



REDESIGN BELONGING

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Co-creation Workshop Report



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Abstract	<p>Work Package 8: Co-Creating Solutions in Finland (WP8) conducted four events that focused on the Co-Creation Phase of the Redesign Belonging project. Events in this WP covered the activities conducted in Finland during April and May 2025. The primary objective of Work Package 8 (WP8) was to support the development and refinement of the Creative Collective members' ideas through meaningful engagement with migrant communities and other residents. This was accomplished by organising a series of co-creation workshops in collaboration with various community groups and relevant organisations.</p>
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1. Introduction

Redesign Belonging (ReBel) is a European project designed to foster solidarity and strengthen the sense of belonging among migrant women who have lived in their host countries for more than five years. By engaging these women in co-creative processes with professional designers, ReBel aims to develop innovative, context-specific models and solutions for integration across the EU.

The main objectives of ReBel are to:

- Provide actionable recommendations to inform both local and international policy;
- Address integration gaps by identifying barriers and resilience strategies; and
- Strengthen and empower migrant women's sense of belonging through a co-creation model.

ReBel is co-financed by the European Commission under the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV). The project consortium is led by **Laurea University of Applied Sciences** (Finland), in collaboration with the **Euro-Arab Foundation for Higher Studies** (Spain), **Educational Centre Visio** (Finland), and the international organization **What Design Can Do** (The Netherlands).

Project activities are carried out in parallel across the participating countries, bringing together migrant women, local citizens, NGO representatives, and local and regional authorities in workshops that encourage open dialogue. These sessions offer migrant women a platform to share the challenges they have faced—and continue to face—in integrating into society, as well as the resilience strategies they have developed.

The project commenced in autumn 2024 with **Research Labs**, which engaged over 200 migrants across Finland, Spain, and the Netherlands. Insights from these sessions informed the launch of an **Open Call**, inviting designers, students, creative makers, and thinkers to submit ideas for fostering belonging. A total of 56 ideas were submitted, and five winning concepts were selected to join the **Creative Collective Cohort**, where they receive support to further develop their ideas in collaboration with migrant women and present their concepts to key stakeholders.

This report focuses on the **Co-Creation Phase**, specifically the workshop activities conducted in Finland during April and May 2025, as part of **Work Package 8: Co-Creating Solutions in Finland (WP8)**.

REDESIGN BELONGING TIMELINE

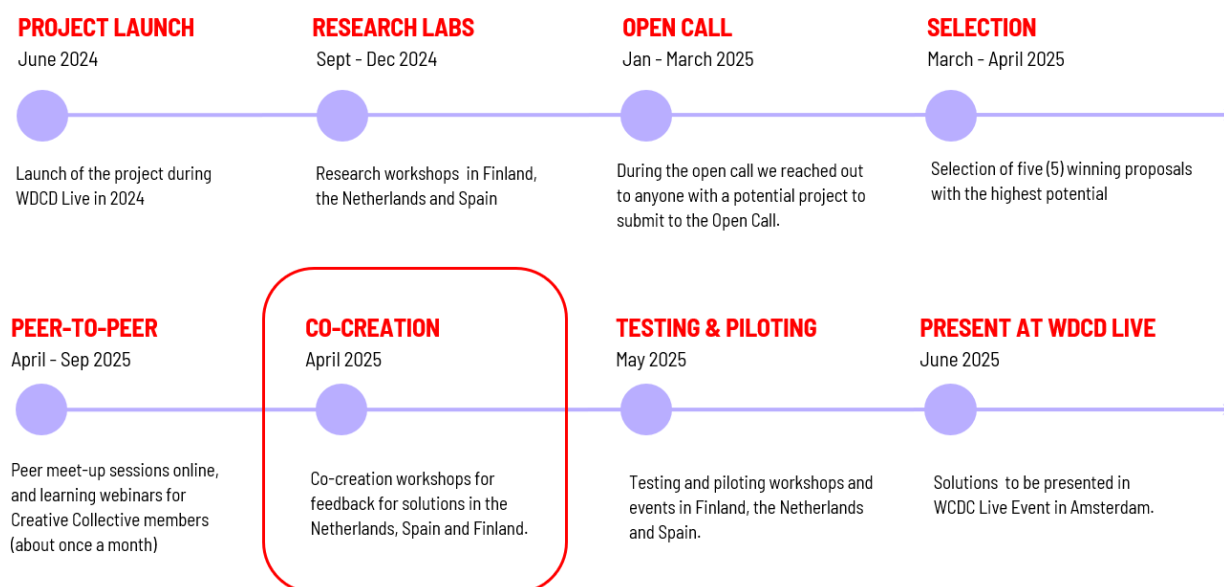


Figure 1: Redesign Belonging project timeline

2. Objectives of the work package

The primary objective of Work Package 8 (WP8) was to support the development and refinement of the Creative Collective members' ideas through meaningful engagement with migrant communities and other local residents. This was accomplished by organising a series of co-creation workshops in collaboration with various community groups and relevant organisations.

While the original plan was to hold two larger workshops, the approach was adjusted to better meet technical requirements and to foster broader inclusion of diverse communities. Instead, four smaller-scale workshops were held, allowing for more focused and responsive engagement.

Due to technical constraints and scheduling challenges, it was not possible to carry out the workshops in direct collaboration with migrant associations, as originally intended. Nonetheless, the workshops successfully brought together a range of participants whose insights enriched the process.

Each session was structured around specific challenges and questions identified by the Creative Collective members in relation to their initial concepts. The feedback gathered from migrant community members and other participants provided concrete input, enabling the project teams to further develop their ideas and enhance their relevance and applicability to the target audiences.

3. Workshops

In total four (4) workshops were organized during April and May 2025, reaching 76 participants in total:

Date	Location	Target groups	Project featured	Participants in total
10.4.2025	Laurea UAS, Leppävaara Campus, Espoo	Students & senior lecturers	Winadill	14
15.4.2025	Laurea UAS, Tikkurila Campus, Vantaa	Students & staff	Home? Belonging Short Stories	17
15.4.2025	Laurea UAS, Leppävaara Campus, Espoo	Students & staff	Winadill	31
15.5.2025	Service Interaction and Design Network, Helsinki	Members of the SID network	You Too Are a Wanderer	14
TOTAL				76

The workshops were tailored for each occasion with accordance to the target group, location, event type and the nature of feedback as requested by the concept owners. In general, workshop duration varied from 1-2 hours; the participants' engagement time varied from ca 15min for showroom format workshops (2) to ca 30min-1 hour for the facilitated workshops (2). On one occasion (Workshop 3: Showroom Leppävaara 15.4.2025), two members of the Finland-based project idea *Winadill* were present at the workshop.

The structure of the workshops as follows:

- The ReBel project and its aims were presented; the purpose of the workshop was communicated;
- One or two ideas submitted Creative Collective member was presented to workshop participants (individually or in a group);
- Participants answered the questions (individually or in a group) and recorded their answers;
- Structured feedback and ideas were collected for further development.

3.1. Workshop 1 – World Café 10.4.2025

The first workshop used a modified version of the *World Café* co-creation method, chosen for its simplicity and adaptability for larger groups. It was conducted at Laurea's Leppävaara campus as part of a service design course for hospitality management students. This dual-purpose workshop served both to gather input for the Winadill project and to provide students with a hands-on example of a design process in action.

In this workshop, Winadill served as a case project as it suited the participants' background and professional interest. *Winadill* is a digital service concept created by Tamara Mezina, Claudia Soares and Aleksandra Davydenko (Aleksandra left the project in May 2025) and addresses the challenge of finding employment in Finland (accentuated by the current political and economic climate), as well as other associated problems, such as non-recognition of qualifications, skills and work experience from abroad, lack of social networks, or a making use of free time (see report D3.1), experienced by many migrant women.

The idea supports micro-entrepreneurship among migrant women. It provides a platform to showcase skills and offer freelance services—from baking to photography—fostering local connections and economic empowerment. Furthermore, it facilitates networking and experience sharing among the women.

Although the Winadill team could not attend due to scheduling constraints, ReBel project facilitators presented the project and facilitated the session. The tables were arranged into three groups, each group provided with the case description and assigned with predefined questions, post-it notes, pens, and sweets. Contrary to the original World Café method where participants shift from table to table during the session, in this workshop the participants stayed in their groups for the whole duration of the workshop and focused on one set of questions. This workshop was facilitated by two facilitators from ReBel project and was organized as follows:



Figure 2: Overview of the World Café workshop setting (Photo: Suvi Valsta, participants have expressed their consent to being photographed)

Step 1: Welcome, project presentation & instructions

In the beginning, we introduced ReBel project, its objectives and process. This was followed by introducing the case project and explaining the World Café format. After that, the students and their lecturers were asked to move to three table clusters; each cluster equipped with pens, post-it notes, sweets (to keep the energy levels high), *Winadill* case description and four sheets of paper with predefined questions as follows:

Step 2: Discussion and recording the answers

The participants were instructed to discuss and write down their thoughts on four groups of questions on four canvases, using post-it notes. Each discussion round was timed, with a possibility for extending the time by a few minutes. This structure allowed us to observe the teams' dynamics and, if needed, allocate extra time for discussion.

Question groups were as follows:

Question group 1 (8 min + 2 min)

- What kind of services do you seek and use through different service platforms?
- How do you find these services? For example, what websites or apps do you use?

Question group 2 (5 min + 1 min)

- Have you had any challenges or problems finding and purchasing services? What kind?

Question group 3 (5 min + 1 min)

- What things do you find important for a service platform to feel reliable and secure?

Question group 4 (4 min + 2 min)

- Would you use such a service platform? If yes, please also tell us why? If no, why not?
- Would you recommend it to others? If you would recommend the service, please also tell us how (e.g. social media)? If you would not recommend it, why?

Step 3 – Summary

Each group shared key takeaways from their discussions, while one facilitator led the discussion and another took notes. In this workshop 2 students and 2 senior lecturers took part.

3.2. Workshop 2 – Showroom Tikkurila Campus 15.4.2025

A pop-up showroom was held at Laurea's Tikkurila campus during lunchtime to attract spontaneous participation from students and staff. Simultaneously, a similar workshop (Workshop 3) took place in Leppävaara Campus.

The workshop showcased the case project *Home? Stories of Belonging* by Sarah Binkowski (Italy), which addresses stereotyping and exclusion of migrant youth in Bolzano. The solution includes an ethnographic diary, a "Real Talk" card game, and a poster series—all tools designed to promote empathy and inclusive learning and to challenge social narratives. The game pack is to be distributed to youth centres and schools where it would be used as a tool for fostering reflection and mutual understanding, while a citywide poster campaign is to challenge societal narratives about migrant youth.



Figure 3: Showroom participants in Tikkurila Campus 15.4.2025 (Photo: Miia Seppänen, permission to photograph was granted by the participants)

The facilitators established a reception desk in the lounge area; one facilitator invited students and staff members to enter the showroom next door. The point of time was intentionally set for the lunch break (11.00-12.30), when the lounge and restaurant areas are particularly busy.

The Showroom workshop format is in many aspects similar to the World Café workshop, with the difference that the participants worked more independently and on their own pace and were not expected to interact with other participants but were welcome to do so. The participants were given an introduction of the case project by the facilitator; this was supplied by the posters more closely describing the idea and the challenges it aims to solve. Participants were then asked to give their comments, ideas and feedback to questions in writing on flip charts.

The four questions were:

Question 1: Belonging in university community

Share your experiences: What has fostered your belonging? What has challenged your sense of belonging?

This first question was meant as a warmup question and it was formulated intentionally adapted to university students and staff.

Question 2: Case Home? Belonging short stories

What kind of potential (e.g. other purposes, environments or target groups) do you come up with this solution?

Question 3: Digital format of the Real Talk Game

What kind of digital version of the card game would you want to use? E.g. platform, application, scalability to different devices. Or would you prefer only physical version?

Question 4: Free comments

If you have any special wishes or greetings to Sarah, the creator of this solution, please leave it here :)

This workshop attracted 17 participants in total. As a thank you, everyone received a voucher for the campus cafeteria.

3.3. Workshop 3: Showroom in Leppävaara Campus 15.4.2025

The workshop was organized simultaneously with Workshop 2 and featured the same format, a pop-up showroom. At this occasion, the Finland-based idea *Winadill* was selected; two members of the team were present besides one project member (facilitator) and actively participated in conducting the workshop.

Like in Tikkurila workshops, we established a desk in the campus' reception area with brief information about the event and actively invited passers-by (students and members of staff) to give feedback on four questions. As a compensation for their participation, the participants received a refreshment voucher for the cafeteria. The target number of participants was reached during the event, in total, and feedback was collected from 31 participants.

The facilitator and *Winadill* team members approached passersby, explained the purpose of the workshop, and if the person was willing to participate, the facilitator or a team member explained the idea and the questions to be asked. Posters with the project information were also available in the workshop premises. The questions were written on a whiteboard and on four sheets of paper spread on the desks in the workshop premises. The participants were asked to answer their questions on sticky notes on the appropriate sheet. The facilitators and team members would also spontaneously ask the participants about their impressions, or the participants would approach the team-members themselves with their comments and questions.

The questions, albeit intentionally broad, focused on the participants' current market behaviour as well as their overall impressions of the idea and considered the participants as platform users as the consumers of the services offered. Coincidentally, vast majority of participants were international students, which was reflected in the conversations and answers (in particular Q3 and Q4), where the participants also considered themselves as possible service providers on the platform.

Question 1: How do you search for services (e.g. hairdresser)?

Question 2: Would you use the Winadill platform? What services would you buy from there?

Question 3: Would you feel safe using such a platform? What would enhance your feeling of safety?

Question 4: Free comments

The answer sheets were then collected by the *Winadill* team members for further analysis.

3.4. Workshop 4: Workshop in Helsinki 15.5.2025

The fourth workshop was organized in conjunction with the Service Innovation and Design (SID) network (a network of current and former students of the Service Innovation and Design) as a part of SID's 2025 open event held on the premises of Futurice, a Helsinki based Business Innovation company. The workshop was parallel with another workshop in the event, with the aim of showcasing practical application of service design methodology and involving professional service designers in the co-creation efforts of the work package. Since the alumni network was based on an international study programme, many participants had migrant and international background, with some of them choosing to relocate and stay in Finland after their studies in the programme had ended.

In this workshop, the project *You Too Are a Wanderer* was showcased and a creative workshop co-designed with project designer and ReBel's Laurea facilitators, run by ReBel facilitators was conducted. The workshop featured a myth of a wanderer, from which workshop participants were instructed to think and process through drawing and writing their thoughts and feelings they felt after reading the myth that was prepared for them in the workshop materials. Before the myth drawing exercise, facilitators warmed up the participants with a few spontaneous drawing exercises, which is often necessary in these kinds of creative workshops if participants are not accustomed to the methods.



Figure 3: Participants of the SID Alumni Event co-drawing their individual experiences together (Photo: Suvi Valsta, permission to photograph was granted by the participants)

After the creative workshop had been run, participants were asked to reflect on their experiences and how they felt using creative methods, such as drawing, map their experiences of migration. Participants reflected that while the method also made them confused and they felt it was hard, they also felt they were "listening to others through their drawings" and that the experience was liberating, and they left feeling relaxed, happy, and more energetic from the workshop. Participants described they felt

connected to themselves and each other and that “creating something concrete together creates a sense of belonging to a group”.

4. Conclusions

Each workshop generated unique insights, which were synthesised and delivered to the respective case project teams in the form of PowerPoint slides or Miro boards. Since each concept idea had different objectives and challenges, both the questions and the workshop formats were tailored to meet their specific needs.

Overall, the participants responded positively to the opportunity to take part in the workshops. The World Café-style sessions were especially engaging due to their interactive format, also event participants in the showroom workshops reported feeling connected to the issues at hand. The creative workshop session was more open-ended in design and allowed participants to express their thoughts and opinions in free-form rather than in traditional workshop setting, but it was apparent that this style of workshop also made them think, and in conclusion that style of a workshop likely gave participants an alternative way to express themselves. Many expressed that they personally related to the challenges being addressed, and several highlighted that the theme of belonging was particularly timely and important.

The case project ideas received a wealth of constructive feedback, which has already begun to inform further development and refinement of the proposed solutions. Participants offered thoughtful observations from a range of perspectives, helping the case teams to identify both strengths and areas for improvement.

In total, WP8 “Co-creating Solutions” engaged 76 participants—matching our work package target—across three cities: Espoo, Vantaa, and Helsinki. The workshops brought together a diverse group of contributors, including students, university staff, professionals working in various design fields, and individuals with migrant backgrounds. This diversity enriched the discussions and ensured that a wide range of lived experiences and viewpoints were represented in the co-creation process.