

B. Zimmer, L. Dechesne, B. Yannou, J. Stal-le Cardinal, A. De Touchet, F. Piette. A design and evaluation program for longer-life products. *Gerontechnology* 2009;8(2):123; doi: 10.4017/gt.2009.08.02.011.00

The Charles Foix Longer-Life Pole owns a design and evaluation competence network to advise and promote innovative projects from design to commercial distribution (Pole Allongement de la vie) located in Ivry sur Seine, near Paris, France. It is a common initiative of AP-HP (Association of Public Parisian Hospitals), and Pierre and Marie Curie University, and includes the selection and support of innovative project development, a medical research centre on normal and pathological aging, a geriatric expertise network, and a growing public and private partnership network. **Technical description** The competency network focuses on developing a methodology and supporting procedures and tools for innovative R&D. The mission of the team 'innovation' is (i) to select promising innovative projects in the early stages of the development process for funding, and (ii) to supply expertise to project leaders concerning project management, innovation management, patenting, business plan, market launch strategy, communication and promotion. We stimulate multidisciplinary teams and design centred for users, their family and/or professional carers¹⁻³. The network provides a multidisciplinary offer for project leaders, based on scientific, technical, industrial and medical competences (Figure 1). The aim is to help making the technologies more transparent and acceptable while carrying out all the necessary functions (usability and attractiveness). These expertise centre's efforts are supported by the municipality of Ivry sur Seine, Val de Marne district, the Ile de France region, the French state and the European Community. **User studies** Currently we support 8 innovative French gerontechnological projects. This includes the development of a robust walker (Ax'EGO, Boissy 94470 Boissy Saint Léger), a carpet equipped with force sensors, a bracelet equipped with physiological sensors (m@dtic), a lamp that communicates with its environment (UbiQuiet, Orfidé, Suresnes), a communication server (INNOS, 71230 Saint-Vallier), an exoskeleton elbow, an exoskeleton knee, and Safygart, a treadmill equipped with a rehabilitation shoulder-harness.

References

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Keywords: design, innovation management, competency network, participative evaluation
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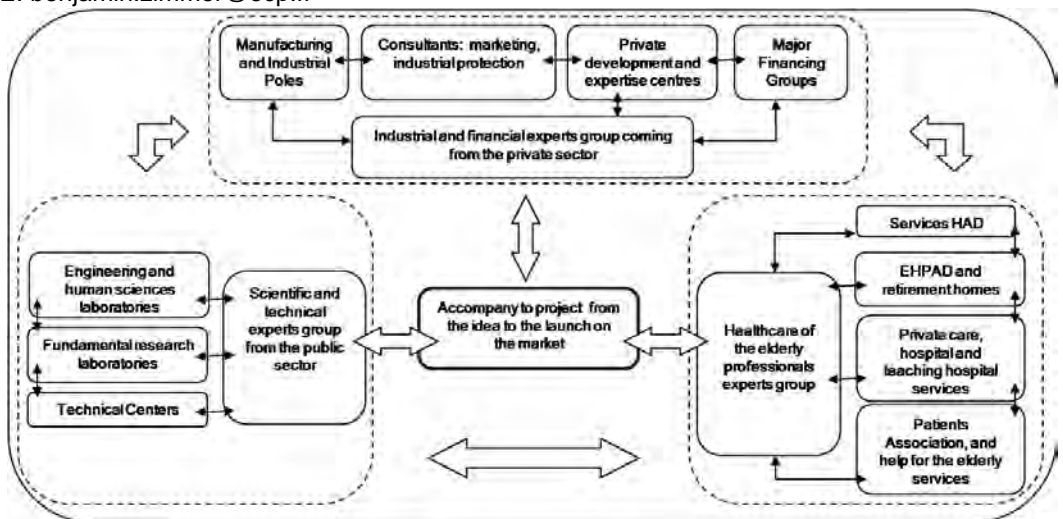


Figure 1. Organisation of the design and evaluation program for longer-life products