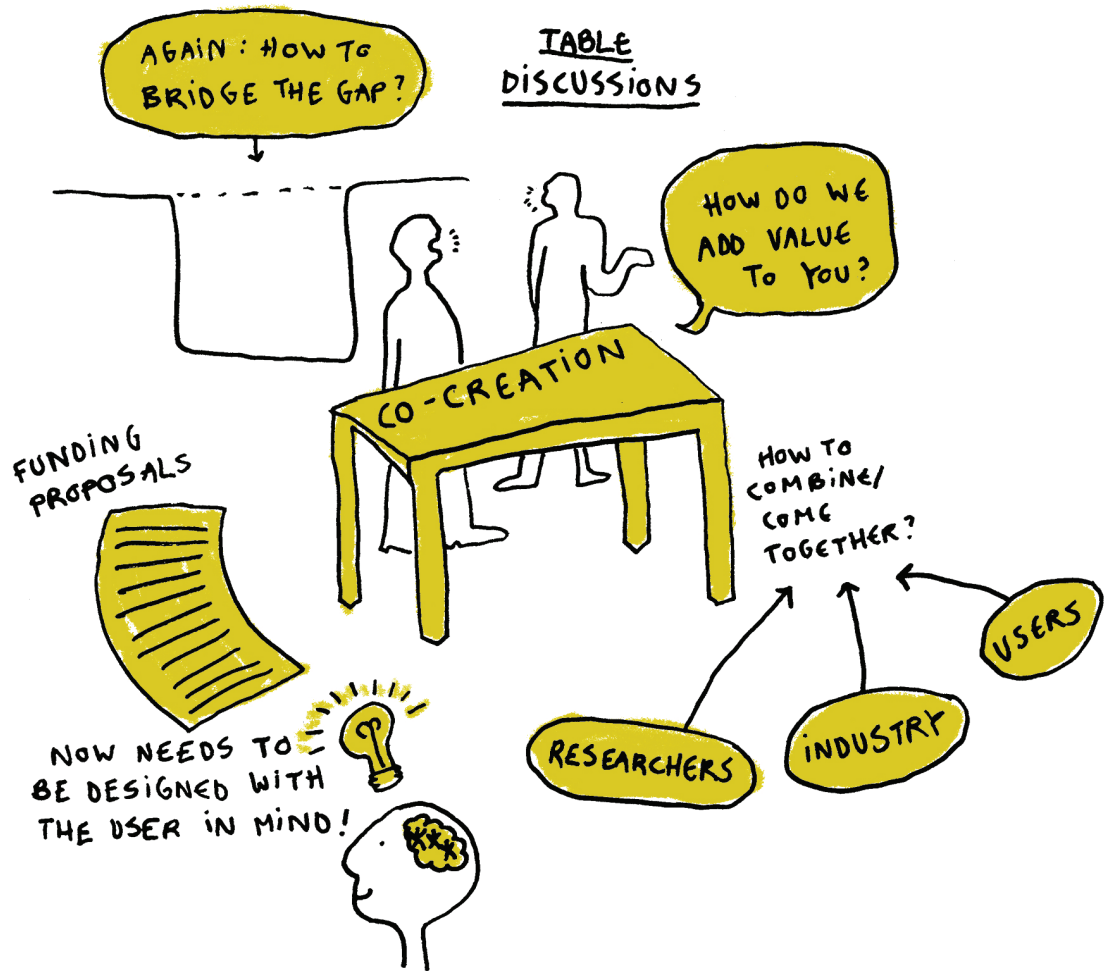


Designing solutions to shared problems with citizens and stakeholders



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Co-creation is about the joint development of new value. The EU-funded GoNano project sought to unleash the power of co-creation on the design and development of nanotechnologies, orienting research to products and services that citizens want and need.

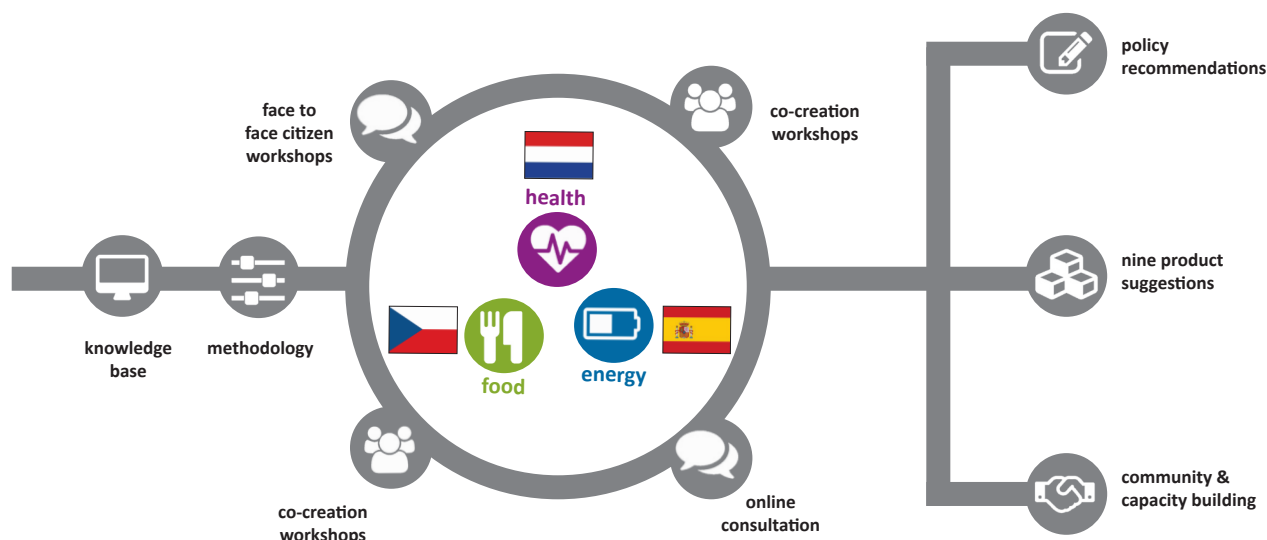
This industry brief highlights experiences from the GoNano project and provides suggestions on how co-creation processes might add value to innovation processes.

What is co-creation?

Co-creation is the joint development of value by innovators and users. It is a collaborative tool that is increasingly being used to design solutions to shared problems. The Creator Space initiative launched by BASF for example aims to foster open innovation within the company by bringing together stakeholders with varying experience from within and outside of the company to develop concrete, challenge-based products and services. Others have used co-creation to enhance participation in research and innovation. The EU project Making Sense EU empowered citizens to use low-cost, open-source technologies to measure air pollution, water quality or sound pollution in their own environment.

Co-creation has the potential to add value to innovation processes by *enabling user-led innovation*, where prospective users of new technological applications provide feedback

Overall design of the co-creation process in GoNano



on prototype designs in early stages of development, or by *envisioning technological futures*, where a diverse group of stakeholders designs demonstrators (e.g. sketches, drawings, prototypes, roadmaps, etc.) to visualise and address the potential societal impacts of new technologies.

The GoNano experience

The EU-funded GoNano project GoNano brought together researchers, producers, citizens, civil society and policy makers in an iterative design process to co-create concrete suggestions for future nanotechnologies. The co-creation process was built around four interrelated steps:

1. *Exploration*: mapping knowledge requirements, needs and interests of participants: define the shared problem.
2. *Ideation*: drawing on the available expertise around the table to imagine creative solutions to the shared problem.
3. *Prototyping*: developing concrete demonstrators of possible solutions.
4. *Reflection*: consider the feasibility of the proposed solution, strengths and weaknesses, and identify next steps.

The co-creation events provided productive spaces for engagement and mutual learning between the participants. Focused, guided interactions led to innovative suggestions on how to integrate broader considerations in research and innovation.

The value of co-creation

The GoNano experience points out that co-creation could offer new inroads for research and innovation. For instance, discussions between policy makers, civil society, researchers and a diabetes patient on the artificial pancreas (a monitoring device for diabetes type 1 patients) led to data management considerations that may be relevant for future data sharing agreements between the producer and users of the device.

Co-creation can also help to make normative commitments explicit, so that possible social and ethical impacts of new applications can be addressed at early stages of innovation (preventing more significant costs due to resistance later down the line).

Co-creation is not a panacea - but it can be an especially effective tool to tackle 'wicked problems': problems that have no single solution because of incomplete, contradictory and changing requirements that are often difficult to recognize and require collaboration between stakeholders.

To find out more, please visit the [GoNano website](http://gonano-project.eu) and embark on the co-creation journey, working together with citizens and societal stakeholders to create new solutions to shared problems.

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 industry brief complements the series of seven policy briefs with information specifically for companies. Please see <http://gonano-project.eu/policy-briefs/> for the complete series.



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[GoNano-project.eu](http://gonano-project.eu)