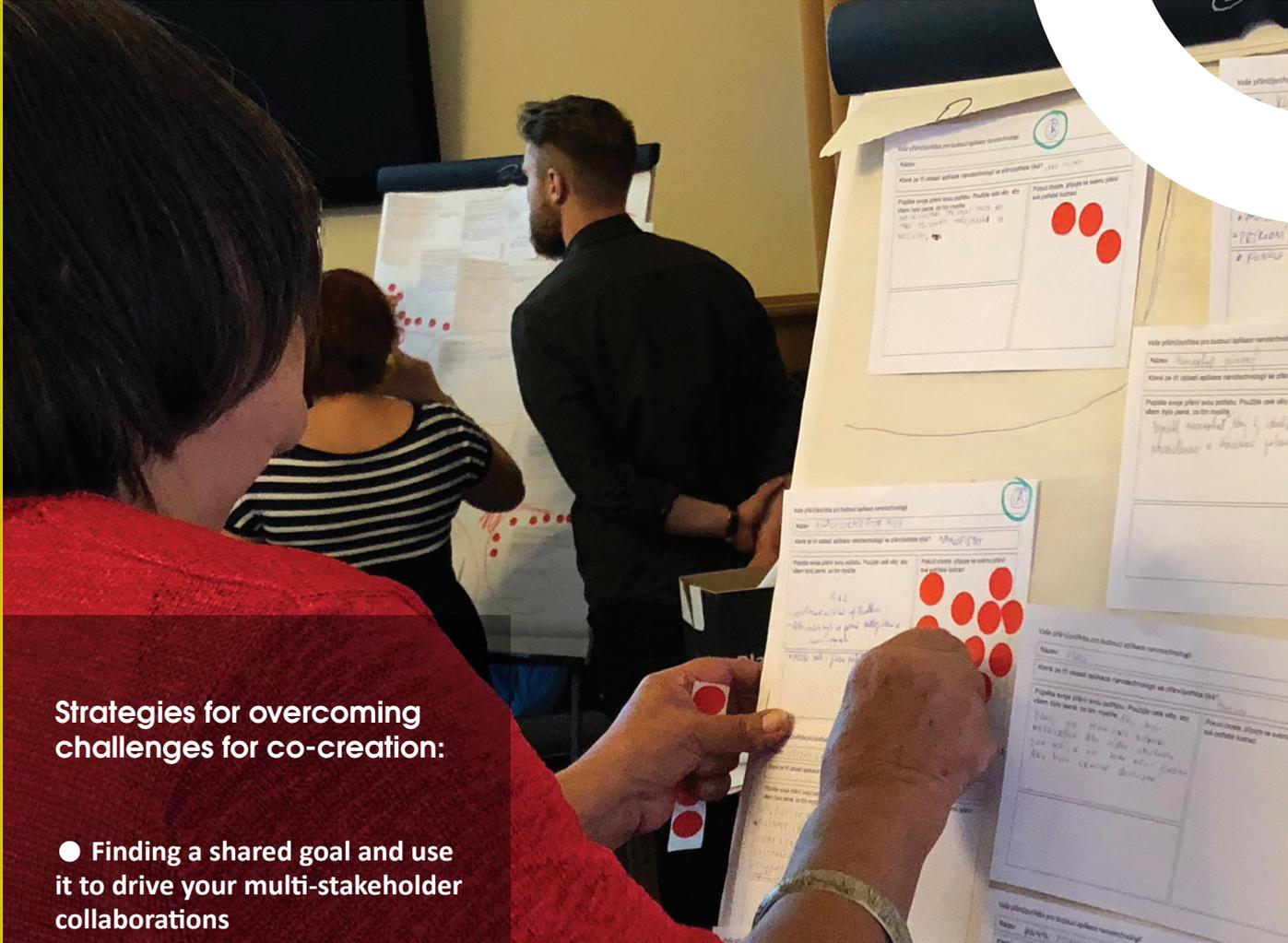


Opportunities and Challenges of Co-Creation: Experiences from the GoNano Project



Strategies for overcoming challenges for co-creation:

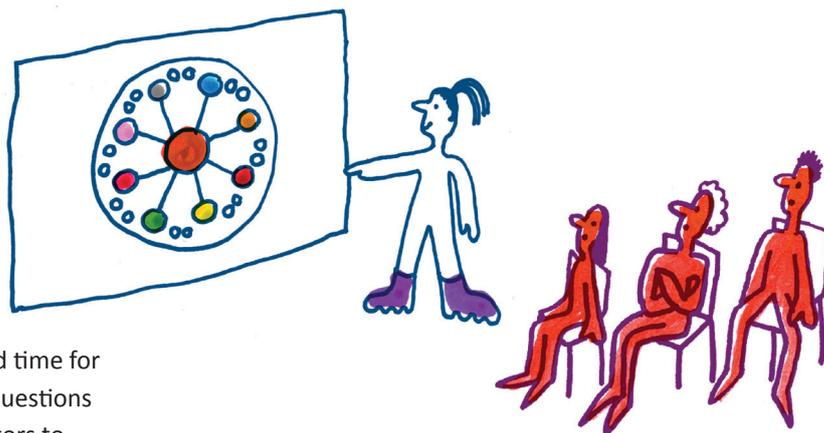
- Finding a shared goal and use it to drive your multi-stakeholder collaborations
- Planning time to translate and mediate between your different types of stakeholders. The more diversity the more time you will need to mediate and build common understanding between groups
- Choosing a clear purpose of the co-creation in research: democratisation or creation of shared value through product development. The goal prescribes the actors that should be involved and their ways of contribution

GoNano strategy and key findings

The GoNano co-creation methodology was designed to formulate a shared goal as the driver for multi-stakeholder collaborations. Collaboration was seen as a joint enquiry in matters of common concern, where all participants would have a genuine influence on the process. GoNano aimed to establish a transparent process that discussed suggestions for future nanotechnologies that were specific enough to affect decisions. Recognising that all participants are expert in some fields and laypersons in most other fields, the GoNano process sought to build trust and enable mutual learning between participants.

- Co-creation is a general approach that can be applied to many goals. Its possible functions were observed in GoNano: co-creation for *envisioning*, for *user-led innovation*, and for the *creation of shared value through product development*. Each

of these involves different types of actors with different expected outputs in different stages of innovation.



- It is important to select the appropriate stage and time for engagement in co-creation and to address specific questions in specific contexts. Supporting the ability of R&I actors to react to societal input when technological trajectories are still malleable can present significant opportunities to align R&I with societal needs and values. However, a key factor for change is the emergence of opportunity, coupled with actors' abilities to recognise and act on it.

- Co-creation as a process holds opportunities *and* drawbacks. It can be an effective tool to tackle special types of problems such as 'wicked problems' (impossible to solve because of incomplete, contradictory and changing requirements that are often difficult to recognise). Nanotechnology governance is such a wicked problem: the challenges do not only reside in the development of the technology itself, but also in the required alignment between working practices, responsibilities, knowledge levels, expectations and concerns across widely divergent fields of expertise.



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Key recommendations on opportunities and challenges of co-creation

- Co-creation comes in many shapes and sizes, but you cannot do it all at once

Define the purpose of the co-creation event, as it prescribes the actors that should be involved and the ways in which they contribute. In some cases, a co-creation process benefits from having combined and multiple purposes; however, shifting between these purposes during the process is difficult to manage.

- Co-Creation is transdisciplinary, practice-oriented, and iterative

Design co-creation events to have an adaptive approach and allow for flexibility concerning timeframe and financial reserves to attract a variety of committed stakeholders, as this will ensure consistent contributions and help to increase yield.

- Co-creation is a process

Acknowledge the processual nature of co-creation. It is not a quick "one fix for all" tool and can change in accordance with the needs of the process and the participants.

The EU-funded GoNano project (Governing Nanotechnologies through Societal Engagement) aims to align future nanotechnologies with societal needs and concerns. From September 2017 until December 2020, GoNano brought together citizens, researchers, industry, civil society organisations and policy makers across Europe to co-create concrete suggestions for future nanotechnologies.

The GoNano policy briefs present the results of the engagement activities and provide recommendations based on the GoNano experiences. This is the third of a series of seven policy briefs. Please see <http://gonano-project.eu/policy-briefs/> for the complete series.



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