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Thematic networking session “Creating lasting change” Enhancing access to healthcare

Luxembourg, 16 December 2025

Luka Messmer
Gé Huismans

Agenda

- 1. Session objective**
- 2. Theme overview**
- 3. VR4Rehab project experience**
- 4. Networking tables**



Objective

- **Bring together stakeholders** tackling healthcare access and system resilience
 - Get inspired by **best practices** to make healthcare project impact durable
 - Discuss how to **turn project outputs into lasting results** and explore opportunities on how to make this happen
 - Identify **support needs** to sustain healthcare innovations beyond project lifetimes
-

Creating lasting change



Create **lasting territorial change**, not just short-term project results



Embed project results into **regional / local policies and community practices**



Ensure that **public investments continue delivering value** after projects end

Creating lasting change



Build on your project's achievements and **ensure the transfer of successful initiatives**



Strengthen **connections with other projects**, create synergies and opportunities for **shared learning and collaboration**



Scale up and broaden the reach of **effective practices** across multiple regions and sectors

Supporting NWE projects in taking results a step further

Telling the story

Provide tools and visibility for projects to showcase and replicate their outputs

Building on success

Support the **uptake of successful project outputs** beyond what was initially planned

Creating connections

Facilitate knowledge exchange and networking among partners and projects, within NWE and beyond

Supporting NWE projects in taking results a step further

Telling the story

Provide tools and visibility for projects to showcase and replicate their results

Promote project activities and **events**

Build project capacity to communicate and showcase their results through **training and workshops**

Showcase NWE projects at **Programme events**

Push NWE projects visibility and / or facilitate participation to **awards and EU external events**

Supporting NWE projects in taking results a step further

Building on success

Support the **uptake of successful project outputs** beyond what was initially planned

Support the uptake of project outputs towards new territories, new type of stakeholders, new fields or domains, notably with **NWE capitalisation calls**:

- **Call 1**: open now until 28 May 2026
- **Call 2**: opening in Dec 2026 until May 2027

Reach out to your Contact Point for support:
www.nweurope.eu/contact-points

Supporting NWE projects in taking results a step further

Creating connections

Facilitate knowledge exchange and networking among partners and projects, within NWE and beyond

Support project **networking**, partnerships, clustering and synergies **within NWE and beyond** and **across programming periods**, notably with networking / clustering events

Why is this topic a challenge for NWE?

- Strong **territorial imbalances** in healthcare access
 - Limited healthcare services and staff shortages in **rural and peripheral areas**
 - Population growth in urban areas and **ageing societies**
 - **Lack of resilience** and coordination in healthcare systems
 - Countries being strongly **interdependent**
-

What do we expect?

Projects that:

- Promote **equal access** to quality healthcare for all citizens
 - Build **resilient systems** capable of responding to future health crises
 - Develop **innovative care services**, smart approaches and digital solutions
 - Strengthen **territorial networks** of health, care, and well-being
-



Forest4Youth

**Interreg NWE
2021-2027
projects on the
topic of
enhancing
access to
healthcare**



Heartsafe NWE



MSD-CARE



Scale-Up4Rehab



RE:HOME

Remco Hoogendijk

Sint Maartenskliniek

Lead partner of the VR4Rehab project (2017-2020)

2017-2018 5 Hackathons



To select the most brilliant ideas for rehabilitation with VR & AR technologies

2018-2019

5 Game Jams



To develop the ideas into workable demos

2019-2021

>5 Challenges



To transform the demos into applications to be introduced to the market

HANDS AROUND THE WORLD

Applied for: Upper limb
Aiming to develop a child-friendly rehabilitation training possibility, which can be practiced at home.

MOVE VREE

Applied for: Lower limb
A VR game that therapists and patients can use to retrain motor control and change pain perception, with two underlying principles: enhancing movement and implicit reward.

TRUNKY XL

Applied for: Therapy adherence
Being independent is the most important goal in rehabilitation. VR rehabilitation with movement sensors on the trunk turns it into a controller to play a VR game while training.

VR TRAVELLER

Applied for: Pain
VR training program for improving cognitive deficits of neurological patients. Specifically designed to train attentional functions in combination with executive functions (working memory and action planning).

ABOUT US

VR4REHAB aims to stimulate the creation of VR based rehabilitation tools by bringing together relevant stakeholders and exchange knowledge. Working together in order to create the future.

Our goals are:

- Offering a platform to facilitate collaboration
- Linking ideas, people and business
- Providing and exchanging knowledge
- Initiating and showcasing new projects

CRYSTAL BALL

Applied for: Therapy adherence
Improving the short term memory. Patient trains the memory during the game play, with the possibility to have several options to get used to helpful tools. The therapist get the feedback off the improvement after every game played via mail.

MOVING REALITY

Applied for: Lower limb
Two VR game applications to be used in gait rehabilitation: 1st implement dorsiflexion training, by use of a visual augmented reality; 2nd wearing a sensor on the foot, which provides feedback thanks to a vibration sensor.

ADHERENCE

Applied for: Therapy adherence
This project explores potential of commercially available virtual reality (VR) systems consoles and games for use in rehabilitation programmes to support therapy adherence

PAIN TOOLKIT

Applied for: Pain
A resource for people with persistent pain. It investigate how VR can add value to the self management material on the toolkit, and to create a stimulating virtual environment, that can bring people together to develop their skills in pain management.



Innovation process Covid-19 WP

1. Hackathon – May 2021

Virtual

5 days of generating ideas – Joint opening & pitches

End of last day pitches in front of jury

Resulting in 3 ideas per patient group = 9 ideas

2. Dev Jam – June 2021

Virtual or live

10 days in 3 months

End of last day pitches in front of jury

Resulting in 1 concept per patient group = 3 concepts

3. Challenge phase – September 2021

50k available for development new game applications COVID rehab

Feasibility testing on different patient groups

Feedback sessions with target groups

Final application games

May 2021

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VR 4 REHAB
COVID REHAB

COVID REHAB HACKATHON



1 HACKATHON

16 TEAMS

1 GOAL

**Invent VR and AR
solutions for Long Covid
rehabilitation.**

June-September 2021

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DEV JAMS

10 September 2021



VR 4 REHAB
COVID REHAB



June-September 2021

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*The Covid Center UZ Leuven team for VR4REHAB
From left to right: Dr. R. Haghedooren – Prof. Dr. R. Gosselink – Msc. E. Haghedooren*



MotiVeeR Uzelf
UZ Leuven
Belgium

Explore Deep
SME
The Netherlands – UK – Ireland

Digital Design VR
University of Sheffield
UK

Successful initiatives

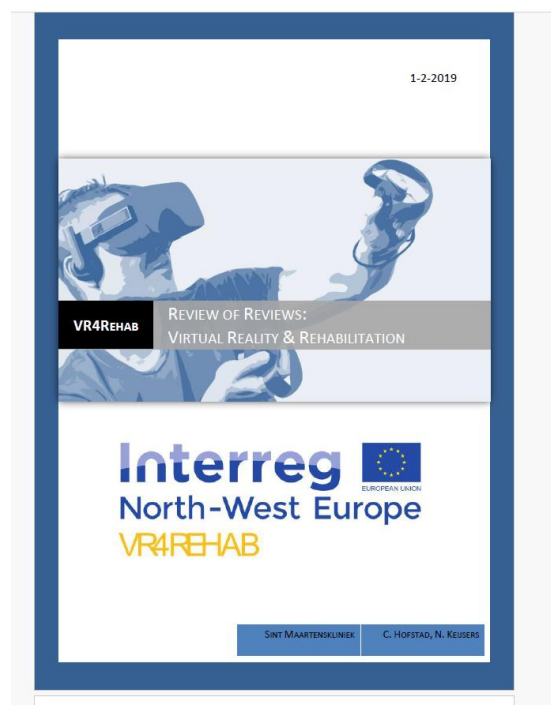
The team Movin(g) Reality wins the Dutch Hackathon

May 17, 2018 12:53 PM

On Monday **May 15th** the team **Movin(g) Reality** was announced as the **winners of the Dutch Hacking Health competition**. Professionals, researchers, patients and many other people participated in many hackathons organized all over the Netherlands late April to design healthcare innovations. The intention of hackathons is to bring people together in order to generate ideas and concepts which otherwise would never see daylight. In association with the **VR4REHAB Interreg North-West Europe** project, the **Sint Maartenskliniek** organized a hackathon. The winner of this hackathon was team Movin(g) Reality with a concept for an **augmented reality game** for rehabilitation of walking disorders. Winners of all separate hackathons participated in the Dutch Hacking Health competition to become the general Dutch winner. The Movin(g) Reality concept eventually proved to be the winning concept for healthcare innovation.



Successful initiatives



Literature review

Successful initiatives

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Successful initiatives



Currently:
62 paying members
30 countries

And counting.....

Successful initiatives



Successful initiatives

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Successful initiatives



Scale-Up4Rehab

Challenges and perspectives

Help for (struggling
SME's)

The gap between
Healthcare Science
& Healthcare
Practice

A guide towards
the possibilities the
EU has to offer

Thank you

r.hoogendijk@maartenskliniek.nl

<https://xr4rehab.org>

<https://scale-up4rehab.nweurope.eu/>



Q&A

Networking tables



1. Tour de table

Share your plans to ensure durability and uptake of outputs



2. Discuss the key question

What further initiative(s) – at programme or project level – could support the durability of results?



3. Restitution

One participant from each table shares the takeaway messages from their group

Tour de table

What are your current plans to ensure durability and further uptake of outputs?



Key question

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What further initiative(s) – at programme or project level – could be taken to support the durability of results?



Neyya from Getty Images Signature via Canva.com

What's next?

13:00 – 14:15

Foyer 1 - Level 0

NETWORKING LUNCH

14:15 – 16:15

NWE PROJECTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Track 1. Green transport and connectivity

Track 2. Circular and resource-efficient economy

Track 3. Climate-friendly and resilient regions

Track 4. Community-led energy transitions

Track 5. Resource-efficient local and regional planning

Track 6. Sustainable agriculture and water systems



**Social media
challenge**




**Vote for the most
inspiring story**

**Check your
personalised agenda
on the event app!**



NWE projects making a difference

	Workshop +1 Level +1	Delegates 3 Level -3	Banquet Level +1	Delegates 2 Level -3	Delegates 1 Level -3	Workshop 0 Level 0
	Green transport and connectivity	Circular and resource-efficient economy	Climate-friendly and resilient regions	Community-led energy transitions	Resource-efficient local and regional planning	Sustainable agriculture and water systems
14:15 – 14:35	Green SKHy	CASCADE	Cool Neighbourhoods	ACCU	ASSET	Better-Calf
10' break						
14:45 – 15:05	MONA	Hemp4Circularity	IB-Green	CIRCUS	Circular Building Convert	SIMONE
10' break						
15:15 – 15:35	STEER-NWE	E6	ECOBoost	RODEO	Circular Shift	Rural Roadwater Rescue
10' break						
15:45 – 16:05	WISTAR	PREUSE	PolliConnect	SmartCORE	T4R	ResiRiver

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Thank you
