



CHANGEING
EXCELLENCE HUBS



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CHAngeing Entrepreneurial Course

2nd Edition
2026

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1. Call Summary

Key Dates	
Call Opening	13 March 2026
Call deadline	2 April 2026*
Evaluation of the participants	Applications will be reviewed on a weekly basis, and applicants will be notified of the decision.
Onboarding Session	07 April 2026
CHAngeing Entrepreneurial Course	14 of April-22 of May 2026
Demo Day	22 of May

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Target Audience

- Academic and Research Community
- Healthcare and biomedical professionals
- Early-stage entrepreneurs in knowledge-based start-ups and spin-offs.

The participants will develop one challenge in a group during the course.

The Course

Module 01 April 14-21	Needs Assessment and Value Proposition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Entrepreneurship Essentials – Opportunity and Needs Assessment ○ Value Proposition ○ Business Model, Lean Canvas
Module 02 April 21-May 4	Clinical Validation, Regulation for MD and Intellectual Property: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Testing and Experimentation for Health ○ Regulatory Literacy ○ Intellectual Property in Health
Module 03 May 5-11	Pitching and Stakeholder Engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pitching to Health Investors ○ Stakeholder Engagement
Module 04 May 11-19	Marketing for Healthcare Startups and Funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building Your Brand ○ Digital Marketing Strategies for Healthcare ○ Customer Acquisition for Healthcare Startups ○ Developing a Marketing Plan
Final Day May 22	DEMO DAY Participants will present their startup ideas in a pitch competition format, demonstrating the innovation, marketing strategy, and stakeholder engagement strategies they developed throughout the course

Training Type/ Modality

- Full remote, 40h of certified learning content

Submissions Form

- [CHAngeing Entrepreneurial Course Form](#)

*These dates may be changed depending on the number of applications received and/or if the call deadline is extended.

2. CHAging Project

Across the world, people are living longer.

The number of older people increased rapidly in all regions of the world from 1980 (around 260 million people) to 2021 (around 761 million people), a trend that is likely to continue over the next three decades. Between 2021 and 2050, the global share of the older population, defined as individuals aged 65 years or older, is projected to increase from less than 10% to around 17%. By the end of the twenty-first century, the world could have nearly 2.5 billion older people (United Nations, Leaving no one behind in an ageing world, 2023).

Demographic studies show that population ageing is progressing more rapidly in developing countries than it did historically in more developed countries. It is expected that the geography of the world's oldest countries will shift from Europe towards Eastern and South-Eastern Asia between now and 2050 (United Nations, Leaving no one behind in an ageing world, 2023).

According to the 2020 Eurostat population forecasts, the population of the European Union (EU) will continue to age, and healthy and active ageing is one of the greatest challenges in the world. By 2100, across the EU Member States, the old-age dependency ratio is projected to be highest in Poland (63%), followed by Italy, Malta, and Finland (all 62%). The old-age dependency ratio for Portugal will be ~58% (European Union, 2020).

CHAgeing is part of the European Commission's Excellence Hubs initiative under Horizon Europe, which seeks to strengthen regional innovation by connecting academia, business, government, and society in Widening countries and beyond. It is a collaborative partnership between two Excellence Hubs Ecosystems for Healthy Living and Longevity, located in the Centro Region of Portugal (Coimbra territory) and Crete, Greece (Heraklion territory). Both are recognized as four-star Reference Sites by the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP on AHA).

The project aims to foster synergies within and between these ecosystems by strengthening innovation excellence through multidisciplinary and cross-border collaboration. It emphasizes the development of joint research and innovation strategies, particularly in the field of ageing, to create impactful interventions and solutions for healthy living.



Long-term Vision

CHAgeing will transform and interconnect two excellence hubs in widening countries into ageing-related R&I poles of attraction in Europe, contributing to job creation and economic growth, as well as to the global European R&I agenda response to ageing-related societal challenges, Green Deal, and Digital Transition. This will be accomplished based on science-based interventions to promote healthy lifestyles supported by Mediterranean diet culture to prevent cerebrovascular diseases (CVD) and better manage rehabilitation of stroke patients.

Long-term Objectives

European R&I Network of Excellence

Starting with two ageing research-based Excellence Hubs in expanding Southern European countries, the goal is to create a European R&I network of excellence in the field of ageing by incorporating fundamental scientific findings into potential clinical applications with broad relevance to human health, quality of life, and sustainable development.

Research and Innovation

To promote an environment that fosters cross-sectoral innovation and research, as well as the training of employees, students, and entrepreneurs both within and between regions.

Cross-sector Fertilization

Establishing robust connections with participating academics, research, and businesses across both hubs and putting into practice long-term collaborative R&I strategies supported by action plans with European relevance to maximize business opportunities, societal impact, and the influence of already-established flagship projects.

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3. Scope

3.1 Course Overview

The [CHAngeing Entrepreneurial Course](#) is a 6-week intensive training designed to empower participants with the essential skills, knowledge, and connections to thrive in the fast-paced healthcare industry. This course offers a dynamic blend of interactive workshops, expert-led mentoring sessions, and hands-on group projects, diving deep into key aspects of innovation and entrepreneurship, specifically tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities within the healthcare sector.

Key Takeaways:

- **Entrepreneurship Concepts:** Equip participants with the fundamentals of entrepreneurship, including needs assessment, value proposition, clinical validation, stakeholder engagement, and marketing for health startups.
- **Finance and Investment Programs in Health:** Gain a solid understanding of finance strategies and investment opportunities specific to healthcare ventures.
- **Intellectual Property and Pitching:** Learn how to manage intellectual property and develop the ability to pitch healthcare innovations to potential investors, stakeholders, and partners.
- **Expert Guidance and Mentorship:** Receive valuable insights from seasoned professionals in healthcare innovation, helping navigate real-world challenges.
- **Multidisciplinary Collaboration:** Work in diverse, multidisciplinary teams with peers from across the EU, fostering cross-cultural collaboration and innovative problem-solving in a real-world context.
- **Networking and Partnership Building:** Expand your professional network by connecting with investors, healthcare experts, and fellow innovators, identifying opportunities for collaboration and growth.

Throughout the course, they will work in diverse, multidisciplinary teams with peers from across the EU, fostering a rich environment for cross-cultural collaboration and innovation. By the end of the course, participants will have built a solid foundation in healthcare entrepreneurship, equipping them to lead transformative innovations in the bio and health ecosystem, to succeed in a highly competitive market, and to meet the growing demands of an ageing society.

3.2 Training Coordinators

The CHAging Entrepreneurial Course is coordinated by two leading institutions in innovation and research:

[Instituto Pedro Nunes](#) (IPN): Located in Coimbra, Portugal, IPN is a well-known innovation hub with a wealth of experience in promoting technology transfer, encouraging entrepreneurship, and propelling health-related enterprises throughout Europe. With a proven track record in R&D, incubation, and training, IPN has significant experience in bridging the gap between academia and business.

[Foundation for Research and Technology in Hellas](#) (FORTH), one of the most prominent research institutes in Greece, offers state-of-the-art insights into technology, aging, and health. FORTH is a major force in fostering innovation and scientific entrepreneurship in the healthcare industry thanks to its interdisciplinary approach and dedication to quality.

IPN and FORTH work together to guarantee an excellent, influential educational experience that is based on both scientific brilliance and entrepreneurial practice.

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3.3 Target Audience

The CHAging Entrepreneurial course is designed for a diverse and dynamic audience, including:

- **Academic and Research Community:** This includes students, researchers, and research managers who are looking to expand their knowledge and skills in healthcare innovation and entrepreneurship. The course offers a unique opportunity to bridge academic research with real-world business applications, empowering participants to turn their findings into impactful solutions for the healthcare sector.
- **Healthcare and Biomedical Professionals:** Professionals in the healthcare and biomedical fields who seek to enhance their entrepreneurial mindset and develop the skills needed to drive innovation. This course provides a deep understanding of how to create, scale, and implement solutions that address key healthcare challenges, particularly those related to ageing and longevity.
- **Early-Stage Entrepreneurs in Knowledge-Based Start-Ups and Spin-Offs:** This course also caters to entrepreneurs in the early stages of developing healthcare or biomedical start-ups. Participants will gain hands-on experience and expert guidance on the essential aspects of business development, including finance, marketing, intellectual property, and stakeholder engagement, helping them accelerate the growth of their ventures in the competitive healthcare landscape.

3.4 Programmatic Content

The CHAging Entrepreneurial Course is structured as a six-week intensive training initiative aimed at equipping participants with the entrepreneurial skills, strategic knowledge, and practical tools necessary to develop innovative solutions in the healthcare sector, with a strong emphasis on challenges related to ageing populations. The course combines expert-led sessions, interactive workshops, and practical group work, culminating in a final pitch event.

Each module is thematically organized and delivered by one of the coordinating partners—FORTH and IPN—ensuring high-level expertise and regional diversity.



Module 0: Onboarding Session

April 07

Lead Partner: IPN

The Onboarding Session will mark the formal start of the CHAging Entrepreneurial Course and will be led by IPN. This session will introduce participants to the course structure, timeline, learning methodology, and main working tools, while also clarifying expectations regarding participation, group work, and deliverables. As an initial alignment moment, it will help participants prepare for the six-week training journey and foster early engagement with the course's collaborative and multidisciplinary approach.

Module 01: Needs Assessment and Value Proposition

April 14 – 21

Lead Partner: FORTH

April 20 Q&A Session with the speaker

April 21 Deliverable 01 – Business Model Canvas

This first module lays the groundwork for entrepreneurial thinking by exploring the core building blocks of health innovation. Participants will be introduced to fundamental concepts such as opportunity identification, needs assessment, and the development of a compelling value proposition. Tools like the **Business Model Canvas**, **Lean Canvas**, and the foundations of business planning will help participants shape their early ideas into structured, scalable concepts.

In addition, the module will delve into forward-thinking approaches through two key toolkits:

- **AI Toolkit for Smart and Resilient Entrepreneurship** – equipping participants with insights into the use of AI to build adaptive, data-informed ventures.
- **Foresight and Disruption Toolkit** – helping participants anticipate trends and disruptive forces to future-proof their innovations.

The module concludes with **Business Plan Outline** Presentations, where participants will pitch the first drafts of their business ideas.

Module 02: Clinical Validation, Medical Device Regulation, and Intellectual Property

April 21- May 04

Lead Partner: IPN

May 04 Q&A Session with the speaker

May 05 Deliverable 02 – How to develop your PoC

In Module 2, the focus shifts to navigating the healthcare innovation landscape from a technical and regulatory perspective. Participants will explore methodologies for **testing and experimentation in health**, gaining awareness of how to validate solutions in real clinical contexts. The module also provides essential **regulatory literacy**, with emphasis on medical device regulation—an area often overlooked by early-stage innovators but crucial for market entry and patient safety. The final focus is on **intellectual property (IP)**, where participants will understand how to protect their ideas and strategically manage IP assets to strengthen their competitive edge.

Module 03: Pitching & Stakeholder Engagement

May 05-11	Lead Partner: IPN
May 11	Q&A Session with the speaker
May 12	Deliverable 03 – 3-minute pitch

This Module is all about **communicating ideas effectively and building meaningful connections**. Participants will be trained in how to craft and deliver compelling pitches to health-focused investors, tailoring their message to resonate with different audiences. Sessions on **stakeholder engagement** will help participants map out and strategically connect with the key players—patients, clinicians, payers, regulators—who influence the adoption and success of healthcare innovations.

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Module 04: Marketing and Funding for Healthcare Startups

May 12–19	Lead Partner: FORTH
May 18	Q&A Session with the speaker
May 19	Deliverable: Marketing and Funding strategies

In the final module of the CHAngeing Entrepreneurial Course, the focus turns to **market readiness and growth strategies**, providing participants with the necessary tools to position their health innovation projects in competitive markets, particularly those addressing ageing-related challenges. This module aims to empower future entrepreneurs with the skills to build a strong brand identity, reach their target audiences effectively, and understand how to secure funding and investment to bring their innovations to market.

FINAL DAY: Demo Day – Remote Pitch Competition

May 22

The Demo Day marks the end of the CHAngeing Entrepreneurial Course and represents a key moment for participants to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and strategies they have acquired over the six weeks of intensive training. This event will be held remotely, allowing all those involved to participate inclusively, regardless of their geographical location.

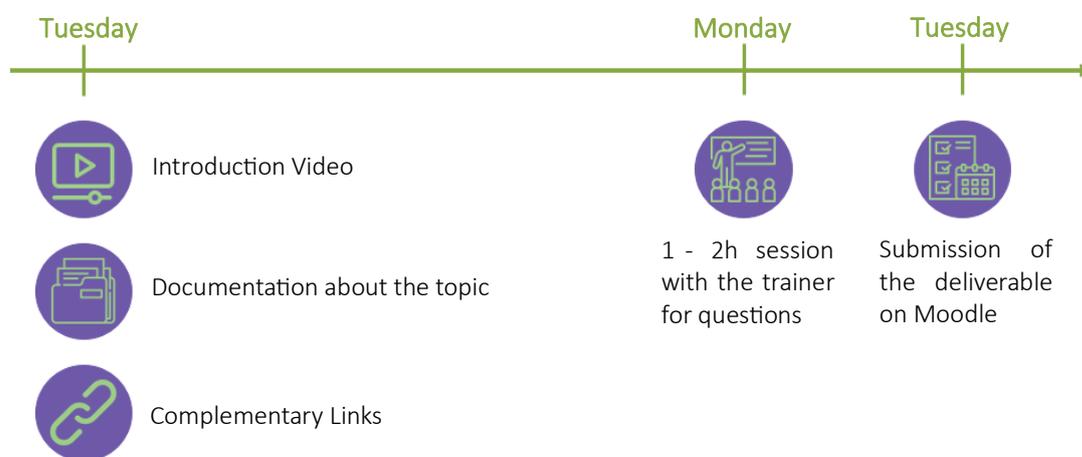
During the Demo Day, each team or participant will present their health innovation project in a live pitch format, in front of a panel of experts, investors, representatives of the innovation ecosystem, and relevant stakeholders from the health and active ageing sector. Pitches should clearly and coherently integrate all the elements developed throughout the course, including the value proposition, business model, marketing plan, stakeholder engagement strategy, and regulatory and ethical considerations.

3.5 Learning Resources

To ensure a rich and engaging learning experience, the CHAngeing Entrepreneurial Course will leverage a diverse set of resources and tools that support both synchronous and asynchronous learning, adapted to the specific needs of participants from various backgrounds in health, research, and entrepreneurship. The core of the course will be hosted on the IPN Moodle platform, providing a centralized space where each instructor and trainee will have individual access. This platform will serve as the main hub for course management, session scheduling, learning materials, and communication, ensuring consistent access to all relevant information and updates. Pre-recorded instructional videos will allow participants to engage with theoretical content at their own pace and revisit key concepts as needed. These videos will be accompanied

by PowerPoint presentations used during the training, as well as curated reading materials and articles that provide additional context and depth on topics related to health innovation and entrepreneurship. At the end of each module, participants will be required to submit practical deliverables, which will be assessed by instructors and mentors, ensuring the application of acquired knowledge. Constructive feedback will be provided to support iterative learning and improvement. To enhance interaction and real-time knowledge exchange, module webinars featuring expert guest speakers will be organized at the end of each training module, on Mondays, offering participants the opportunity to engage with professionals from the field and explore real-world case studies. In addition to these activities, participants will also benefit from mentoring sessions, designed to provide personalized guidance, support the development of their projects, and help them navigate the challenges of transforming innovative ideas into viable solutions.

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3.6 Challenges and Groups

Participants will be organized into multidisciplinary groups of up to four (4) members. Group composition will aim to ensure a diversity of backgrounds, skills, and professional experiences, fostering collaboration across different disciplines within the healthcare and innovation ecosystem.

Each group will be assigned one of the challenges proposed within the framework of the CHAngeing Entrepreneurial Course. The challenges are designed to address real and relevant problems related to ageing, healthy living, and longevity, with a particular focus on the development of innovative medtech solutions.

Throughout the course, groups will work collaboratively to design and progressively develop a solution that responds to the assigned challenge. The challenges serve as a unifying practical component of the course, enabling participants to apply entrepreneurial and innovation-oriented thinking to concrete healthcare needs.

The outcomes of this work will be presented during the Demo Day, where each group will showcase its proposed solution in a pitch format, highlighting its relevance, innovation potential, and applicability within the health and active ageing context.

Challenge 01

Lifestyle and Health Monitoring in Older Adults

How can we design solutions that combine medication adherence with lifestyle monitoring in older adults to reduce complications from chronic disease and integrate seamlessly into primary care?

Challenge 02 Adherence to Medicines in Older Adults

How can we create effective interventions that improve medication adherence for older adults living at home while ensuring safety in cases of polypharmacy and high-risk medicines?

Challenge 03 Monitoring at Home After Cardiovascular Surgery

How can we design safe and effective post-discharge monitoring solutions for patients recovering from cardiovascular surgery that detect early warning signals, reduce readmissions, and improve recovery confidence?

Challenge 04 Stroke Rehabilitation at Home

How can we design scalable, engaging, and safe home-based rehabilitation solutions for stroke survivors that support measurable progress and expand access beyond urban centres?
