Good Practices Repository

of responsible ICT Research and Innovation with SSH input

HubIT | TECHNOLOGY WITH AND FOR SOCIETY

Title of the initiative

COUCH – The Council of Coaches

Description of the Initiative

The Council of Coaches (COUCH) project aims to address one of the grand challenges of our time: To create high quality health care and welfare services to ageing societies. But as responsible and sympathetic this may sound; it still implies risks toward society at large. Thus, COUCH is concerned with proceeding towards its goals in a responsible manner and preempt potential societal risks. Council of Coaches aims to develop a radically new virtual coaching concept based on multiple autonomous, embodied virtual coaches, which form together a personal council that fulfills the needs of older adults in an integrated way. Each coach will have its own expertise, personality and style of coaching; they might not always agree with each other, but they all share a single goal: to support you across every aspect of well-being, including physical, social, cognitive and mental support. The Council members listen to you, inform you, help you to set personal goals and inspire you to take control of your health. Give the council your thoughts or listen and observe how the individual Coaches exchange their views on numerous issues. Apply your new skills in daily life and if the need arises, contact any of the coaches anytime, anywhere. COUCH is empowered by a novel Open Agent Platform, providing core functionalities for the development and deployment of Coaches, including technologies for non-obtrusive interactions between the user and the Coaches. To this end, leading edge spoken dialogue interaction technologies will be provided as embodied conversational agents that will join in conversations with the user. The platform will not be confined to a constrained number of Coaches – rather it will enable developers and innovators to introduce new Coaches that provide additional knowhow and services. Hence, COUCH will

www.hubit-project.eu
info@hubit-project.eu

enable a new virtual coaching ecosystem, bringing together healthcare services providers with innovators to implement novel ideas.

In order to anticipate potential risks, the COUCH has developed an RRI-strategy consisting of three interlaced and on-going:
• Identifying the RRI-issues and societal risks that arise from the ambition of the project, developing a shared RRI vision as well as a plan for how to meet this vision.
• Stakeholder and user engagement throughout all parts of the project. Insights from stakeholders and future users are crucial for identifying the potential risks and issues that relates to the project.
• Performing socio-technical integration of the RRI-issues. Socio-technical integration is about enhancing responsible reflection in the technical work while putting all concerns and issues into play, developing specific solutions to specific RRI-issues and making sure these solutions are implemented.

Virtual Coaching, ICT Health, eHealth, mHealth, Wellbeing, Healthy Ageing, AI, Healthcare, Healthy Lifestyle, Selfmanagement, Human-Computer Interaction, Multiple-agent System

Type of Output of Initiative
Events open to civic society | Training/sharing information about RRI pillars | Establishment of a Community of interest

Country(ies) involved
Belgium | Denmark | France | Netherlands | Spain | United Kingdom (UK)

Geographic scale of the initiative
International | National

Website
https://council-of-coaches.eu/

Status of the initiative

Running

Users' target group(s)

EC and H2020 programme | ICT developers / researchers | SSH scientists / researchers | Policy makers | General public level | Local Administrations

RRI dimensions involved

It has been taken into account the ethical impact. (Ethics)

The requests of civil society have been evaluated. (Public Engagement)

The representatives of civil society have been provided with the knowledge and skills to actively participate in the initiative. (Science Education)

The outcomes of the activities have been / are being published for free access. (Open Access)

SSH disciplines involved

Philosophy | Anthropology | Psychology

ICT domain involved in the initiative, both for the activities and as for output.

Content technologies and information management, big data, open data, languages learning and teaching technologies, creative technologies, gaming and new interactions technologies

Method used to exchange information and knowledge to include the RRI principles into the ICT research and innovation processes

Cooperative workshops | Focus groups | Face-to-face meetings

Participation and engagement of people and organizations in the implementation of the initiative

They all participate into a funded project/initiative

Number of people participating

50

Number of organizations participating

7

Number of events held

-

Number of researchers (ICT+SSH) involved

15

Number of women involved

6

Number of joint discussion themes

-

Who sustained the cost / effort

Shared among participants

How it is / has been funded this initiative?

Public funding

Notes

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