

Formulating the Framework for Active Involvement of Older Adults in Technology Research and Development (OA-INVOLVE project, AGE-WELL)

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The development of innovative technology that addresses the needs and preferences of an aging population requires involving the potential target users as co-designers in the whole spectrum of technology research and development, from conceptualization, to formulating the research questions, to prototype testing to commercialization.

The objective of our project (OA-INVOLVE) is to explore and support best practices for active OA involvement in AGE-WELL, a National Centre of Excellence focusing on technology and aging network in Canada. OA-INVOLVE applies an innovative method based on participatory action research, working closely with partner organizations and older adults advisory group.

Based on our multifaceted study which is informed by a scoping review, consultations with dozens of AGE-WELL projects and community partners, we present a framework for OA engagement process, including planning, recruitment and training strategies for OA participation as collaborators, consultants, and co-designers involved at every stage of research and development. We report on facilitators, barriers, lessons learned, and solutions to enhance recruitment and meaningful engagement of OA. Our multimedia knowledge dissemination strategy is planned to further mobilize the larger research and development community as well as older adults to form effective partnerships.

This work will enable us to establish evidence-based models for collaborative participatory work with OAs and assess its impact on the research process and associated outcomes.