A SYNAPSHOT OF GLOBAL INNOVATION IN AGING AND SENIOR CARE

A synthesis of global innovations to inform efforts in the United States

January 2017
Over the past few years, Aging2.0 has been connecting, educating, and convening innovators from around the world who are working to improve the lives of older adults. This report highlights a number of key innovations and trends shaping the senior care landscape that have the potential to benefit older adults here in the United States.
Science fiction author William Gibson’s oft-quoted line, “The future is here, it’s just unevenly distributed” is especially true in senior care today.

With the world’s populations aging at unprecedented rates, technology changing rapidly, and funding resources growing more strained, there is an increasing need for policy makers, providers, and entrepreneurs to search the world for the best ideas and insights that can transform the aging experience. While this report focuses on the United States, these are globally relevant trends.

Part 1 of this report starts with an overview of the “state of innovation” in aging and senior care. From a review of the hundreds of startups we have seen over the past four years—a number that seems to be growing exponentially—and in discussions with our partners, four categories of solution areas emerge: Mind, Mobility, Independence, and Care. We then list ten trends in innovation that can help navigate an increasingly complicated technology landscape.

Part 2 focuses on the Aging2.0 2016 Global Startup Search, starting with an overview of the breadth and reach of the companies who applied, followed by a review of the top 10 startups selected by our panel of expert judges to present on stage at the October 2016 OPTIMIZE Conference in San Francisco.

Given the recent findings of the health impacts of loneliness, the report concludes with Part 3, a deeper dive into companies focused on social inclusion experiences. This is an area where foreign companies seem particularly strong.

With funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Aging2.0 launched a new program for global and U.S. startups working in the field of social inclusion to attend OPTIMIZE and its inaugural Startup Bootcamp. The program helped connect entrepreneurs from around the world to learn from one another and share best practices. The Foundation also provided support for the Global Startup Search.

At a time of both significant challenges and opportunities for innovation in healthcare, this report aims to inform and inspire healthcare providers, innovators, investors, and policy makers looking to improve healthcare in the United States.
WHAT’S INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT

**PART 1:**
The State of Innovation in Aging and Senior Care Globally p. 3

**PART 2:**
Aging2.0 2016 Global Startup Search p. 9

**PART 3:**
Deep Dive: Startups Focused on Social Inclusion p. 16
The explosion in startups in recent years is making its presence felt in addressing the challenges and opportunities in aging.

In this section, we review the framework for organizing solutions and discuss global trends we have observed at the intersection of innovation and aging.
Aging2.0 uses the following four categories as a framework for organizing solutions at the intersection of innovation and aging: Mind, Mobility, Independence, and Care. The chart below highlights some of the companies in each of these theme areas.

### THE STATE OF INNOVATION

#### MIND

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#### INDEPENDENCE

#### CARE

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<th>Caregiver Support</th>
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<td>Honor</td>
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<td>Sword Health</td>
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<td>Vynca</td>
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*Personal Emergency Response Services (PERS): Products and services that help older adults remain independent and receive help in emergencies*
Global Trends at the Intersection of Innovation and Aging

For the past four years, Aging2.0 has worked to connect, educate, and convene promising innovators around the world working to improve life for older adults. When we started, the market for technology in aging was nascent—Aging2.0 saw passionate entrepreneurs with personal experiences entering the market, young businesses trying to reach individual customers on a case-by-case basis, and only a cautious interest among large providers in utilizing emerging innovations.

Today, the space is maturing, due in large part to companies learning from the successes and failures of their earlier peers, increased pressure on senior services operators to manage costs and generate new revenue streams, and major advances in technology and design. Below are ten trends we have observed that are essential for startups and organizations to understand as they develop or integrate solutions for older adults and their families.

1. **Person-centric design arrives, finally**

Clunky pendants and personal emergency response services (PERS) devices are giving way to good-looking, well-designed products that also happen to be functional. Smart jewelry from companies like WiseWear now provide passive health monitoring that requires no input from older adults beyond wearing the jewelry. Non-wearable health trackers such as Ally monitor the health and well-being of older people in their homes. An emphasis on design and style aims to lower the barriers to adoption that often prevent the take-up and usage of “clunkier” solutions.
THE STATE OF INNOVATION

2 Disappearing user interfaces

User experience is crucial when designing for older adults. Complex instructions, mice, touchpads, and keyboards can be challenging for those with dexterity issues. Emerging voice interfaces such as Amazon’s Alexa and Google Home represent a new interaction platform on which we’re starting to see startups build solutions. Other emerging input paradigms include gesture-based solutions that enable users to control appliances and other devices inside their smart home with a simple hand movement (e.g., Reemo, Myo), and smart clothing that embeds sensors to passively monitor vital signs and provide subtle notifications (e.g., Siren Care, Ohmatex).

3 Greater recognition of the social determinants of health

The business case for senior-focused technologies is increasingly portrayed in terms of the potential benefits to the healthcare system. Health plans and healthcare systems seeking to reduce the cost of care for Medicare patients are deepening their focus on social determinants of health like social inclusion, transportation, and access to healthy foods. Companies such as CareMore are partnering with on-demand ride programs like Lyft to help patients get to the care they need when they need it. Another recent example is Johns Hopkins Bayview Maryland Health System partnering with Meals on Wheels to scale delivery throughout Central Maryland via financing from social impact bonds.

4 Emergence of aggregated services to connect the silos

Tech-enabled concierges provide “person-centric” solutions, bringing services to the older adult or their family, rather than sending the family in search of them. Through a user-friendly app like the Cubigo platform or an on-demand service like Envoy’s on-call local concierge assistants, seniors can find high-quality local service providers to help them with tasks and errands. These concierges remove the burden of older adults having to do the tasks themselves or manage multiple service providers or apps.
GLOBAL TRENDS

5 Consumerization and specialization of robotics

Robots aren’t one size fits all, but rather are designed for a specific purpose. There are robots that provide an emotional connection with older adults as companions (Jibo, Catalia Health) and others that are more focused on efficiency improvements. In both cases, successful robotic startups will take away less desirable tasks and augment human interventions, combining high-tech with high-touch. We believe the next wave will likely be robots helping in the “back of the house” (e.g., laundry, meal prep), which is already happening in hospitality and healthcare (hospitals).

6 A “caring” sharing economy

With more and more older adults living on a fixed or declining income, interest in supplementary income or sharing living costs is on the rise. A recent report by Airbnb found that the typical Airbnb host over 65 makes $8,350 a year in supplemental income, typically lowering their housing costs from one half of their gross income to a more affordable one quarter. Concerns about the negative impacts of “Uberization” of society—lower wages and temporary jobs—can potentially be mitigated by new opportunities for older adults to receive additional sources of income through companies like Silvernest, Freebird Club, and Room2Care.

7 Artificial Intelligence (AI) augments caregiving

We are beginning to see the emergence of solutions that combine artificial intelligence and avatars to provide cost-effective, virtual care for older adults. Artificial intelligence solutions—such as CareAngel’s virtual caregiving assistant, which provides a daily phone call—can help augment family caregivers who are sometimes not able to provide the necessary care and oversight. Avatars (e.g., Sense.ly, IDAvatars) provide in-home interactions to support adherence to care plans and triage potential issues early. Point of care (e.g., Caring in Place) and guided decision making (e.g., Roobrik) are augmenting care and support for older adults and caregivers alike.
New collaborations are forming between startups and existing companies in order to better serve older adults. Formerly distrusted as competitors, existing providers and companies are seeing startups as helpful avenues to learn about their target population. A very recent example is the launch of CareRides, a partnership between CareLinx that makes Lyft’s ride-sharing service available through CareLinx’s mobile application, thus enabling their elderly customers to easily order a car to get to doctor’s appointments, run errands, and visit friends and family with the assistance of a professional caregiver.

The important role played by family caregivers is being recognized by both society and entrepreneurs. AARP has been increasingly advocating for the over forty million family caregivers in the U.S. and has estimated the annual value they provide at nearly half a trillion dollars. Forward-thinking employers such as Deloitte are introducing formal programs that explicitly support elder care. Startups have always struggled trying to connect with family caregivers because many of them don’t self-identify as caregivers (e.g., “I’m just being a good daughter”) and may be less willing to discuss their parents’ challenges or needs than new parents. Despite this, new startups are delivering targeted content (Daily Caring), while local support communities (Daughterhood) and coaching and care coordination (Cariloop, Care.ly, Tending) are providing much-needed support for these vital, and previously under-appreciated, enablers of successful aging.

Succeeding as a direct-to-consumer solution requires successful marketing and distribution to older adult customers who often do not see themselves as customers of the “senior” product. Without a strong B2C channel, customer acquisition costs can be prohibitively high, so startups are increasingly shifting their sales focus to distributors that serve a large number of seniors like Direct Supply, Medline, Cardinal Health, and McKesson. For example, senior living communities, care circles, and hospitals are becoming targets of new technologies like Reminder Rosie and Linked Senior. In addition, a number of startups are finding success selling directly to the service providers that reach the intended clients (e.g., ClearCare and CareMerge selling to home care agencies and assisted living communities, respectively).
The second annual Aging2.0 Global Startup Search was held across 33 cities in 25 countries, adding another 386 startups to the more than 2,000 that Aging2.0 has been tracking over the past four years. The breadth and depth of the emerging solutions is remarkable. While health and wellness are important topics, there are plenty more interesting things that older people want to focus on rather than just their health, namely their families, communities, and other personal passions.
AGING2.0 2016 GLOBAL STARTUP CHALLENGE

368
Companies applied for the Global Startup Search

24% Early Stage
27% Launched
45% Beta Stage
4% Growth Stage

BROAD GEOGRAPHIC REACH

25 Countries represented in all submissions

63% NORTH AMERICA
15% EUROPE
12% ASIA & MIDDLE EAST
9% SOUTH AMERICA
1% AUSTRALIA
### MOST PREVALENT FOCUS AREAS AMONG GLOBAL STARTUP SEARCH COMPANIES OUTSIDE THE U.S.

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<th>Care-transitions</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Assistive</th>
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<td>Bathing</td>
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The 2016 Global Startup Search Winners

In collaboration with a group of international judges (drawn from across the continuum of aging and senior care), ten startups were selected to present on-stage at the OPTIMIZE Conference in San Francisco. The ten finalists are listed below, along with a comment from one of the judges who voted for that particular company.

OPTIMIZE is Aging2.0’s annual conference that brings together healthcare leaders, entrepreneurs, and industry experts to share insights and learnings at the intersection of innovation and aging.

United States // The world’s first voice-powered artificially intelligent caregiver. Like Siri, but for seniors, CareAngel helps older adults live longer, safer, and more independent lives at home.

“CareAngel is my top pick. Although the world is moving to smartphones, the landline concept could provide comfort and reliability to the aging population. CareAngel provides independence at home while still connecting family members.”
— Anna Lehner, Innovation Manager, Medline Industries, Inc. (Chicago, IL)

United States // Cariloop provides comprehensive services and tools that help families plan for and manage the care of aging loved ones.

“Caregiver burden is one of the greatest unmet needs of our era. Cariloop helps address that need and moves the on-demand caregiving industry forward.”
— Andrew Smith, Innovation Director, Brookdale Senior Living (Nashville, TN)
TOP 10 WINNERS

Israel // EchoCare develops a non-wearable, elderly-care, home monitoring system that automatically alerts safety and emergency response in situations such as falls, stress, sleep apnea, etc.

“I like the passive nature of the product and the potential to scale it to organizations of various sizes.”
— Rod Copple, Executive Director, Life Care Services (Ames, IA)

United States // iTR Diagnostics develops non-invasive digital biomarker panels to help physicians and researchers identify neurological diseases (e.g., Parkinson’s) and monitor their patients.

“Because early identification of Parkinson’s in a low-cost and portable way is an impact-driven solution that should be promoted and supported.”
— Sarah Thomas, Senior Director of Global Innovation, Genesis Healthcare (Kennett Square, PA)

Brazil // Mundo Prateado is a movement launched by two Brazilians who want to inspire older people, family, and friends to face maturity in an active and creative way.

“Transparency of resources and connectivity are vital themes to the success of family caregivers and those wishing to stay independent. Mundo Prateado aims to bring resources to those in need and create a connected community for the people of Brazil.”
— Sarah Thomas, Senior Director of Global Innovation, Genesis Healthcare (Kennett Square, PA)
Israel // MyndYou is developing a platform that allows families of Alzheimer’s patients to balance their own well-being with optimal care for their loved ones.

“Fantastic integrated product to tie in caregivers, families, and staff with the senior. Apps that encourage cognitive stability and development as well as tele-medicine make this a win. Tie in metrics from consumer-based health monitoring devices and the product is well rounded. Fantastic Team.”
— Lisa Cini, Owner, Mosaic Design Studio (Columbus, OH)

United States // NuEyes is a technology firm that has introduced a wearable device that improves the lives of those affected by vision loss such as macular degeneration.

“Great use of existing tech to solve a problem affecting a lot of people. Not too many competitors working in this space. Seem to have great direct connections to the industry and sales side of vision care.”
— Ken Smith, Director of Mobility, Stanford Center on Longevity (Palo Alto, CA)

Belgium // FibriCheck, the first product of Qompium, is a validated detection tool to monitor patients’ heart rhythm with a focus on the detection of atrial fibrillation.

“I think the Qompium team is tackling an important and vastly growing need. The market potential is huge, the background of the team is strong, and they are assembling a strong roster of partners.”
— Mary Furlong, Founder & CEO, Mary Furlong Associates (Berkeley, CA)
### TOP 10 WINNERS

**United States // Silvernest** offers a highly scalable, innovative online solution that pairs aging homeowners (50+) with compatible roommates and provides tools for long-term home sharing.

“Silvernest was one of the top picks because they solve several major problems among the 50+ generation —loneliness, lack of income, and health events going undetected—with such a simple, accessible, and scalable solution. Finding them a perfect roommate can dramatically change their quality of life.”

— Rebecca Woodcock, EIR, 500 Startups (Mountain View, CA)

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**OVERALL WINNER**

**United States // Stack** is a revolutionary spatial intelligence platform that embeds sensors in common lighting formats, enabling motion analytics, circadian lighting, and unique health-tracking apps.

“Stack has created something truly powerful and well-suited to senior care. It’s relatively inexpensive, requires no installation or modification beyond screwing in a bulb, and addresses some very real needs in terms of safety and improved quality of life both in the home and in a congregate care environment—all while doing its job passively and respectfully in the background.”

— Tom Paprocki, Director of Development and Innovation, Direct Supply (Milwaukee, WI)
This year’s Global Startup Search uncovered dozens of new companies that are delivering solutions to advance social inclusion for older adults. These solutions are especially relevant for the U.S., where a recent UCSF study found that more than 40 percent of all older adults feel lonely on a regular basis, even those who live with other people.¹

As innovators challenge the traditional construct of social support for the elderly, old views of one-way, care-centered interactions between older adults and their families are giving way to a richer and more realistic view of the multidimensional social needs and social roles of older adults.

Recognizing the dynamism of social support, the innovation landscape for social inclusion around the world is generally focused on three primary classifications of social support: type, direction, and source.²

While currently no single program, product, or intervention offers the panacea for “social inclusion,” Aging2.0 believes that new technologies and innovations like these hold the keys to a more inclusive world for older adults.
Classifications of support
For each of the companies profiled in the following section, included is a visual representation of the classifications of support they offer. The corresponding support area is highlighted to indicate the focus for each company.

TYPE
The type of support varies day-to-day
People need a combination of both emotional and instrumental support, particularly to maintain autonomy and independence as they grow older and face challenges in performing their daily tasks and engaging in social activities. As people age, they do not transition from needing empathy and emotional support (EMOTIONAL) to simply requiring help with functional tasks like making meals and completing housework (INSTRUMENTAL). People need many different types of support as they grow older, and want to be empowered to seek it. Fortunately, startups around the world are delivering more personalized experiences for finding support—from one-stop services that find companions or caregivers and allow people to indicate the type of support they seek to social media platforms that help them find peers with shared interests.

Sources
Diverse support sources are the way to go
Family members often serve as important emotional and caregiver support for older adults (FAMILY). Friendships outside of kin (NON-FAMILY) also serve an important role for older adults, sometimes acting as a buffer to the negative impacts of aging. New services that foster friendships in old age are sprouting up across the world, as are products that make staying in touch with others easier. For example, new technologies are simplifying the user experience of tablets and smartphones.

Direction
The direction of support need not be one-way
The image of older adults passing their remaining days quietly in a rocking chair has been replaced by a more realistic image of dynamic people with complex needs and wants. Recognizing the need for older adults to continue exercising the agency they have experienced across their lives, innovators are working on new avenues for exchanging support. In a 2003 study, giving support (GIVE) was found to actually be more beneficial on measures of morbidity and mortality than receiving support (RECEIVE).
Adaptivecity
Spain
www.family.ar.com

Intended for the less tech-savvy older adult, Adaptivecity’s user interface makes it easy to stay engaged with family and friends. Through an easy calling and texting mechanism, along with the ability to view photos and videos, older adults can stay in touch with their loved ones. Offering different account views for the individual, family, and caregiver, Adaptivecity allows family members to stay up to date on their loved one’s care without having to constantly ask.

AgeWell
South Africa
www.agewellglobal.co

AgeWell supports people who are confined to their home due to physical and mental limitations as well as those who are healthy but lack strong social connections. AgeWell delivers peer-based social engagement and mobile health screenings that improve health outcomes for homebound seniors. Clad with smartphones during home visits, older-adult AgeWell employees visit their less-able peers and collect critical information that helps identify clinical, social, and environmental issues that may warrant social services or medical referrals. With a focus on making seniors part of the solution, AgeWell is advancing a new model of elder care coordination that can reduce medical costs.

CareHood
Canada
www.carehood.co

When difficulties arise due to illness, injury, or family loss, support from family and friends helps people both manage day-to-day tasks and not feel alone. However, it can take time and precious energy to ask for and then coordinate support. CareHood creates an online care community for individuals and caregivers needing physical, emotional, and task-based support, making it much easier for people to lean on their community during difficult times.
As people age, they want to stay connected with their community while maintaining their independence. Cubigo’s interactive platform is designed to help them do both.

“With only the social side, you don’t solve the whole aging-in-place problem,” says Cubigo CEO Geert Houben, of Belgium, who founded the company about five years ago. “You need other services, like transportation, meals, and housekeeping, organized via a personalized platform.”

That’s where Cubigo comes in. It’s designed to help elderly people living at home or in assisted living to get both what they want and what they need, simply and quickly, all in one place.

The software can be installed on any device—a computer, tablet, laptop, or phone. You create a profile of your living situation and your needs and preferences. And you’re ready to roll.

For example, say you live alone and your kids live far away. You no longer enjoy cooking and want to make use of a meal provider in your neighborhood. Cubigo knows where those providers are and can access them for you, right from your dashboard.

Or perhaps you like to play bridge, and you’re available on Tuesdays. Cubigo can tell you where there’s a game that day, and with a single click, can order a taxi to get you there.

You can also make video calls to your kids, scan the news, share photos and videos, and listen to music.

The idea is to make living socially—and independently—easier for older people.

“You have to make technology not for the sake of technology but for solving a problem,” Houben says.

In this case, the problem is loneliness. Cubigo helps people connect with their community while providing them access to the services they need.

Currently, Cubigo has more than 20,000 users. In Europe, Cubigo works with health insurance organizations, senior associations, and home care associations that provide services for elderly people.

In the United States, however, elderly care is organized more around facilities, so Houben is working with independent assisted living organizations to make Cubigo available to residents. Through the Cubigo dashboard, residents can access services from inside the facility, such as maintenance or meals, as well as resources in the community, like what’s going on at the neighborhood YMCA or senior center. Brookdale, a major operator of senior living communities, is implementing Cubigo at one of its facilities.

Houben has big plans for expansion, and Cubigo already has a U.S. office, in San Rafael, CA. Technology-wise, Houben is working with Apple to explore voice control for Cubigo.
### DEEP DIVE: SOCIAL INCLUSION STARTUPS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Careship</td>
<td><a href="http://www.careship.de">www.careship.de</a></td>
<td>Rather than offering functional help or traditional home care, Careship provides companionship for older adults. Customers select personalized services ranging from companionship in general or for a specific activity to home care and support with errands and daily tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Cubigo</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cubigo.com">www.cubigo.com</a></td>
<td>Although “aging in place” is often promoted as the gold standard of “successful” independent aging, many seniors who grow old in their own home find themselves facing poor nutrition, challenges completing household tasks, and excessive loneliness. Cubigo is working to combat these challenges by making living socially and independently easier for people as they grow old. With an easy-to-use software that can be installed on any home computer, laptop, or phone, Cubigo is making it easy for older adults to connect with their social communities and services to help them age well at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>The Freebird Club</td>
<td><a href="http://www.thefreebirdclub.com">www.thefreebirdclub.com</a></td>
<td>Staying active after retirement has been linked to better health and vitality. Advancing this mission, Freebird Club offers older adults a safe and fun peer-to-peer social travel experience wherein they can meet individuals from other cultures around the world and discover new ways to earn additional income later in life.</td>
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Hogewey: Bringing Normalcy to the Everyday Lives of People with Dementia

People with dementia live in a strange and confusing world where they may not recognize the person in front of them or understand what's going on around them. This inability to make sense of their environment can be frightening, and cause them to feel anxious, depressed, or even angry.

As a social worker at a psychiatric hospital in the Netherlands, Yvonne van Amerongen saw how people with dementia suffered when forced to live in an impersonal environment that provided them with virtually no connection to their former lives.

She decided to create a new kind of care experience for people with dementia, one that “replaced the medical model with a social relationship model,” as van Amerongen puts it.

And so was born Hogewey, a gated, self-contained village in Weesp for elderly people with dementia who lead close-to-normal lives with people of similar backgrounds and experiences in small-group homes that look and feel like real homes. Hogewey, also known as “Dementia Village,” looks like a real town, with a plaza, supermarket, hair salon, pub, restaurant—even a theatre. It is run by a government-owned company called Vivium, for which van Amerongen is director of quality and innovation.

Hogewey contains 23 residential homes in which six to eight people live together. Each home reflects one of seven cultural lifestyles, such as urban, aristocratic, or religious, and is designed and furnished according to its lifestyle, which also determines the type of music played in the home, the type of cuisine that is served—even the way the table is set.

The idea is for residents to have a life that resembles their old life as possible. To that end, caregiving staff blend into the environment to support residents in their everyday activities.

They dress and act like members of the community—a supermarket clerk, a bartender, a hairdresser, or a neighbor. These caregivers are specially trained to help residents understand where they are and what they are doing in that moment—for example, shopping for groceries at the store or having a glass of wine with a friend in a café.

Everything in Hogewey is designed to be familiar and comfortable to the residents. “Recognition can be supported by what we call ‘favorable surroundings,’” van Amerongen explains.

“Favorable surroundings offer you a place you understand, where you are living in a normal house, with a normal household.”

In many ways, it’s the opposite of a normal long-term care facility.

Far from “living out their days,” Hogewey residents lead lives that are active, social, and happy. They can ride a bicycle, take a stroll, go shopping, or have a beer at the local pub. They can have pets. Because of the normalcy of their lives, they tend to require fewer medications than residents in conventional nursing homes.

As van Amerongen says, “It’s not about staying alive, but what your life is about.”
## DEEP DIVE: SOCIAL INCLUSION STARTUPS

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<tr>
<th>Startup</th>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Giving &amp; Getting</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://www.givingandgetting.net">www.givingandgetting.net</a></td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>As individuals grow older, they often find themselves needing help performing many daily tasks and activities that they could previously do alone. Constantly receiving support like this can lead to feelings of dependence and reduced self-efficacy, and result in an unequal exchange of support, depression, and eventually social isolation. Giving &amp; Getting makes it easy for seniors to remain active members of their community by providing a platform for receiving support in specific areas of life. Through a system that transfers tokens between members upon completion of a request, it encourages social engagement and mutual exchange of support and favors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hogewey</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://www.dementiavillage.com">www.dementiavillage.com</a></td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Hogewey delivers a person-centered community living experience for people with dementia. Flipping the traditional memory care facility model on its head, Hogewey’s community design fosters social connections. From its six- to eight-person residential homes that mirror traditional households to its self-contained village design complete with town square, Hogewey delivers an exceptional living experience for people growing old with dementia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Klup</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://www.kluppen.nl">www.kluppen.nl</a></td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Research points to the importance of non-kin relationships to mental and cognitive health in old age. Unfortunately, as people grow older and fill fewer social roles that more easily foster meaningful, trusted relationships, opportunities to form new friendships significantly decrease. Without active social and neighborhood clubs, individuals can have difficulty forming new social networks. Klup, a web application for activity and companionship, helps older adults connect, based on their shared interests and location. As people grow older and become less mobile, having friends within walking distance can pay dividends to health and well-being.</td>
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The Freebird Club: A Companionable Travel Network for Elders

What is the most valuable asset that older people have to share with each other?

According to Peter Mangan, founder of the Freebird Club, it’s their company.

“How can there be so many older people lonely in the world when there are so many and the numbers are increasing?” Mangan, a native of Ireland, asks.

In an effort to address that question, he created the Freebird Club, a web-supported, peer-to-peer social and homestay network for people over 50. It may sound like Airbnb for seniors, but there’s a twist: The Freebird Club is for hosts and travelers who want to share each other’s company.

This is not about simply handing off the keys and exchanging cell phone numbers. It’s about having breakfast together and perhaps chatting about the day’s adventures in the evening. It may mean an outing to the neighborhood pub or a local theatre production. At the highest level of interaction, hosts commit to serving as local tour guides for their guests, spending a good portion of each day with them.

Mangan came up with the idea after building his own vacation home in Kerry, on the southwest coast of Ireland. When the recession hit, he needed to rent the home out to cover his mortgage. Since he was working in Dublin, he asked his father, a semi-retired veterinarian, to welcome guests. The arrangement worked well, but when a few older couples came to stay, something extra happened.

“There were trips down to the local pub, a couple of games of golf, taking them to see local sights—things that didn’t happen with the younger people,” Mangan says. His father “was relishing it. And the feedback from the guests was that this made their holiday.”

The Freebird Club launched in September 2016. It has more than 400 members from countries all over the world, including the United States.

In a way, it’s a perfect storm of opportunity, combining the sharing economy, online technology, the availability of spare bedrooms many seniors who have raised families have at their disposal, and the desire many older people harbor to travel more.

Mangan’s hope is that the Freebird Club will develop into a real travel and social network community that sparks friendships beyond a single vacation experience.

“I want this to be an open community where anyone can stay with anyone and there’s that feeling of genuine welcome anywhere you go,” he says.

He also wants to work with charitable organizations that address loneliness, isolation, and dementia in the elderly. “That’s where the real social impact is,” Mangan says. “We want to be part of the solution in a real way.”
DEEP DIVE: SOCIAL INCLUSION STARTUPS

Koala Phone
Czech Republic
www.koalaphone.com

Mobile phones have traditionally not been designed to meet the specific needs of older adults who want to stay active and connected to their family and friends. Cell phone buttons and text are often too small for people with arthritis or vision problems, and smartphone apps and functions often feel overwhelming and unwieldy. Koala Phone lessens the technology barrier by making smartphone use simpler and more straightforward through bigger icons, a larger keyboard, and fewer options and settings.

Marlena Books
Canada
www.marlenabooks.com

As people experience the challenges of living with Alzheimer’s or dementia, activities like reading and writing can become difficult and frustrating. The frustration can cause avoidance of these activities, and result in a lack of stimulation that can lead to further decline and increased chances of depression. Marlena Books takes an evidence-backed approach to provide readable books for people with Alzheimer’s and other dementias. Designed to be read alone or with loved ones, their books are age-appropriate and stimulating for older adults—helping them remain literary members of their social world.

Age UK Reconnections—Social Impact Bond

Innovative “pay for success” model proven to scale interventions

Age UK’s Reconnections provides personalized plans for isolated seniors using volunteer-led support groups, exercise, and befriending programs. Participants often become volunteers themselves. While the intervention on its own increases social inclusion, the true innovation is in the financing mechanism. Through a Social Impact Bond, third-party impact investors fund operational costs which the government will repay with interest only if the desired social outcome is achieved and independently verified (in this case, a reduction in the UCLA scale of loneliness). In this way, innovative programs can be tested and scaled without payers bearing the cost if they fail.

http://www.socialfinance.org.uk/database/?project_id=26
Go-Go Grandparent: A Companionable Travel Network for Elders

After Justin Boorgaard’s 85-year-old grandmother lost her vision to glaucoma, she wanted to be able to use Uber to get around town. What she didn’t want was a smartphone, or an app.

“She needed an end-to-end, non-technical, independent solution,” says Boorgaard, who lived with his grandmother for three years and respected her desire to remain self-reliant. So he designed that solution for her: essentially an old-fashioned hot line.

To order a car, Grandma simply calls a number from her regular land line or a flip phone and presses 1. A human voice reads her the name of the driver; the make, model, and color of the car that’s been dispatched to her home, and how soon her ride will arrive. She tells the driver where she wants to go, and that destination is saved as her last location. When she’s ready to leave, she calls the number again, presses 2 to be picked up where she was dropped off, and Grandma’s on the move again.

“There’s no app, there’s no smart phone, there’s no person involved,” says Boorgaard.

And that, in a nutshell, is GoGoGrandparent, which Boorgaard and a partner launched in April 2016 to make on-demand services such as Uber accessible to older people who don’t have smart phones.

Since then, GoGoGrandparent has delivered rides, medications, groceries, and meals to more than 16,000 callers, and is available in all 50 states. The cost, according to the company’s website, is $0.19 per minute “from when we start monitoring a service to when we stop.”

GoGoGrandparent also offers a family update service that sends designated family members real-time text messages on their loves ones’ comings and goings and safe arrivals, as well as notifications of anything unusual observed about their elderly relatives’ health.

Boorgaard thinks of GoGoGrandparent as “kind of like an automated third sibling” (he has a sister) who’s always available for Grandma. In fact, it’s becoming more and more like a self-serve concierge system that older adults can use to arrange a number of services. Boorgaard hopes to strengthen the platform with predictive capabilities that will make it more useful for families who want a better picture of how their older relatives are doing day to day.

In addition to marketing directly to older adults and their families, GoGoGrandparent has developed relationships with elder living facilities, caregiving agencies, hospitals, and municipalities that are interested in promoting greater independence for older adults.

For Boorgaard, who’s 25, creating GoGoGrandparent has opened a window on what it means to be elderly.

His read: Older adults are really not that different from younger adults.

“Older people are vibrant and independent and have their own lives,” he says. “They have physiological problems, and they didn’t have cell phones for the first 70 years of their lives.” They don’t want to be “coddled,” he adds, but they may not be interested in learning how to use modern technology, either.

GoGoGrandparent meets them where they are—literally and figuratively.
## DEEP DIVE: SOCIAL INCLUSION STARTUPS

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<th>Location</th>
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<th>Tags</th>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
<td><a href="http://www.maturijobs.com">www.maturijobs.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neeuro Pte Ltd.</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td><a href="http://www.neeuro.com">www.neeuro.com</a></td>
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<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>RemindMeCare</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td><a href="http://www.remindemecare.com">www.remindemecare.com</a></td>
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**CASE STUDY**

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**grandPad:**
Father and Son Team Up to Create a Senior-Friendly Tablet

When Isaac Lien gave his presentation at the Aging2 conference in San Francisco on October 14, his grandmother in Iowa was watching—from her grandPad, a tablet device specially designed for seniors by Isaac and his father Scott.

“Hi, Grandma,” he waved.

Three years ago, Isaac and his father teamed up to start grandPad as a way to help reduce the isolation and loneliness that hundreds of millions of older adults worldwide say they experience in their everyday lives.

Standard communications technology, the Liens say, has left older people out—and let them down. With grandPad, they are both reconnecting older adults with those who matter to them most and bringing back their spark.

Grandma Lien was actually their first user. “I thought it would be fun and convenient for her,” Scott says. “I had no idea of the positive impact it would have on her life. Now we’re doing it for thousands of people.”

grandPad is a tablet device and service that includes everything users need: hardware, software, built-in wireless internet connectivity, customer support, and no-questions-asked replacement if the grandPad is lost or damaged. The month-to-month, no-contract service costs $65 to $75.

Key to grandPad is its elderly-friendly design. Scott Lien credits his son with that.

Built-in internet connectivity means elders don’t have to struggle with complicated setup and passwords. The grandPad comes with its own wireless docking station for charging—no need to find an electrical outlet. The tablet is small but easy to read.

The interface—icons, colors, and pictures—was designed for and with input from seniors. Instead of a touch screen, which doesn’t work well for older people whose fingertips have lost their natural moisture, users navigate with a stylus.

Users can play games, listen to music, and catch up on the news. But the most popular features are the easy-to-use tools for sharing photos and making video calls.

“Someone who’s 90 can love and be delighted by this product within 90 seconds,” Scott Lien says.

grandPad has users in all 50 states, and it’s going global too. The company has a strategic partnership with Acer, a Taiwanese multinational computer manufacturer that does business in 160 countries. And, in September, grandPad launched a pilot in Switzerland with Swisscom, that country’s major telecommunications provider.

Isaac Lien said that grandPad is a startup with a strong social mission. “We’re not about connecting older adults to technology,” he explained during his Aging 2.0 presentation. “Our goal is to connect humans with humans, and with technology.”
Instant SMS messaging poses a challenge for seniors suffering from arthritis, vision problems, and lack of familiarity with smartphone technologies. But as younger generations use SMS messaging in greater numbers than ever before, staying in touch with these younger family members can prove difficult, leading to reduced social contact for older adults. Roha’s Catcha platform makes messaging easier and more intuitive, replacing SMS typing and reading with voice messaging, with contacts visible in a simple and elegant home screen, and an intuitive carousel to scroll through contacts.

With families and friends geographically dispersed, it can be difficult for older adults to maintain strong social connections, particularly when mobility challenges prevent them from venturing far from home. Because new technologies such as smartphones can be complicated to learn for new users, Sentab utilizes a familiar technology—the television set—to deliver a virtual meeting place for older adults, where they can both connect with existing social circles and build new ones. With a user-friendly interface, free calls, and photo and video sharing, Sentab is helping reduce social isolation by bringing community directly into seniors’ living rooms.

Many older adults face difficulty translating their past career experiences into strong candidacy for new jobs. SilverJobs supports older adults through workshops and courses to help them gain the skills and confidence to succeed in their job search. Acting as a curator of content and skills training, SilverJobs also helps older employees transition to their next job.
Room2Care: 
Creating a New Long-Term Care Alternative for Older Adults

When it comes to housing, many elderly people face a dilemma. They no longer want to live alone, but they can’t afford assisted living. And the only viable alternative—moving in with their kids—is not necessarily their preference.

Enter Room2Care, a web-supported network of private, affordable caregiver homes for older people in the community.

“In this country, if you’re poor, the government will take care of you,” notes Rich Ashenoff II, co-founder of Room2Care. “If you’re wealthy, you can get into an assisted living facility. But if you’re in the middle, you’re stuck.”

Room2Care, he says, focuses on “working Americans” who have care needs but don’t want to move in with their children.

Ashenoff got the idea while working for a home health insurance company in Florida. Part of his job involved matching the home health nurses on his roster with short-term assignments. He always had a large number of nurses looking for work, but he never had enough work for all of them.

In fact, he consistently had a lot of excess work capacity.

That started him thinking. On the one hand, he had trained caregivers looking for work. On the other, he had seniors who needed an affordable, supportive home environment.

He created a website for caregivers with an extra room in their house that they were willing to rent out to a senior. And he set up a system to match caregiving needs with caregiving capacity. “Many seniors don’t need a lot of care,” Ashenoff notes. “They just need someone around in case something happens.” Others may need assistance with housekeeping, getting dressed, cooking, and other everyday activities.

Caregivers, who typically are home health aides or certified nursing assistants, can sign up to provide as little or as much care as they feel comfortable giving. Ashenoff notes that everyone is background-checked, and that Room2Care has systems in place to ensure senior safety and satisfaction.

Room2Care doesn’t get involved in pricing, but it provides suggestions based on area Medicaid rates for nursing home care. “We encourage caregivers to charge about half the cost of what care is in the area,” Ashenoff says. In Miami, for example, the monthly cost ranges from $600 to $1,600.

Ashenoff sees Room2Care as a win-win. Caregivers can make more or less the same amount of money they would make with a home care agency; some may even continue working for an agency part-time.

And seniors have a new, affordable living alternative that allows them to stay in the community without feeling like a burden to their children.

Currently, Room2Care is only in Florida, but Ashenoff is looking to expand to other states. When he and his business partner started Room2Care less than two years ago, their focus was on building a strong platform. Now they are ready to “evangelize,” as Ashenoff puts it, and build brand awareness, both with families and investors.
DEEP DIVE: SOCIAL INCLUSION STARTUPS

**Tinybots**  
*www.tinybots.nl*  
*Netherlands*

There has been much fanfare and focus on personal robots as tools and companions for care. Tinybots is taking an interesting approach by encouraging families to personalize the look of their specific robot to help integrate it into the fabric of an elder’s environments. Examples include dressing the robot and incorporating plants and other environmental elements. In addition, Tinybot is very focused on older adults with dementia who need the experience to be as simple as possible and geared toward providing more daily structure.

**Uniper Care Tech**  
*www.unipercare.com*  
*Israel*

Unlike many other apps and technologies that require a new device and have a steep learning curve for non-technology natives, Uniper’s simple and intuitive TV app, UniTV, provides older adults with an easy way to connect with their family circle, from the comfort of their own home and TV set. UniTV is part of Uniper’s holistic solution to help older people maintain dignity, social connections, and privacy as they age in place safely.

**Vitalitix**  
*www.vitalitix.com*  
*Israel*

While many older adults want to remain in their home and community as they age, they often lack family nearby who can support them at a moment’s notice. Vitalitix provides a cloud-based social hub for connected technologies, emergency services, GPS tracking, and emergency alerts for older adults. The platform also connects older adults with a network of nearby volunteer “angels” who make themselves available to lend a helping hand whenever an elderly person nearby is in need, thus empowering older adults to maintain independence and vitality in old age.
Across the world, new technologies and innovations are making an impact on the health of older adults. Through our research of startups focused on older adults, we discovered that while many are traditional healthcare startups, many more operate on the “social determinants” of health (in particular social inclusion), which have conclusively been shown to drive health outcomes. Experts in aging have always emphasized the importance of “whole person” care, rather than purely just treating the clinical symptoms\(^5\), and this is the direction that healthcare as a whole is heading. Moreover, many promising areas for innovation including wearables, smart homes, voice interface, robots, and autonomous vehicles are being driven from outside healthcare entirely, with many coming from outside the U.S. As U.S. health policymakers review the future of health, non-healthcare sectors and foreign innovators will become increasingly important.

Going forward, three questions stand out as ripe for more in-depth research:

1) **What are the most important challenges facing older adults where innovation could play a pivotal role?**
   This will help focus the attention and resources on top priorities.

2) **How should we measure success, other than in purely financial terms?**
   Many of the companies we looked at are “social enterprises” delivering a greater impact to society than their balance sheets would suggest.

3) **How can we connect innovators and offerings to reduce the inherent fragmentation that is so prevalent?**
   Creating ways to share best practices, data (such as common standards and shared protocols), and business models (such as through aligned incentive models) could help build the kind of critical mass that will be needed as the U.S. population ages over the coming years.

Progress in answering these three questions will help accelerate innovation in this area and in turn benefit older adults, health systems, and society as a whole.
NOTES

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- Scott Lien, Grandpad (U.S.)
- Geert Horben, Cubigo (Belgium)
- Rich Ashenoff, Room2Care (U.S.)
- Angus Tiet, Aristocrat (Australia)
- Mandy Salomon, Mentia (Australia)
- Maristela Velloso, Mundo Prateado (Brazil)
- Yvonne van Amerongen, Dementia Village (Denmark)

Ambassadors:
- Lulu Xiong, Beijing
- Maria Isabel Leon Fiestas, Peru
- Juan Pablo Correa, Barcelona
- Gabriel Montiero, Rio
- Eric Kihlstrom, London
- Laura Visconti, Brussels
- Hsin-Ling Tsai, Taipei

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