Sigma Inc, Oxygen ry, COOPERNICO - COOPERATIVA DE DESENVOLVIMENTO SU, Hypha Genossenschaft, IMPACT INTEGRITY GMBH.

Team/associated researchers: Sorin Gabriel Anton (PI, UAIC).

Budget: 4,987,497.50 Euro

Brief description of the project: DENGET proposes a novel approach to peer-to-peer energy sharing by integrating Decentralized Autonomous Organisations (DAOs) with tokenomics and ABCA based negotiation protocol. This is innovative and holds the potential to significantly transform the energy sector by way of making participation inclusive, easy to use and automated based on preferences. DENGET builds on the best practice of HYPHA DAO open-source project and tested ABCA based negotiation protocol. Collaboration across interdisciplinary fields, including software (DAO, AI, UX), law, and business studies, guides the testing of this approach within established energy communities, providing valuable insights to shape the establishment of new ECs and effectively accelerate successful project implementation. DENGET tackles precise challenges within energy communities, and in comparison, to current solutions, the fusion of

Daonomics and tokenomics presents a notably promising and influential approach for driving behavior change and fostering a widespread adoption of EC and P2P energy and benefit sharing. DENGET effectively converts collaborative incentives into tangible tokens or points that can be traded among energy community members in exchange for energy - offering a novel approach to store the value of energy. Aligned with Horizon Europe's goal of resource pooling for energy projects and the European Green Deal's focus on citizen-driven renewable energy initiatives, Blockchain is used to enhance energy sharing transparency and security - in line with the goals of Horizon Europe and the European Green Deal while increasing renewable energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving grid stability, and empowering consumers.

The project can help meet the Energy Efficiency Directive's target of reducing energy consumption by 11.7% by 2030, with a particular emphasis on vulnerable and low-income households that are not necessarily tech savvy. Citizen Science initiatives can engage communities in monitoring their own energy usage, empowering vulnerable and low-income households to contribute to energy efficiency goals without requiring advanced technical skills.

B. National applications

1) Development of Monitoring Workplace Air Quality: Citizen Science Collecting Data Platform (DEMON CITIZEN SCIENCE)

Associated Living Lab: Sustainable Cities and Communities (VI SCC) Living Lab (SDG #11) – *Perceptions of the building environment – Indoor environment and quality of air*

Name and (provisional) reference of the project: Development of Monitoring Workplace Air Quality: Citizen Science Collecting Data Platform, acronym: DEMON CITIZEN SCIENCE (PN-IV-P7-7.1-PED-2024-2126)

Status: Submitted

Project call: [PNCDI IV, Programul Parteneriate pentru Inovare, Subprogramul Parteneriate pentru competitivitate – Proiect Experimental Demonstrativ](#)

Leading university and principal investigator: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, Anca-Diana Bibiri

Universities and researchers taking part in the project as members of the research team or associated researchers: CS II dr. habil. Mihaela Mocanu (Institute of Interdisciplinary Research, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași), Professor PhD Iustinian Gabriel Bejan (Faculty of Chemistry, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași), PhD Liviu-Andrei Scutelnicu (Faculty of Computer Science, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași), PhD Violeta Mangalagiu (Faculty of Chemistry, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași), post-doctoral researcher Dr. Claudiu Roman (“Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași), PhD student Sergiu Bortoș (“Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași).

Budget: 750.000 lei

Brief description of the project: *DEMON CITIZEN SCIENCE* project is mainly focused on how to engage the community members, i.e., students enrolled in different academic degrees, in the best possible way by motivating them to participate, share their problems, and get a first-hand experience of conducting citizen science research. The results not only helped in gaining an insight into students' perception of indoor air quality but also in raising awareness that could lead to better decision-making and sustainable development. Raising awareness at the grassroots level and engaging the student community to participate in air quality monitoring can generate partnerships in which citizens and researchers can effectively work towards a common goal.

Project objectives:

- Holistic approach to the perception of the air quality in academic spaces; a survey will be conducted to the university population which will assess different aspects of this heated debate; analysis of the data collection;
- The existing prototype of the sensor will be improved to record and capture the indoor air quality, and signal the presence of polluting factors that affect IAQ;
- Developing an integrated platform in the framework of the Internet of Things – IoT, with a strong component dedicated to citizen science (students and other categories of stakeholders have access to the database platform and the possibility to give feedback).

Expected results of the proposed project:

- The project proposed to involve citizens in data collection for the formaldehyde and particulates as the main components of indoor pollution.
- DEMON Citizen Science results through the introduction of cost-effective, user-friendly sensors, and citizen science initiatives as a resolution to concerns voiced by environmental activists will inspire the initiation of new citizen-led projects at the local/regional level.
- Beyond data collection, the results of the proposed project enhance public awareness, empowering communities with information about indoor air quality and promoting environmentally conscious behaviour.

The project DEMON-CITIZEN SCIENCE would consider two concepts of transfer of technology. Firstly, the project would start from the TRL2 level of maturity where the concept of citizen science implication based on basic principles of practical involvement would collect data using formaldehyde and particulate sensors. The data collected by students would be used to develop a data collection platform at the disposal of indoor pollution researchers as a proof-of-concept for a model constructed with citizen science concepts for data collection and interpretation. Secondly, the sensors proved to measure formaldehyde concentration and particulate matter values in various locations as presented in the preliminary results (TRL2) would be included in a network through a development process advancing the maturity level to TRL4.

2) Automatic screening tool of speech sound disorders in preschool and primary school children

Associated Living Lab: Good Health and Wellbeing (VI GLADE) Living Lab (SDG #3) – **Healthy (Home) Office Habits**

Name and (provisional) reference of the project: Automatic screening tool of speech sound disorders in preschool and primary school children

Status: Submitted

Project call: PNCDI IV, Programul Parteneriate pentru Inovare, Subprogramul Parteneriate pentru competitivitate - Proiect Experimental Demonstrativ (<https://uefiscdi.gov.ro/proiect-experimental-demonstrativ>)

Leading university and principal investigator: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi, Mihaela Mocanu

Universities and researchers taking part in the project as members of the research team or associated researchers: Professor Adrian Iftene (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi); Associated Professor Ovidiu-Cristian Tudorean (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi); Senior Researcher Anca Diana Bibiri (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi); Postdoctoral researcher Andrei Scutelnicu (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi); Phd Cosmin Nicu Tirpescu (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi).

Budget: 750,000 RON

Brief description of the project: The project *Automatic Screening Tool of Speech Sound Disorders in Preschool and Primary School Children* (SSD-ScreenTool) aims to provide an experimental automatic screening tool for speech sound disorders in children. Our project's main goal is to develop and implement an automatic program for diagnosing speech sound disorders in the Romanian language, based on the research on the differences between impaired speech and non-impaired speech. Our screening tool is not a diagnostic tool. Once a delay or speech disability is detected by this tool, a child may need to be referred to a specialist for more detailed tests and therapy interventions that are tailored to their needs. The project proposal targets interdisciplinary research (conducted by specialists in computer science, linguists with expertise in phonetics and prosodic analysis, and speech therapists) – its main goal being the development of methods, models, algorithms, and system-on-chip architectures concerning the elaboration and implementation of a complete system addressing the assessment of dyslalia affecting preschool and primary school children, in a personalized and user-centred manner. Our project addresses the population of 10% of children aged between 4 and 7 who, according to the statistics, present different variations of speech sound disorders. The potential users of our SSD-ScreenTool are children affected by speech impairments and speech therapists, but also parents, educators, school units, and paediatricians.

SSD-ScreenTool is a Citizen Science project as we collect data with the active participation of Citizens, test and validate the system with speech therapy professionals and implement a partnership with an enterprise for realisation and testing of a new technology and innovative solution for a healthy society.

3) Better aging at home: an international living lab on life habits and health (IN MOTION)

Associated Living Lab: Good Health and Wellbeing (VI GLADE) Living Lab (SDG #3) – **Healthy (Home) Office Habits**

Name and (provisional) reference of the project: Better aging at home: an international living lab on life habits and health (IN MOTION)

Status: funding granted

Project call: Programme d'Appui aux projets pour une Recherche Internationale – PARI (internal call for projects at the University of Poitiers)

Leading university and principal investigator: University of Poitiers, Laurent Bosquet

Universities and researchers taking part in the project as members of the research team or associated researchers: Professor Laurent Bosquet (University of Poitiers), Professor Marion Albouy (University of Poitiers), Professor Mylène Aubertin (Université du Québec à Montréal), Professor Sylvie Belleville (University of Montreal), Professor Nathalie Bier (University of Montreal), Professor Julian Wood (Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour), Savin Chavinier (Lecturer, University of Limoges), Ana Rivadenevra (PAST, University of Bordeaux), Professor Dominica Royoux (University of Poitiers), Professor Daniela Soitu (University of Iasi), Bastien Viollet (Lecturer, University of Poitiers), MsC Federica Loperfido (University of Pavia), Alessandra Vincenti (PhD, University of Pavia), Tuija Leskinen (University of Turku), Professor Ionel Mangalagiu (University of Iasi), Ana Iolanda Voda (Lecturer, Phd, Habil., University of Iasi).

Budget: 36 000 euros

Brief description of the project: The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that the number of people aged 60 and over will double between 2020 and 2050, from 1 billion to

2.1 billion people. There is much concern about the potential consequences of this ageing population, as senescence is accompanied by physiological, psychological and social changes that have a negative effect on the health and autonomy of individuals. Better ageing and sustainable health are therefore a key issue for the coming years.

Data from several international cohorts clearly establish that the relative risk of developing chronic diseases can decrease by up to 80% when individuals combine several health-promoting lifestyle habits, such as physical activity, nutrition, or stress management. The lines of action in prevention and health promotion are therefore fairly well identified. However, we are witnessing an increasing deterioration in these life habits despite progress in the level of evidence on their effectiveness in improving healthy life expectancy. This finding highlights the difficulty of converting validated health promotion programmes into effective population-level public health programmes in their own environment. The issue is complex and requires an interdisciplinary perspective to identify possible solutions. One solution that comes up most often in North America and more gradually in Europe is to co-construct and co-evaluate health promotion programmes directly with stakeholders (users, companies, communities, and laboratories) in the context of living labs. This approach consists in combining a traditional evaluation focused on effectiveness with a much more macroscopic evaluation of the implementation conditions to be met to adapt these programmes to the characteristics of the territories. These can include the characteristics of the target population, as well as the environmental, socio-economic, cultural, and political characteristics.

The University of Poitiers and the Poitiers University Hospital have two unique population health intervention research platforms in France, the QG and the Vie La Santé. These resource centres specialised in health promotion through lifestyle habits, 15 minutes apart, have set themselves the goal of being the cornerstone of an international living lab with ramifications in Europe within the European Campus of City Universities (EC2U) Alliance and in Canada with several research institutes in Montreal.

The scientific consortium of this living lab is quite broad, since it gathers economical, geographical, health, legal, physiological, political, psychological, social, management and engineering sciences. Public and private stakeholders as well as beneficiaries also joined this consortium.

The objectives of the living lab are 1) to co-develop and co-evaluate promotion programmes based on lifestyle habits with all these health stakeholders, 2) to structure an international network specialised in implementation sciences, defined by the WHO as the study of methods promoting the integration of scientific discoveries and evidence in public health policy and practice. Beyond the acceleration of the knowledge transfer process as presented above, the objective of the living lab is also to contribute to the education of the population in connection with stakeholders of the different ecosystems, but also to the training of professionals through university training, in particular within the framework of the GLADE (Good health and well-being) Virtual Institute of the EC2U Alliance. This objective also concerns the scientific community, since a major challenge for the living lab is its ability to network within the European territory with scientists likely to support the transition towards a more systemic vision of prevention and health promotion programmes. This is why the living lab plans to submit an application to the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) programme in order to develop a doctoral network within the EC2U Alliance, in collaboration with Montreal institutes (cardiology, geriatrics, rehabilitation).

C. Other types of competitions

This initiative does not strictly fall under the category of a Citizen Science project within a Living Lab framework, but rather, it was submitted to secure additional funding aimed at expanding the operational scope and activities of the three Living Labs.

European Citizen Science Prize Competition

Name and (provisional) reference of the project: Research & Innovation for Cities & Citizens (RI4C2): **European Citizen Science Prize Competition**

Status: Submitted (not funded)

Project call: [European Union Prize for Citizen Science](#), 2024

Leading university and principal investigator: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, Ana Iolanda VODA (UAIC) and Ionel Mangalagiu (UAIC)

Universities/researchers taking part in the project as members of the research team or associated researchers:

- Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania (UAIC): Ionel Mangalagiu (WP6 Leader), Ana Iolanda Voda (WP6 Local Scientific Coordinator), Elena Felice (WP6 Local Administrative Coordinator), and Diana-Manuela Lina (team member);
- University of Poitiers, France: Prof. Ludovic Thilly (EC2U & RI4C2 Coordinator); Pauline Bordiec (RI4C2 Project Manager), Anaïs Georges (Local Coordinator) and Elif Gulsen (Coordination Assistant);
- University of Salamanca, Spain: Raul Sanchez Prieto (WP2 Leader), Jorge Hernandez (WP2 Local Coordinator), Ricardo Costa (WP2 Local Science and Innovation Coordinator), Marina Holgado Madruga (WP2 member);
- University of Coimbra, Portugal: Rita Martins dos Santos (WP3 Local Coordinator);
- University of Pavia, Italy: Daniela Ovadia (WP4 Leader), Gaia Garancini (WP4 Local Coordinator);
- University of Jena, Germany, Dana Strauß (WP5 Leader), Eleonore Roderfeld (WP5 Local Coordinator).

Budget: 60.000 euros

Brief description of the project: The EC2U Alliance's Research & Innovation for Cities & Citizens (RI4C2) project has been granted 2 million euros under the Horizon 2020 "Science with & for Society" (SwafS) call for European Universities. Comprising 7 universities, the project is centred on fostering a Pan-European Knowledge Ecosystem (PEKE) by progressively aligning the Research & Innovation (R&I) missions of participating universities.

The project is centred on 8 work packages (WPs), with WP6 specifically concentrating on gaining a profound understanding of Citizen Science and establishing a shared framework for the 7 local Knowledge ecosystems within the Alliance. Acknowledging citizens as crucial contributors within these ecosystems, WP6 main results comprise the identification of *outstanding* Citizen Science Champions, the development of a toolkit to measure their participation in R&I, and the launch of 3 Pilot Living Labs whose topics align with specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 3, 4 and 11.

WP6 places a strong emphasis on integrating citizens into its initiatives, particularly through the identification of Citizen Science Champions within the EC2U Alliance cities and regions. This process involved a targeted survey conducted on the LimeSurvey platform, available in all

seven languages of the project partners (112 valid responses). The achieved outcomes enabled us to identify 32 Citizen Science Champions, recipients of awards, who actively participated in subsequent events, including two international conferences and the submission of collaborative projects. The 104 participants were brought together through seven focus group interviews and two conferences. The Champions' list remains dynamic, constantly evolving as new potential champions are added.

IV. Conclusions

In D6.6, the Citizen Science projects submitted by the members of the EC2U consortium, in partnership with external researchers, actors, and stakeholders, were presented. These projects cover a wide range of areas, directly related to the themes of the three Living Labs established within the RI4C2 project.

Through collaboration between the different stakeholders involved in drafting the project applications, we have identified opportunities for synergy and sought to exploit the potential to address complex problems. The projects presented aim to make significant contributions in their specific areas, and the results will serve as a basis for future research and development. The projects topics are aligned with SDGs, aiming to contribute directly to global sustainability efforts. By addressing SDG targets such as health, education, sustainable cities, and climate action, project applications demonstrate a commitment to advancing societal well-being and environmental sustainability.

Participating in collaborative projects enhanced the consortium's visibility and reputation on an international scale. It facilitated partnerships with universities, research institutions, non-academic actors and organisations across different countries, promoting cultural exchange and strengthening global networks. We believe that by collaboratively submitting these project applications, we have strengthened the links established in the activities we have carried out in the RI4C2 project. This involves diverse institutions, including academia, industry, and civil society, working together to achieve results that are best suited to the needs of societies and communities.

The consortium comprising universities in the Alliance has actively pursued opportunities for collaboration and project submission across various European and national funding platforms. However, specific calls addressing the intersection of education, cultural biases, and community languages—key areas of focus for the Quality Education Living Lab—may have been limited or not available during recent submission periods.

Moving forward, the consortium aims to identify and engage with relevant funding opportunities that resonate with the objectives of the Quality Education Living Lab. For instance, upcoming calls like the Impetus Citizen Science call in early 2025 present potential paths for initiating projects

that promote educational quality, cultural understanding, and innovation across diverse communities. By actively seeking and participating in these initiatives, the consortium intends to strengthen its commitment to enhancing educational practices and fostering inclusive learning environments through collaborative research and Citizen Science initiatives.

V. References

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Compagnucci, L., Spigarelli, F., Coelho, J., & Duarte, C. (2021). Living Labs and user engagement for innovation and sustainability. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 289, 125721.

Deliverable D6.1: Citizen Science Champions. More details are available at: <https://ec2u.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/709/2023/05/D6.1-Citizen-Science-Champions.pdf>

Deliverable D6.5: Pilot Living Labs for Citizen Science. More details are available at: https://www.uaic.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/RI4C2_WP6_D6_5_Pilot_Living_Labs_for_Citizen_Science.pdf



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