

INSPIRE case study

HAPPI: Healthy Ageing – Public Procurement of Innovations

1. Identification and assessment of unmet needs within (and starts from) the public bodies

The recent phenomenon of a massive ageing of the population brings emerging needs for the care services and institutions. Hospitals and nursing homes are facing the challenge of hosting and treating more and more elderly people, with age-related risks and diseases, in a context of resource control.

However, these new needs are difficult to evaluate, especially in the context of a non-mature market, with fragmented demand and supply, low standards, no market leaders, etc...

The difficulty also results from the high number of players involved: the HAPPI members are working for the benefit of several hundreds of operators (RESAH = 140 hospitals & nursing homes, NHSCS = 28 hospitals, Mercure = 20 hospitals & ns, FHL = 8 hospitals, SCR = 5 hospitals) rendering the operation of analysing the overall need for “ageing well” solutions really difficult.

As a consequence, we chose to implement a market-oriented approach: start from supply-side then research the need upon what the market can offer.

Three main steps have been defined: identification, analysis, procurement.



Through a dedicated online platform, suppliers offering innovative goods or services for healthy ageing were invited to submit their offer on www.happi-project.eu.

2. SoA analysis via open technical dialogue and early market engagement

2.1. Infodays

One of the keys to success of the HAPPI project was the participation of innovative suppliers in the market survey via the HAPPI innovation platform and in the upcoming call for tender.

To raise awareness and help manufacturers and suppliers understand the aims of the project four Infodays were held in major European cities: London, UK (24/09/2013); Paris, France (09/10/2013), Turin, Italy (30/10/2013) and Vienna, Austria (02/12/2013). The major objectives of these Infodays were to:

- Meet each other and create a network / emulation effect / “buzz” around the project
- Provide preliminary information on how to access HAPPI’s joint procurement (web platform, registration procedure, evaluation process, individual interviews...)

- Bring SMEs and procurers together, create new market opportunities outside HAPPI
- Bring SMEs and funding bodies together and allow first contact opportunities for potential grants inside or outside HAPPI
- Start spotting the best SMEs/products/services for HAPPI's joint procurement

In total, the infodays gathered over 500 participants from 17 different countries.

2.2. Online platform

Through its dedicated online platform (www.happi-project.eu) HAPPI aims at identifying and evaluating innovative solutions for ageing well.

The project website is hosting a tool specifically developed for the purpose of the project: the DARS (Data Analysis and Reviewing System). This online market research tool is an interface between supply and demand:

- Through the DARS, suppliers and technology providers are invited to submit their innovative solutions for healthy ageing.
- The members of the HAPPI project (core beneficiaries and associate members) can review the innovations submitted, assess their relevance, innovativeness etc. and share their viewpoint.

The HAPPI platform offers suppliers an opportunity to showcase their innovative products and services to the HAPPI project team's attention ahead of any calls for tender and formal procurement process. From buyers' side the platform has become a tool to facilitate market research and need assessment.

In total, over 200 suppliers registered on the platform and almost 150 innovative solutions were submitted.

3. Involvement of users in specification of requirements and/or piloting

Users and technical experts have been associated to the process of reviewing the solutions identified via the on-line platform. The reviewing process was performed through 2 different stages:

- Online review of the solutions
- Expert committee meetings

Purchasers but also experts from hospital and nursing homes like clinicians and geriatricians, ergonomists, hospital managers, biomedical engineers, etc. were involved in the analysis of the solutions, with regards to the needs of their institutions and patients.

4. Specification of functional / performance-based requirements

Following the market engagement phase with the infodays and the submission of over 150 innovative solutions on the HAPPI platform, the consortium has been working on the definition of common needs. Based on the European market research facilitated by the online platform, our experts identified a series of solutions which may address these needs. These solutions, described in functional terms in the tender specifications, should fall into the following categories:

- Fall detection and alert system
- Treadmill for rehabilitation and analysis of walking disorders
- Walking course for preventing falls and maintaining independence
- Bed thermoregulation system
- Chair enabling users to maintain independence and reducing effort for aides

5. Evaluation and Verification of innovative solutions (either within the tendering process or in pre-commercial phase)

In order to assess their relevance, efficiency, security or comfort of use, some of the identified solutions can be tested at two different stages:

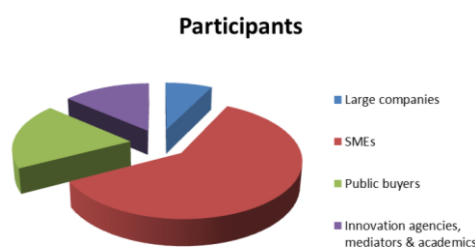
- Ahead of the call for tender: this has been done through the delivery of sample products and testing within our hospital members;
- During the procedure: it has been included in the specifications that for some lots, the evaluation process will include a testing phase.

6. Shared allocation of risks and benefit (including IPR management)

Since we are purchasing only existing solutions (already on the market), no IPR issues.

7. Enable the participation of SMEs

The organisation of the 4 infodays was clearly targeting SMES and the high proportion of small businesses in the total participants demonstrates the success of our communication strategy (see chart below).



In order to guarantee the participation of SMEs in the tendering process, a “SME helpdesk” will be set up, with an online tutorial (including FAQ).

8. Enhance the competition during execution and facilitate innovation over the contract period (for PCP multiple sourcing and approach in phases, for PPI performance condition, lots....)

Progress plans and a close follow-up of the execution of the contracts is included in the tender specifications.