



EXCITING TIMES AS RESOURCES LAUNCHED TO HELP SMEs BENEFIT FROM OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SILVER ECONOMY

After almost two years of intense development, the partners of the Erasmus + Age Friendly Economy project are busy sharing outputs that will assist **SMEs to diversify their business to avail of opportunities from the silver economy**. The world is aging. But first, a key learning. As shared by [Cliffrun Media \(Ireland\)](#), be careful about Silver Economy Stereotypes such as

- Older generation only seen as suffering from ill-health, inactivity and decline
- Old people are weak, helpless and cantankerous
- Old people are past being consulted about anything – even their own lives
- The majority of old people are lonely and isolated from their families

Age does not define this sector. Cliffrun summarise the key motivations of the older consumer ...

- **Values** – Independence, Safety, Health, Privacy, Relationships, Family, Dignity
- **Beliefs** – Opinion not valued, No longer useful, Technology too something to add', Will get lonelier, I am capable / not capable of taking care of myself, I am wise
- **Attitudes** – Age is just a number, Now it's time for me, Need to Plan, Dependent, Adaptive to change, Each day as it comes, Struggling (Note: Attitudes change with Ill health, Bereavement, Financial

It is widely recognised that over 50's are the fastest growing and highest earning section of the population. The EU estimates that the over 50s market, or the "Silver Economy", will be worth over €5 trillion annually by 2025. This is an exciting opportunity for local businesses to focus on this growing market.

Our dynamic learning platform www.agefriendlyeconomy.eu (available in English, Spanish and Polish) shares the four main outputs;

- a free online digital skills technology training course to assist with research and marketing.
- presentations and resources from a two-day innovation boot-camp for SMEs to further develop product/service ideas and a commercialisation plan;
- work-based learning toolkit offering hints and tips on how to better improve research and development within the workplace
- online collaborative knowledge exchange platform to help businesses to connect to other SMEs throughout Europe.

Age Friendly Economy presents three interconnected training programmes that will transform your business capacity in digital skills, helping you to respond to the needs of the silver economy market. These are unique blended learning modules that will plug digital skills deficits and promote innovation.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY SKILLS FOR SMEs:

OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES

DATA SKILLS FOR ENTREPRENEURS

Module 1 Introduction to Big Data

This module will provide an overview of the basic information on big data and how this may be used to tap into the "silver market". If you can understand big data, where it comes from and how it works, then you will be much better placed to make the most of the information! This module will improve your understanding of the emerging role of big data, the key terms in relation to smart data and how to apply this to your "aging community" customer.

Module 2 Improving current business with own data

You could improve your business today using only the information you already have. Follow this module to learn how you can best find, analyse and implement the information which your business already owns in order to tap into the "silver pound". This module can help by equipping you with tips and tricks which will allow you to take advantage of the data which comes from your business. Find this data and use it to build a brand that people trust.

Module 3 Improving your business with external data.

Think of the millions of businesses there are in the world! You can use the data which stems from these businesses to inform your own decisions. Utilising this information to steer your business in a more "age friendly" direction. There is much to be learned from past mistakes, so by using this free information as research you can improve your existing business model. Follow this module and learn how to capture the older generation's attention, making them lifelong consumers.

Module 4 Legislation.

Being an ethical company is something which will entice people to be faithful to your store or service over other fleeting brands, older customers tend to be much more loyal to companies that they can trust in. Follow this module to grasp some of the basics which you need to ensure that are covering the "regulatory" side of things for your business. Protecting your company now means protecting your future.

Module 5 The Future of Big Data.

Will you be playing catch up or will you stay one step ahead of the curve? Take this module to see where the predictions for big data's future will take us. Being prepared means that you are dependable and this is vital for engaging the older customer. It's important for companies big and small to stay updated and relevant. By making use of big and smart data your company can ensure continued success, stay updated on what's "hot" and what's "not". The opportunities are endless, and with our course navigating you through some of the challenges, it should be no problem to stay relevant!

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND PRESENTATION

Follow our short guides to learn more about the top tools for communication and take the first steps to becoming an expert!

Presentation and Animation Tools

Guide 1: Three Steps to Get You Started with Explain Everything

Collaboration and File Sharing Tools

Guide 2: Four Steps to Get You Started with Dropbox

Guide 3: Four Steps to Get You Started with Slack

Webinar and Meeting Tools

Guide 4: Four Steps to Get You Started with Gotowebinar

Guide 5: Four Steps to Get You Started with Skype

Video Production and Mobile Movie Making

On this course, you will learn more about..

- Knowledge of mojo equipment
- Practical ways to film
- Positioning, light and angles
- Facebook live
- Mobile apps and
- Computer Editing programme

DIGITAL MARKETING

This module will help to equip the SMEs, specifically those who have an interest in creating products for the older generation, with a practical set of Digital Marketing Tools which will help them to grow their online sales and expand their market reach. It covers:-

- Focus on Marketing - what it is and how can you use it to boost your online sales
- Understanding Online Consumer Behavior. Specifically the "silver surfers"- The FFF Model
- Content Marketing - what it is and how to use it across all your marketing activities
- Social media tips to increase sales
- Spotlight on Shopify - Marketing Apps to help you sell more

A Handy Little Guide to e-Business

The way older people research, shop, book and pay for their travel, food, consumer goods and entertainment needs has fundamentally changed. This guide is a short overview of ...

- The Internet and the Silver Economy
- Choosing and Registering a Domain Name
- Good Website Design
- Website Hosting and Statistics
- Internet & Search Engine Marketing
- Online Booking
- Useful Websites

UK - GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE SILVER ECONOMY

The National Launch and Showcase event for the Erasmus+ ‘Age Friendly Economy’ project took place at Lisburn Enterprise Organisation, on 21st June 2019, attended by a host of age-friendly organisations and businesses hoping to seize the golden opportunities represented by the silver economy.

The event was a great success and was attended by 50 people from across Northern Ireland and beyond. Speaking at the launch, Chairman of the Council’s Development Committee, Alderman Allan Ewart MBE, said: “The council is aware that in the next 10 to 20 years we will have an increasing ageing population and that a range of interventions and projects will be required to ensure better supportive environments are in place to support this change.

This project, supported through the Erasmus+ programme, represents one of the first initiatives undertaken by the council to explore the opportunities that this demographic will bring to businesses in terms of service delivery and product development.”



Also speaking at the launch, Mr Eddie Lynch, NI Commissioner for Older People added: “The number of older people living in Northern Ireland is set to increase rapidly over the coming decades. In fact, by 2041, 1 in 4 people living in Northern Ireland will be over the age of 65. Therefore, it’s vital that all economies are “age friendly” and that businesses and services meet the needs of an older population. This project is a great example as to how interventions.

SPAIN - Multiplier Event

Ageing Lab ran its Multiplier Event on July 10th 2019 in Macrosad Facilities, Jaen (Spain).

The event was attended by more than 30 people from different entities, as well as the institutional representation formed by Alfonso Cruz, President of Ageing Lab, and Daniel Salvatierra, chief executive of Senior Citizens and Non-Contributory Pensions of the Andalusian Regional Government. The event started with an overview and introduction of the Age Friendly Economy Project presented by Lucia González, Ageing Lab Manager. Juan Manuel Espinosa, Dr. in Medicine and Ageing Advisor in Andalusian Regional

Government gave an interesting and pleasant speech on “Understanding the needs of the senior citizens, from expectations to reality: co-creation”.

The Multiplier Event then focused with a hands on review of the four Intellectual Output achieved in the project. The points dealt with were; Work-based learning Toolkit, Digital Technology Skills for SMEs (Open Education Resources), The Boot-camp, The Collaborative Knowledge Exchange Platform and dissemination activities. This final event achieved a very high impact with considerable attention from local and national media in Spain.

IRELAND - National Showcase



On Wednesday June 26th Louth Local Enterprise Office Louth held its multiplier event to showcase the contribution we are making to the Silver Economy. The event was organised to highlight how the project supports businesses and individuals to develop entrepreneurial, innovation and digital skills to create new products and services demanded by the silver economy. The collaborative and interactive approach adopted by Louth Local Enterprise Office to the Age Friendly project was evident during our multiplier event as the stakeholders, key actors, trainers, Bootcamp participants as well as businesses and retailers who participated along the way were all in attendance. Sarah Mallon provided an overview of the project itself discussing the Workbased Learning Toolkit, Digital Technology for SMEs and the Collaborative Learning Platform. We invited two of our Bootcamp participants, Damien Keenan of Elite Form Engineering and Megan Hughes of Dundalk Credit Union, to present feedback and discuss their experience of the Product Innovation Bootcamp. Our special guest speakers were Peter Mangan, CEO and founder of the Freebird Club, a travel-based social club for older adults, enabling positive connected aging via social travel and homestays. His success in providing a service that offers a whole new way of travelling for older adults was a great illustration of how an original approach can unlock the 50+ market. Karen Coan of the Netwell Centre a research centre on ageing populations based in Dundalk Institute of Technology, also spoke on the market opportunities presented by the Silver Economy. Other speakers also included Rodd Bond of the Louth Age Friendly Alliance, Martin McElligott of the Dundalk Business Improvement District also provided a retailers perspective and Mary Deery from the Community section of Louth County Council spoke about what the local authority are doing to deal with the challenge posed by ageing populations in our communities.

POLISH COMPANIES EYE THE AGE FRIENDLY MARKET

18 lipca w Szczecinie odbyło się spotkanie promocyjne projektu „Age Friendly Economy”, spotkanie odbyło się w formie rejsu po Odrze. Sprzyjające okoliczności przyrody, piękna pogoda i dużo merytorycznej wiedzy, którą mogli przyswoić zarówno seniorzy uczestniczący w projekcie jak i przedsiębiorcy biorący udział w wydarzeniu.

Północna Izba Gospodarcza w Szczecinie realizując unijny projekt Age Friendly Communities stara się przybliżyć zachodniopomorskim przedsiębiorcom ideę „srebrnej gospodarki”. Fakt starzenia społeczeństwa jest niezaprzeczalny, ta sytuacja sprawia, że blisko 1/3 aktywnych konsumentów to osoby powyżej 60 roku życia. Seniorzy mają swoje oczekiwania względem producentów i twórców usług, a realizowany przez Izbę projekt ma za zadanie wspomniane dwa światy – seniorów i przedsiębiorców – do siebie przybliżyć.

Pokazujemy potencjał „srebrnej gospodarki”, głównym tematem rejsu było zagadnienie starzenia się społeczeństwa. Podpowiadaliśmy przedsiębiorcom jak wykorzystać potencjał, który dotychczas pozostawał niezauważony. Jest wiele firm, które projektując swoje usługi i produkty powinny brać pod uwagę głos przedsiębiorców. To może zaowocować np. poszerzeniem grupy docelowej lub szerszą ekspansją na rynku. Formuła rejsu wynika z okresu wakacyjnego, to jest czas, który nie zachęca do spędzania czasu w salach szkoleniowych.



A WEALTH OF CONTENT

Product Innovation Bootcamps



Home / Courses / Product Innovation Bootcamps

Overview Curriculum Instructor

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) have now completed their Age Friendly Product/Service innovation boot-camps in Lisburn. The intensive two day boot-camp training exercise took place on 5th and 12th April with 15 small businesses from N. Ireland taking part.

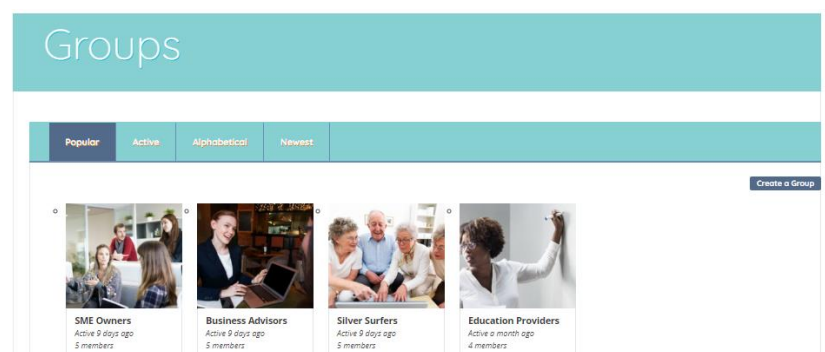
NORTHERN IRELAND/UK: LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH COUNCIL LCCC were delighted to have Eamonn Donaghy, Chief Executive of Age Sector Platform present on the first day to give an overview of the needs, interests and trends concerning the older generation of Northern Ireland. The participants were given an insight into the valuable work carried out by the Age Sector Platform, the workings of the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament and their current campaigns. LCCC were delighted to have Eamonn Donaghy, Chief Executive of Age Sector Platform present on the first day to give an overview of the needs, interests and trends concerning the older generation of Northern Ireland. The participants were given an insight into the valuable work carried out by the Age Sector Platform, the workings of the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament and their current campaigns.

bringing them to market.

The Age Friendly Economy is also a platform that enables visitors to interact with each other, post in groups, join discussions and share ideas. As a way to help give a quick and comprehensive guide on how to use the platform in order to get the best results, a video has been created, that explores every section on the website, explaining what the functionality of each page is and how to create a profile, how to interact with other users on the website, how to navigate the online training section and so much more.

The Age Friendly Economy website is home to numerous resources, courses, information, as well as details regarding the different actions that were undertaken by the project partners during the lifetime of the project.

The Product Innovation Bootcamps section of the Online Training gives an overview of the two-day events the partners from Northern Ireland, Denmark, the Republic of Ireland, Spain and Poland organized and which served as a space for attendees to get acquainted with the needs, interests and trends concerning the older generation in their countries. The participants in the Age Friendly Bootcamps developed individual commercialisation action plans and received customized one to one mentoring sessions from experts in the field of marketing to help them further develop their respective products and services with the ultimate aim of



Age Friendly Economy Multiplier Event Louth

Uncategorized | Sonia Admin | Jul 25, 2019

Geraldine Johnston (Boyne Communications) speaks about the economic value of the Silver Economy.



Sarah Mallon (LEO Louth) talks about the Age Friendly Economy programme.



On the same note and keeping in mind that sometimes video is the king of content, the blog section of the website hosts a series of videos that capture the presentations by the speakers at the Multiplier Event which took place in Dundalk, County Louth (Ireland) on June 26th 2019. Among the presentations that are available there is Geraldine Johnston's speech about the economic value of the Silver Economy, Peter Mangan's talk about The Freebird Club - a peer-to-peer social travel & homestay club for older adults or Sarah Mallon's (LEO Louth) talks about the Age Friendly Economy programme, to name just a few.

All in all, the Age Friendly Economy platform is a dynamic and relevant resource on the topic of age friendly communities, as well as a hub for exchanging ideas and keeping in contact with individuals that share a similar interest for the Silver Economy.

Partners



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

