SHIFT-HUB

SHIFT-HUB's Best Practice
| Living Labs

❓ Why Living Labs?

Living Labs are dynamic, user-centred environments where **innovations are co-created, tested, and validated under real-life conditions**. They unite public-private actors as citizens, companies, universities, policymakers, and civil society around the shared goal of solving real-world challenges through collaborative innovation.

In Smart Health, Living Labs create immersive and interactive processes that enable citizens, patients, and other vulnerable groups to explore and engage with emerging solutions. By involving end users throughout iterative testing cycles, Living Labs generate meaningful feedback that guides developers toward **solutions that truly match user needs**. This approach not only improves usability and acceptance but also strengthens adoption, long-term impact, and societal sustainability.

The main objectives are:
· to co-design the end-users, practitioners and technology providers,
· to facilitate real-life experimentation processes in user-centric environments,
· to ensure usability and ergonomic design to support adequate engagement, and encourage active participation from end-users,
· to foster sustainable adoption.

🎯 Who to target?

The **Key Target Stakeholders** who benefit from participation in Living Labs are:

☘ Technology Providers & Knowledge and Infrastructure Providers
☘ Healthcare Professionals & Health Organizations
☘ Citizens & Patients

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Best Practices – **How to do it best**

1. **Foster Multi-level Stakeholder Collaboration**
   Engage all relevant stakeholders and create informal, trust-based spaces for open dialogue to co-design solutions addressing real-world challenges.

2. **Prioritise User-centred Co-creation**
   Engage users, patients, and healthcare professionals in real-world testing to ensure practical, workflow-ready solutions.

3. **Build Trust and Maintain Continuous Dialogue**
   Use transparent communication and continuous feedback to adapt Living Lab activities and keep solutions relevant.

4. **Integrate Social and Clinical Perspectives**
   Blend clinical expertise with user input, including vulnerable groups, to ensure equitable, practical and accessible innovations.

5. **Apply Continuous Evaluation and Adaptive Learning**
   Use ongoing monitoring to refine methodologies and track impact. Communicate evidence-based results to funders and policymakers to reinforce credibility.

6. **Maintain Agile Connection to the Medical Field**
   Remain aligned with clinical practices, regulatory changes & patient needs, adapting rapidly to technological advances to bring innovations into practice.

7. **Secure Diversified and Sustainable Funding**
   Combine public, private, and service-based financing and build long-term partnerships with industry, healthcare providers, and regional authorities for operational continuity.
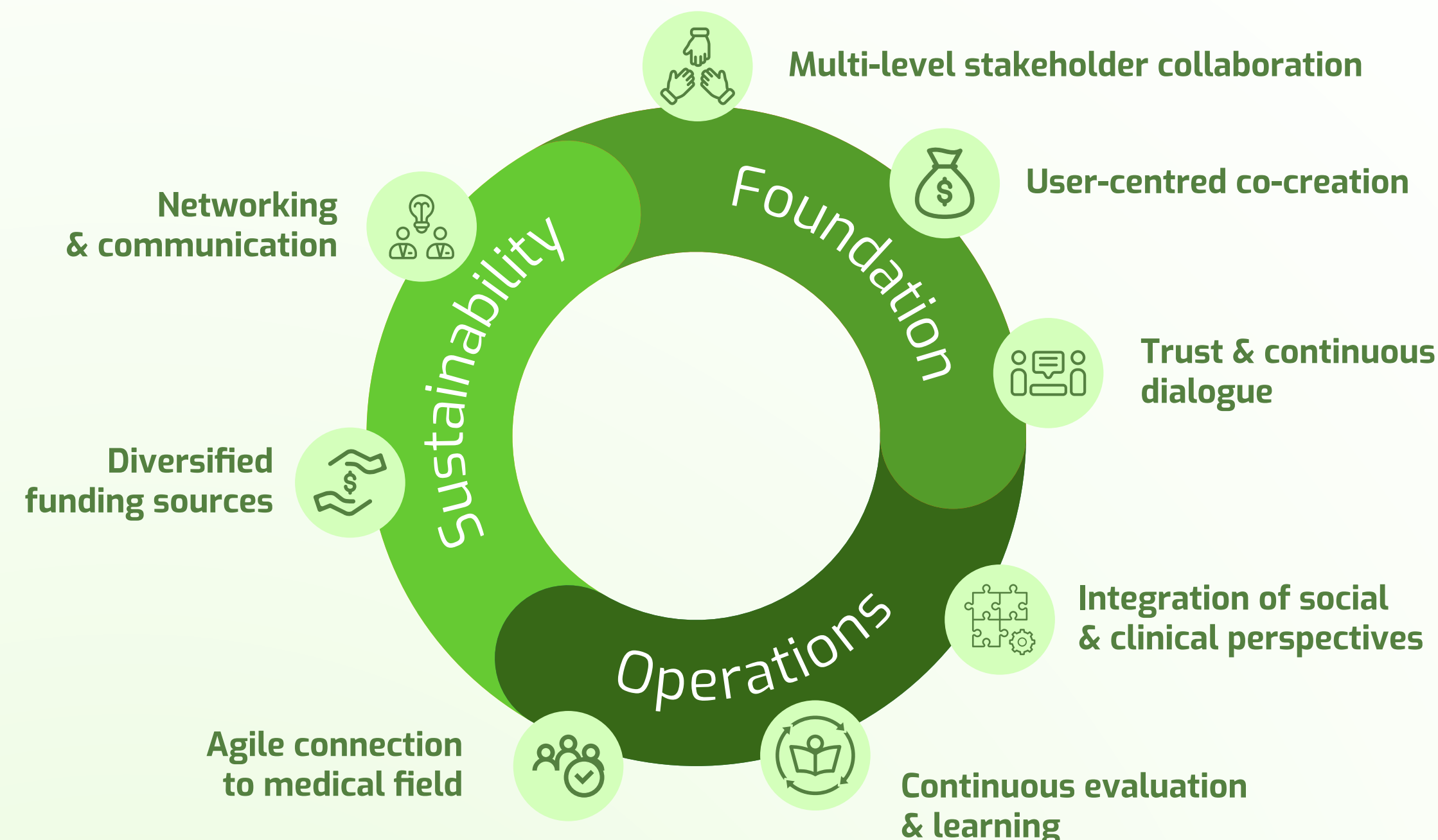
8. **Engage Through Networks and Transparent Communication**
   Engage in national and European innovation networks (e.g., ENoLL) for visibility and learning, while promoting two-way communication and open dissemination to enhance stakeholder engagement and continuous improvement.

Multi-level stakeholder collaboration

User-centred co-creation

Trust & continuous dialogue

Integration of social & clinical perspectives

Continuous evaluation & learning

Agile connection to medical field

Diversified funding sources

Networking & communication

Sustainability

Foundation

Operations

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📋 In short...

Living Labs succeed when innovations are **co-created with users, tested in real-world settings, and supported by multi-stakeholder collaboration**.

Trust, inclusion, sustained engagement, diverse funding, and continuous evaluation are key. Addressing regulatory and systemic challenges early, while staying flexible and transparent, ensures **solutions are practical, socially grounded, and impactful** across the European Smart Health innovation ecosystem.

💡 Want to learn more?

Please find more information in the Resources section of the SHIFT-HUB website.

Take a closer look at **SHIFT-HUB's Best Practices Guide**

And explore detailed findings in the **Capacity Building Workshop report**

Ready to apply it yourself?

For specific questions related to the replication of Living Labs, please contact:

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SHIFT-HUB's Best Practice
Living Labs

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European **DIGITAL SME** Alliance

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