Northumbria University NEWCASTLE

l-r Professor Rob Wilson, Senior Research Assistant David Jamieson, and Professor Mike Martin in the Living Lab

Dec 14, 2018 10:37 GMT

Newcastle Living Lab welcomes international researchers for collaboration workshop

More than 30 international researchers and practitioners from across Europe visited Northumbria University recently to test and develop new methods of collaboration and co-creation in the field of social innovation of public services during a special three-day workshop.

The Co-Creation of Service Innovation in Europe (CoSIE) workshop was led by Newcastle Living Lab Professors Rob Wilson and Mike Martin from Newcastle

Business School. It was hosted in the Lab, which provided the platform of the collaborative learning environment via the deployment of the lab's technology and digital tools for the event.

The Newcastle Living Lab at Newcastle Business School enables organisations to innovate their relationships with employees, partners and customers. By analysing fundamental interactions, it can help to identify inventive approaches to 'wicked' problems and better ways of getting things done.

It is part of a wider European network (ENOLL) and represents a creative and innovative approach to complex problem solving for businesses and communities through collaboration and partnership building. One example highlighted how multi-agency collaboration facilitated by The Living Lab has helped transform the probation service in Hull, leading to better outcomes for offenders and less re-offending.

The CoSIE project is a three-year European co-funded research and development initiative through the Horizon 20/20 programme worth over 3m Euro. It aims to transform our understanding of social innovation and interaction between organisations and service users on a range of 'wicked' problem areas including probation services (UK), housing of older people (Poland), services for people with complex disabilities (Sweden) and long-term worklessness (Spain).

CoSIE project partners are currently working in collaboration on a series of nine individual, but interlinked pilots. Each pilot has different target groups, service needs and local settings. Together, they are actively seeking new ways to use digital tools and open data in order to enable the co-creation of public services for the benefit of society.

The workshop's knowledge transfer sessions in the Newcastle Living Lab enabled researchers to demonstrate their emerging methods for improving communication between stakeholders to ensure greater inclusion, enhanced understanding and increased collaboration.

Professor Rob Wilson explains: "Many of the challenges facing our businesses and communities can seem difficult and intractable. Taking a Living Lab approach can evolve thinking, innovation and adaptation in response to new pressures and expectations to deliver workable solutions for complex, multi-

faceted.

“It has been fantastic to welcome our CoSIE project partners to Northumbria and is testament to our international reputation for collaboration and attracting academics from research intensive institutions around the world to come here. Being part of the international Living Lab movement is another example of our global reach and reputation.

“The CoSIE project is pioneering public service innovation by creating collaborative partnerships between service providers and service beneficiaries. Through innovative practices we can improve citizen inclusion and highlight opportunities to be active members of society.

Professor Mike Martin said “Our Newcastle Living Lab technology’s visualisation and animation tools enable stakeholders with diverse perspectives to make sense of large scale, complex social and technical systems. In developing our Living Lab approach as part of the CoSIE project, we aim to support the wider adoption of these new tools and techniques to provide a concrete focus for their co-creation activities.”

In the latest Times Higher Education World University Rankings, Northumbria has climbed 273 places from 522nd to 249th place for research. The Newcastle Living Lab is another example of our investment in research infrastructure and our global reach and reputation.

For more information on the CoSIE project please contact Rob Wilson

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