

Friday, 29 April 2011 09:30

Invitation for workshop participation on June 7th, 2011, 10h30 - 17h30**Support for companies developing Ambient Assisted Living solutions to achieve the market breakthrough****Albert Borschette Conference Centre, Rue Froissart 36, 1040 Brussels, Belgium****Registration to the workshop has now closed but you can follow it online****A workshop organized by AALOA [1] and eInclusion [2] and supported by AALA [3]**

This invitation is directed at companies whose business involves the development of software components or complete solutions for AAL (Ambient Assisted Living). The participation of SMEs is particularly welcome.

The goals of the workshop are to:

- Identify technical areas where – in the view of the participants – provision of common approaches or technical solutions would lead to faster, cheaper or more flexible product development.
- Provide information about on-going activities in this area supported by the European Commission and AALA
- Discuss the form and content of possible new funding measures from the European Commission and AALA aimed at involving companies in practical experimentation with new technologies currently under development, and offering them the opportunity to influence this work to match their needs.

The underlying motivation for the workshop is the potential for significant economic and social impact from the introduction – on a wide scale – of innovative AAL solutions. While this potential has been recognized for some time, breakthroughs in terms of widespread availability and deployment of solutions have yet to be achieved. The EU and AALA have funded activities in this area for some years, and some of these are now at a stage in their development where direct hands-on involvement of development companies is the best way to make sure that this work produces results that are effective and applicable in real industrial settings.

The workshop is organised by AALOA and European Commission – eInclusion, and supported by AALA:

AAL Open Association – AALOA is serving as an open meeting point for various projects, individuals, and organizations to form an AAL community with broad involvement from all types of stakeholders like technology providers, service providers and research institutions involved in AAL. AALOA is intended as an invitation to join the mission of bringing together the resources, tools and people involved in AAL within a single forum, making it much easier to reach conclusions on provisions needed to design, develop, evaluate and standardize an open common service platform for AAL.

European Commission – eInclusion: Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) play an essential role in supporting daily life in today's digital society. They are used at work, to stay in touch with family, to deal with public services as well as to take part in culture, entertainment, leisure and political dialogues. The Commission proposes a series of measures to promote take-up of digital technologies by potentially disadvantaged groups, such as elderly, less-literate, and low-income persons. Improving access for people with disabilities as well as tackling demographic ageing with the help of ICT for a better quality of life for the elderly, reduced cost of care, and business opportunities in the "silver economy" are important parts of the eInclusion agenda.

AAL Association – AALA: The AAL Association is an international not-for-profit association with the involvement of many EU member states that implements the Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme. Its objective is to enhance the quality of life of older people and strengthen the industrial base in Europe through the use of ICT. The motivation of the new funding activity is in the demographic change and ageing in Europe, which implies not only challenges but also opportunities for the citizens, the social and healthcare systems as well as industry and the European market.

As a first approach to achieve the market breakthrough, the goal of the planned workshop is to involve the industry in new funded projects where their products can be ported to a promising platform solution from international research projects and be integrated in AAL environments with minimal integration efforts. The AAL community is invited to nominate existing and emerging platforms with suitable IPRs (that allow their usage in the new projects) as candidates to serve as porting target in such projects. The funding should mainly aim at mitigating adaptation costs for the participating vendors. The following benefits are then expected to be achieved:

- The industry and research are supposed to get closer to each other, bridging the gap between the AAL research achievements and the industrial AAL products and services.
- The vendors of the AAL products and services will be able to adapt selected technologies from the latest

- The vendors of the AAL products and services will be able to adopt selected technologies from the latest research results and, if the whole target platform proves to be very promising, will benefit from being among its early adopters.
- The candidate platforms will be provided with the most effective feedback loop for taking corrective actions and will have the opportunity to deliver the evidence for the practicality of their provisions.
- The funding authorities (eInclusion and AALA) benefit from the overall effect of getting closer to the AAL market breakthrough and can show the usefulness of all the previous investments in AAL.
- As, according to its manifesto, AALOA wants to "Design, develop, evaluate, standardize and maintain a common service platform for AAL", such porting projects will provide the AALOA community with indicators for creating consensus around a shared platform.

In order to guarantee the existence of at least one candidate platform as porting target, eInclusion recommends the AAL platform being assembled within the FP7 project called universAAL [4], which is supposed to consolidate the results of the eInclusion previous investments in AAL towards an open cross-application platform. The goal of eInclusion in funding universAAL was to prevent the legacy of the previous investments from dying out; such legacy should be reused efficiently towards converging conclusions. Also due to the usage of permissive open source licenses by universAAL, the platform should be a serious candidate for porting projects. This, however, should be examined in the workshop as appropriate.

The preliminary scheme of the workshop program is as follows (the final programme will be published by the end of May 2011):

1. Opening by the organizers (ca. 15 minutes)
2. Up to 10 very short presentations by technology and service providers on the AAL market obstacles (ca. 60 minutes)
3. Three short presentations by the candidate platforms (ca. 45 minutes)
4. Up to three short presentations on funding possibilities for porting projects by FP7, AAL JP, and CIP ICT PSP (ca. 45 minutes)
5. Guided discussions on the targeted funding scheme and concluding the recommendations (ca. 2.5 hours)
6. Closing with a sort of protocol (ca. 15 minutes)

AALOA plans to organize further workshops directed at AAL market breakthrough and will invite the community in due time to participate in the discussions about the possible topics for them.

[1] The [Ambient Assisted Living Open Association](#).

[2] Short for the [ICT for Inclusion](#) sector of the [DG for Information Society and Media](#) of the European Commission.

[3] The [Ambient Assisted Living Association](#).

[4] Short for [UNIVERSal open platform and reference Specification for Ambient Assisted Living](#) under the grant agreement no. 247950.