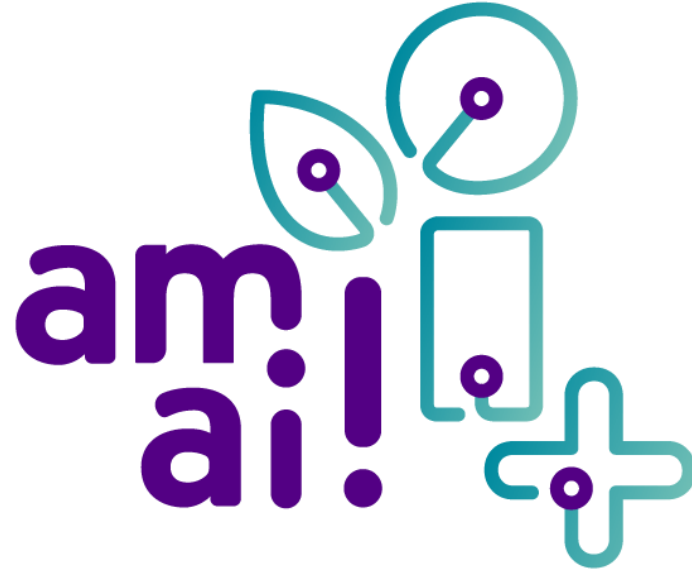


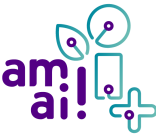


Implementing a Mission-Oriented Participatory Approach: Engaging Citizens in the Development of Societal AI Applications

Annelies Duerinckx & Karen Verstraelen



How did it start?



- Goal = **give citizens a voice** in AI research and development
- Method = **participatory process**, also applicable in other domains and regions
- **Outreach** component within Flemish AI action plan



2 teams, a perfect match



- **Scivil**: The Flemish center for citizen science
 - Participatory approach
- **Knowledge centre Data & Society**
 - Domain knowledge: Societal aspects of AI

Funded by the **Flemish Government** (Economy, Science and Innovation), as part of AI Flanders programme

The logo for Scivil, consisting of the word "Scivil" in a black, sans-serif font. A vertical wavy teal line is positioned to the left of the logo.

**Vlaamse
overheid**

Presentation outline

1. Overview of participatory approach
 - Applicable in other domains and regions
 - Examples on AI from 'amai!'
2. Lessons learned

4 steps



Step 1: Define your goals

General approach

- Bring the **topic closer to the daily life of citizens**, show them why they should care and offer them the knowledge to do so
- Capture how citizens think about the topic and what is important to them, **involve them in all steps of the process**
- Let their involvement **create impact**: e.g. funding call, concrete outputs, citizen science projects...

In amai!

Insight: How is AI part of our lives?

- Science communication

Ideas: What do you want AI to be used for (and in what ways)?

- Citizen science

Impact! We give consortia a chance to make citizens' ideas come true

- Funding call
- Projects with a citizen science approach

4 themes



Mobility



Climate



Health



Work

Step 2: Define target audience

General approach

- No such thing as “the general public”
- Avoid preaching to the choir
- Who should be reached to achieve impact or change?
- In which audience can something be changed? What is feasible and useful?

In a mail!



Civil society
organizations



Societal
implementers



Researchers



Policy makers



AI-professionals

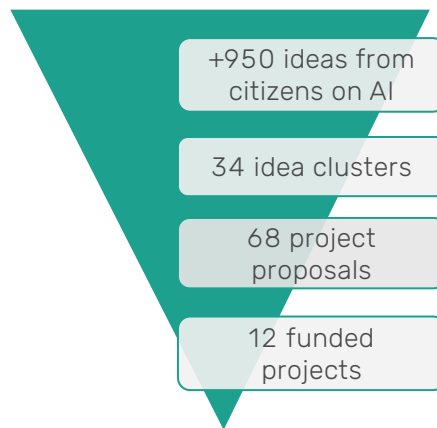
mail!

Step 3: Design the process

General approach

- Involve citizens in each step of the process
 - Collecting research questions
 - Co-creation of approach to realise solutions
 - Open call: involve citizens in selection process
 - Citizen science approach in selected projects

In amai!



Step 4: Implementation of project

4.1 Collecting research questions



General approach

- Guided conversation
- Go where the people are
- Accessible information
 - Introduction to the topic through stories that connect to daily life
 - Fun elements, low threshold to engage: social media 'tests', a game, interactive wall, ...
- Communicate widely

In amai!



- AI-Storytelling
- Card game on AI
- How artificially intelligent is your supermarket visit?
- Datawalk in the city
- Famous people sharing their idea for AI
- ...

amai!

Step 4: Implementation of project

4.2 Co-creating solutions and methods

General approach

- Clustering ideas
- Co-creation sessions with quadruple helix
- Goal: together defining the scope of a solution, set up a methodology
- Also: networking opportunity for project call

In a mail!

DOMEIN: Mobiliteit
Cluster: Drukte (en) mapping

Kan AI helpen om drukke plaatsen en momenten in kaart te brengen en eventuele drukte te spreiden?

Telling van reizigers openbaar vervoer. Kunnen 'slimme' passagiers tellers of sensoren aan de deuren van OV (bussen, trams, metro of treinen) zorgen voor betere telling van reizigers aantallen? Op termijn de bezettingsgraad voorspellen i.f.v. een ritje vroeger of later nemen, met gegevens van dagen, weersomstandigheden, activiteiten...
- Koos F. & Koen V.

Van thuis uit kunnen zien of ik parkeerplaats zal hebben wanneer ik op mijn bestemming aankom. Lege garages, bedrijfsparkings en supermarktparkeerplaatsen monitoren i.f.v. parkeer- en mobiliteitsbeleid.
- Ilse O. & Wouter F.

Verplaatsingsstromen en mobiliteitspatronen in kaart brengen. Hoe kunnen de actieve modi (wandelen en fietsen, maar ook alle nieuwe modi) geteld worden? Belangrijk daarbij is dat er al opties zijn om tellingen op een piek te doen, maar 'het' in kaart brengen van verplaatsingsstromen is nog moeilijk.
- Koos F. & Kris V.

Stilstaan van auto's in kaart brengen. Hoe kunnen we met behulp van AI de stilstand van auto's in steden en gemeenten in kaart brengen? Hoe kan een 'slim' parkeermonitorsysteem lokale overheden helpen om een duurzaam parkeerbeleid op te zetten?
- Koos F.

Als ik naar de kust of de supermarkt ga, wil ik weten hoeveel mensen er per dorp/stad zijn. Zodoende kan ik kiezen voor een strand of winkel i.f.v. aantal mensen, en is er een betere spreiding van de bezoekers.
- Anne K. & Fajsal A. & Kristof W. & Por L.

De verwachte drukte op de snelwegen. Aan de hand van het adres dat je in je GPS intypt kan er de drukte op de snelwegen berekend en ingeschat worden.
- Christine B.

Hoeveel wordt er waar gefietst? Wie weten dit al puntsgewijs, maar helemaal niet voor het hele wegnetwerk.
- Joost S.



- Bringing together citizens, experts in societal challenges and AI-experts
- Defining scope of issues and requirements for AI-solutions

Step 4: Implementation of project

4.3 Open call for proposals

General approach

- Mandatory elements:
 - Starting point: one or more of the citizens' ideas
 - Citizen engagement component in project plan
- Citizens have a voice in selection procedure
- Create opportunities for partners to meet each other

In amai!

- Consortia should have at least one societal partner and one technical partner
- Evaluation process:
 - Expert panel: pass or fail
 - Citizen panel: impact
 - Online public vote: wide support
- Pre-application, matchmaking, support



Step 4: Implementation of project

4.4 Developing solutions or research

General approach

- Roll-out of funded projects
- Overarching support
 - Community of practice
 - Integrated communication
 - Workshops on specific themes for project officers

In amai!



Mapping quality of bike paths



Smart diabetes assistant



Mapping of trees in cities



Live subtitles in the classroom



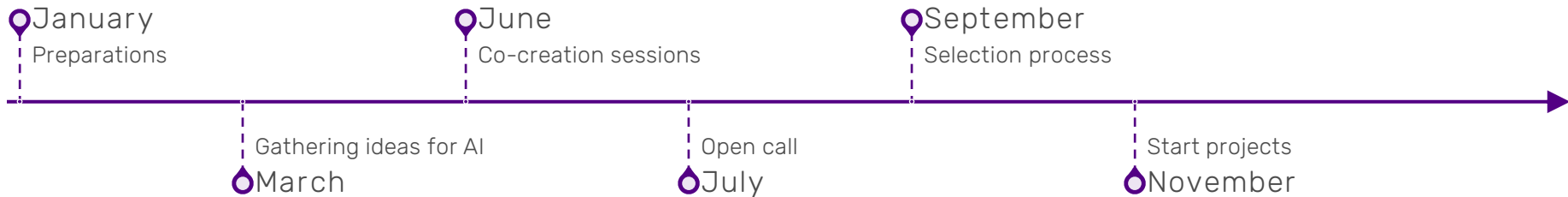
Lessons learned



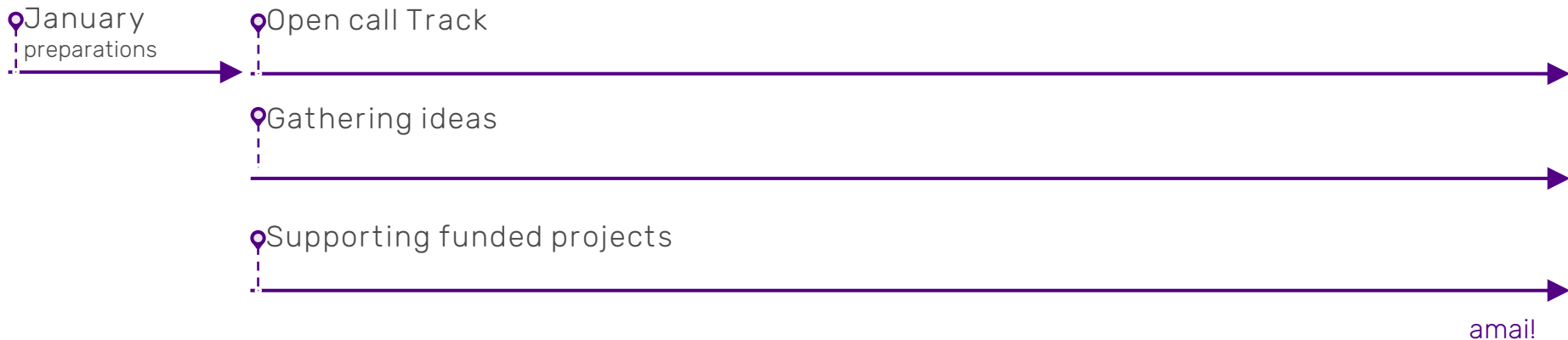
2021

It's challenging to run the whole process in one year

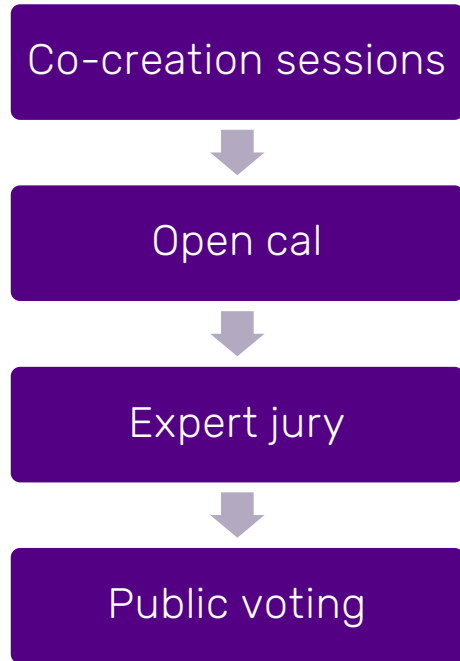
2021: sequential flow



2023: parallel tracks



Open call



- We ask a lot of the consortia in the proposal:
 - Start from an idea of the citizens
 - Implement a citizen science approach
 - Strong AI component
 - Partners must include both AI professional and societal organisation
- Strong support needed:
 - **Active matchmaking**: Connecting AI professionals and societal organisations
 - **2 stage process** with intermediary non-binding advice
 - **Budget** and project duration **high enough**
- Embed call in existing networks
 - Co-creation sessions **in partnership with existing networks**
- Citizens have final voice:
 - **Citizen jury**: focus on potential impact
 - Public voting: focus on broad support

Elements of success

Involving the quadruple helix

- Citizens, AI-professionals, Civil Society Organizations, Local policy makers

Citizens are involved in every step of the process

- Participation is possible from idea to new product or service

Looking forward

Focus for the future

- Toolkit on the approach
- Long term sustainability of the projects:
 - Guiding them towards other funding, schaling up, ...
- Working together with other programs & networks