

# MobileAge

## A Guide to Co-Creating Digital Public Services

<https://co-creation.mobile-age.eu>

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## Executive summary

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This is a short summary of the interactive version of our Guide to Co-Creating Digital Public Services. The guide may be found at <https://co-creation.mobile-age.eu>

Co-creation is based on the assumption that a participatory process will lead to more relevant and usable services than the existing ones. **The MobileAge guidebook offers good practice examples, materials and tools to practitioners in local and regional government, as well as NGOS, who provide services to citizens and who intend to collaborate with them to co-create digital solutions for improving their service delivery. While our own experiences and lessons learned are based on six co-creation projects with older adults, the guidebook also provides useful recommendations for co-creation projects with other target audiences. It is not meant to be a recipe book but rather understands and promotes co-creation as reflective practice. It features three distinct sections: (1) co-creation methodology, (2) co-creation resources and (3) co-creation tools.**

- **Co-creation methodology.** Co-creating a digital public service requires different types of activities, such as recruiting participants, developing software, collecting data or planning for sustainability. These activities run in parallel and inform each other. We have developed a co-creation model that distinguishes seven streams of activities. While this model is generic and may be applied in different co-creation settings, our examples are derived from co-creating with older adults and relevant stakeholders.
- **Resources.** A section on resources includes the six case studies of successful MobileAge co-creation projects, presents and critically reflects some of the methods we have employed and offers related materials that were created in the course of our project.
- **Tools.** A section on tools provides a range of digital tools to facilitate and support co-creation projects. These tools were developed during the MobileAge project.

## Summary of Interactive Guide (process and product)

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Co-creation is based on the assumption that a participatory process will lead to more relevant and usable services than the existing ones. This guidebook offers good practice examples, materials and tools to practitioners in local and regional government, as well as NGOs, who provide services to citizens and who intend to collaborate with them to co-create digital solutions for improving their service delivery. While our own experiences and lessons learned are based on five co-creation projects with older adults, the guidebook also provides useful recommendations for co-creation projects with other target audiences.

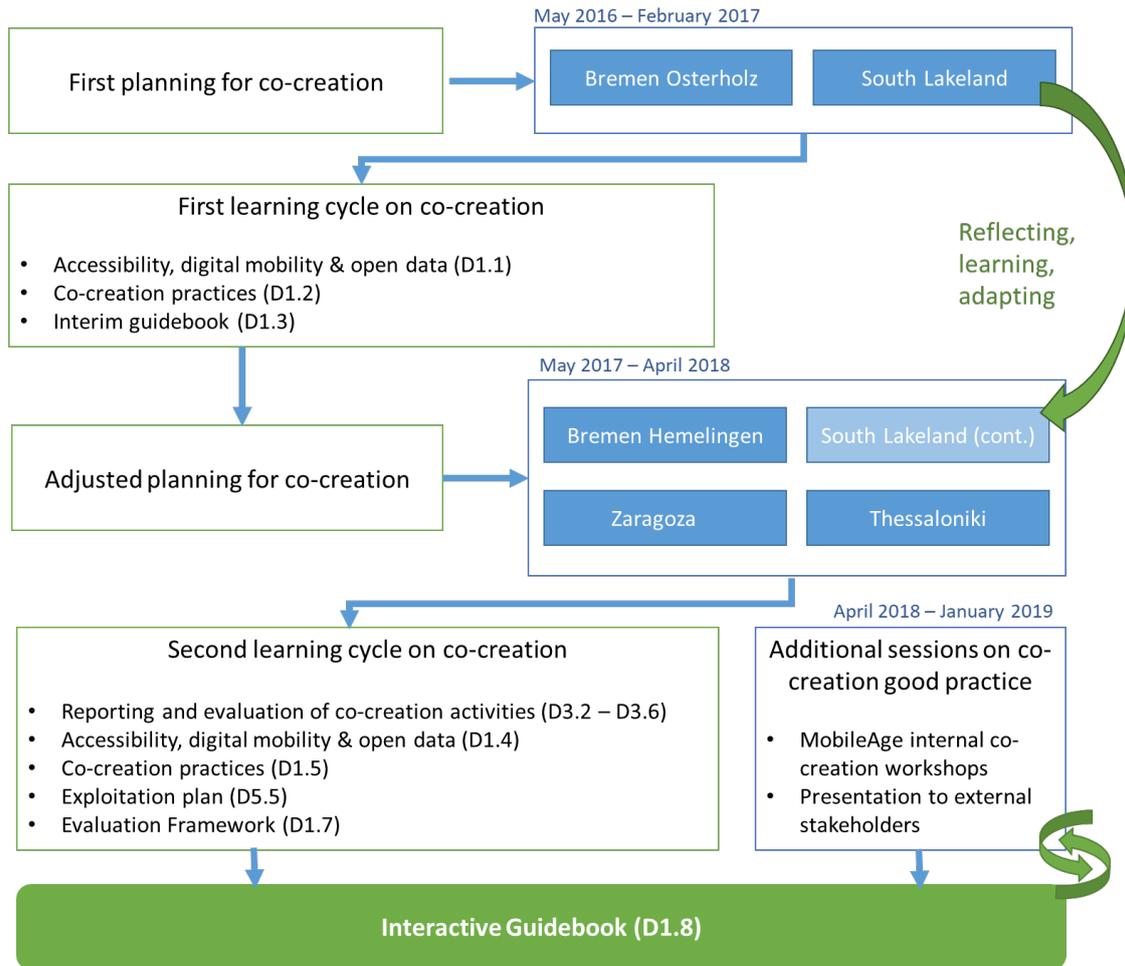
Every co-creation process is unique. It depends on a multitude of conditional aspects such as the kind of service to be developed and its expected impact, the stakeholders, the resources available and so on. Thus, a guidebook to co-creation cannot be used like a cookbook. Rather this guidebook will give you an impression of what it means to co-create and what it requires. Thereby providing you with practical guidance and orientation based on previous experiences.

The heart of this guidebook is a **process model** that structures the process of co-creating in seven different streams, each concerned with a certain set of thematically related steps (e.g. technical tasks such as programming or organizational tasks such as engaging stakeholders). The streams are not a linear sequence of steps but must be seen as building blocks of a whole. Some blocks need to be in place before the other can follow. Others are under construction throughout the whole process. You'll find a detailed description of each stream regarding its particular aims and requirements, the expected results of certain tasks, as well as its relation to other streams, some practical recommendations, good practice examples and links to useful resources.

The **resource section** contains materials and tools that support you in planning, implementing and evaluating your co-creation process: In the methods section you'll find different formats for engaging with your stakeholders. The case studies give you an insight in the co-creation processes that this guidebook is based on. In the material section examples on certain methods are provided.

Finally, we provide you with different **tools** that may facilitate your co-creation process: A documentation tool that will help you document your process in a systematically manner, an evaluation framework that helps you evaluate your process and assess the impact, the MADE platform, and a blog as a communication tool with your stakeholders.

The interactive guidebook was developed following an iterative process according to the Mobile Age co-creation methodology (see figure below for process).



**Figure 1: Process for co-creation of interactive guide**

For screenshots of the landing page, please see Appendix I of this document. For full access, please visit <https://co-creation.mobile-age.eu>.

We have begun to present and promote the guidebook at external events in order to disseminate our findings and collect feedback. For example, we presented the guidebook at the following events.

**Table 1: Communication activities & stakeholder engagement**

Event	Role of Mobile Age	Participants
<b>Panel run by REA on “OpenGoV Co-production &amp; Co-creation: Sharing experiences from Regions and Cities” during the EU Week of Cities and Regions, Brussels, 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018.</b>	Presentation of good practice example during panel and moderation of round table on inclusive co-creation	Around 50 participants from public administration, research, business and NGOs
<b>Final conference of MobileAge, Brussels, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018</b>	Conference organiser	Around 40 participants from public administration, research, business and NGOs
<b>Several meetings with different units in public administrations in Bremen and Bremerhaven</b>	Consultant	Bremerhaven - City council of Bremenhaven - IT department - Elder Care unit in Ministry of Social Affairs  Bremen - CIO, Ministry of Finance Bremen - Elder Care unit in Ministry of Social Affairs - publisher
<b>Networking session on “Moving co-creation forward”, ICT 2018, Vienna, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018</b>	Organisation of a 45 minutes networking session on co-creation good practice	Around 30 participants from public administration, research, business and NGOs
<b>European Parliament Joint Intergroup Meeting, Brussels, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019</b>	Organisation of 2 hours meeting	Around 40 local and European policy maker

The guidebook was presented along with the relevant policy briefings. We received interested and at times enthusiastic feedback on our co-creation approach and resources. For example, one participant of the ICT 2018 event contacted us via email stating:

*“I participated in your Networking Session in the ICT 2018 and found your project really interesting and very relevant for us. I had a look at your Guide (CIDER) and it is definitely full of very useful info and tips [...]”*

*Living Innovation Project (H2020)*

Based on the discussion during the networking session at the ICT 2018 event and a feedback survey of the event, we could identify a clear need of practitioners to learn more about approaches to co-creation such as “to learn more, exchange knowledge and explore proposed possibilities” and “to get an inside on next generation public services”. The fields of application for co-creation are varied and at times different from the MobileAge context. However, we are confident that the guidebook also provides useful insights for other co-creation contexts.

The guidebook is currently being translated into German in order to facilitate its exploitation in Germany.

# APPENDIX I



Figure 2: Landing page of interactive guidebook featuring the streams of co-creation activities

**Evaluating co-creation process & results**

In a co-creation project, user evaluation and testing of the technical outputs are fundamental and should become part of the co-creation process in iterative feedback cycles. Different methods should be applied for formative and summative evaluation. Participants and other stakeholders may be assigned particular tasks and roles in the evaluation both of the product but also of the co-creation process itself.

**Exploiting, maintaining & sustaining**

The involvement and engagement of citizens and Intermediaries as co-creators usually concentrates on the usability of software and relevance of data. They expect that arrangements will be made for maintaining a service as well as for personal and financial sustainability. The responsibility for a sustainable service provision, maintenance of data and software updates is, in most cases, assumed by a government organisation or NGO. Operational procedures may be carried out in cooperation with other local stakeholders.

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**RESOURCES**

This section includes five case studies of successful co-creation projects, presents some of the methods they have employed and offers related materials that were created in the course of these projects.

**METHODS**      **CASE STUDIES**      **MATERIALS**

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**TOOLS**

This section provides a range of digital tools to facilitate and support co-creation projects.

**Documentation**      **Evaluation Framework**      **MADE**      **Blog**

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**Figure 3: Landing page of interactive guidebook (scrolled down) featuring resources and tools**