

Shaping Intergenerational Futures



Aalto University
School of Arts, Design
and Architecture

Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 2025

Sushmita Charlu, Paul Grandchamp, Xuan Huang,
Warda Mohamed, Valeria Nova, and
Design for Government course at
Aalto University

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Methods	4
Insights	5
Ideation	9
Narrative for Change	10
Vision	11
Entry Points	12
Critical Reflection	15
Team Information	16
References	17
Appendix	18

Executive Summary

This project is the outcome of the 2025 Design for Government course at Aalto University, a practice-based collaboration where multidisciplinary student teams work with public sector partners to develop strategic responses to complex societal challenges. This year, our team partnered with the Ministry of Finance's Open Government Initiative to address the brief: "Open Government for an Age-Friendly Finland."

Currently, Finland is experiencing one of the fastest demographic transitions in the world: by 2030, over 26% of the population will be aged 65 or older (THL, n.d.). Meanwhile, a shrinking working-age population challenges the sustainability of public funding and service delivery. This shift places increasing pressure on healthcare, social services, infrastructure, and long-term care systems.

Despite their growing presence, older adults remain underrepresented in decision-making and future-oriented policy discussions. Dominant narratives continue to center younger and future generations—overlooking the reality that older adults will not only live in but help shape that future. This age-biased framing reinforces structural and cultural barriers to participation, weakens intergenerational solidarity and contributes to declining confidence in public institutions and the future itself.

At this pivotal moment, we see both a challenge and an opportunity: to redefine aging and reimagine the role of Open Government in shaping a more inclusive and future-ready society.

Our proposal responds by expanding the vision of Open Government beyond transparency, accountability, and participation to also emphasize intergenerational trust, inclusive foresight and shared agency. We advocate for embedding intergenerational dialogue and foresight as core design principles—reframing older adults not as passive recipients of services, but as co-creators of Finland's future alongside younger and future generations.

To achieve this, we recommend building upon existing mechanisms like the National Dialogues and the Action Plan, while introducing new practices that enable sustained cross-generational engagement.

We argue that adopting an intergenerational model of Open Government can promote mutual understanding, strengthen a collective sense of purpose and ensure that diverse voices shape the future of Finland. In doing so, Finland is uniquely positioned to lead globally in designing democratic systems—across governance healthcare, and the economy—that are both age-inclusive and future-ready. This approach could establish Finland as a global leader in building age-integrated societies, just as many countries confront similar demographic shifts in aging (Steinberg, 2025).



Methods

To identify opportunity areas in Open Government, we used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods: desk research, fieldwork, and close collaboration with our project partners.

Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 2025. Sushmita Charlu, Paul Grandchamp, Xuan Huang, Warda Mohamed, Valeria Nova, and Design for Government course at Aalto University

Desk Research

To understand elderly participation and open governance in Finland, we divided our desk research into four thematic work streams: 1) Open Government, 2) the Action Plan, 3) Elderly Participation Initiatives, and 4) the Ageing Population and Public Services. This distributed approach allowed us to comprehensively review policy documents, reports, academic literature and relevant online resources to identify patterns, gaps, and engagement models.

We also reviewed national and international case studies and trends in civic participation and intergenerational collaboration. These insights shaped our future-oriented vision and informed our proposal for inclusive civic engagement.

Field Research

We conducted 11 semi-structured interviews with public sector and civil society actors (Figure 1). The interviews addressed themes from our early research, such as trust, transparency, intergenerational participation, and shifting narratives in Open Government (see Appendix for interview themes and documentation). This helped us capture generational perspectives, identify systemic barriers, and uncover underutilized resources in the current Open Government model.

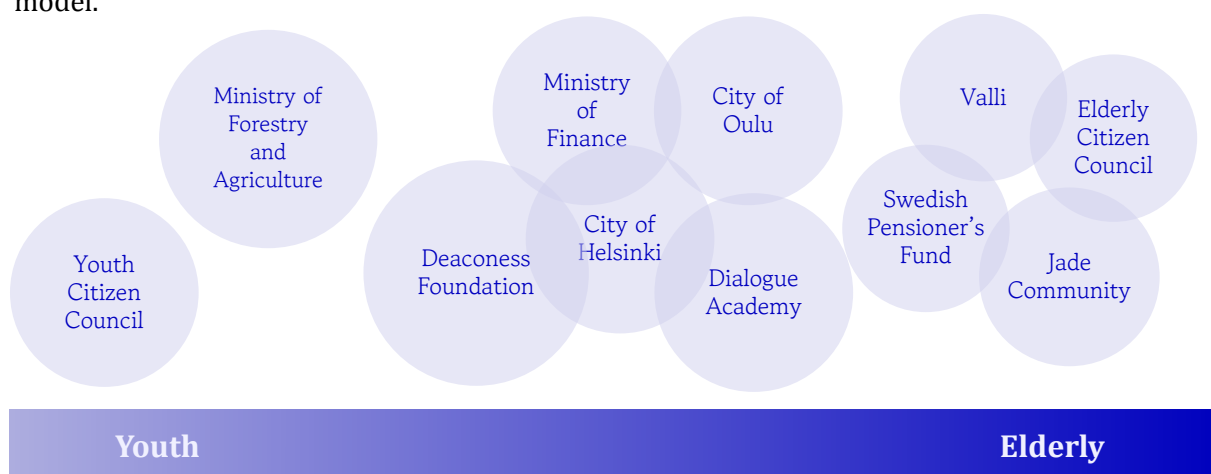


Figure 1: Interview sample spanning organizations from youth to elderly representation.

Collaborative Work with Project Partners

Partner collaboration was embedded throughout the project across three key phases:

- **Project Brief Roundtable Discussion:** An initial session to explore our partners' needs, clarify expectations, and align on project priorities.
- **Conceptual Framing Presentation:** A mid-point check in where we presented emerging findings and thematic insights, proposing a conceptual shift.
- **Ideation Session:** A co-creation session that invited feedback and new ideas to build on our insights and helped refine directions for further development.



Insights

The outcomes of our research were documented using digital collaborative tools and ideation boards. Key findings were collected and analyzed through thematic analysis and affinity diagramming, allowing us to cluster the information based on identified patterns and emergent themes to identify potential entry points.

This process resulted in the development of our core insights, in which we identified three opportunity areas: trust, common ground and perceptions of the future. The themes also prompted the need for alignment and shared agency across generations in participatory governance.



Trust

Trust in the government is higher in age groups where civic participation is backed by institutions.

Trust is essential for good governance, yet it is increasingly fragmented across all age groups. While the youth (13–17) and elderly (65+) tend to show relatively high trust in government, young adults (18–29) do not.

Youth (13–17): They demonstrate a strong belief in their ability to drive change. They are encouraged to engage with participatory tools like public budgeting for short-term initiatives and they are taught that voting is a powerful mechanism for influencing decision-making. Because they see immediate results from their involvement, their trust in government is reinforced. Organizations such as the Youth Citizens Council strengthen their sense of community and provide tangible opportunities to influence policy changes.

Young Adults (18–29): This group tends to be more silent and disconnected. Frequent relocation and shifting life priorities often weaken their attachment to their hometowns and communities.

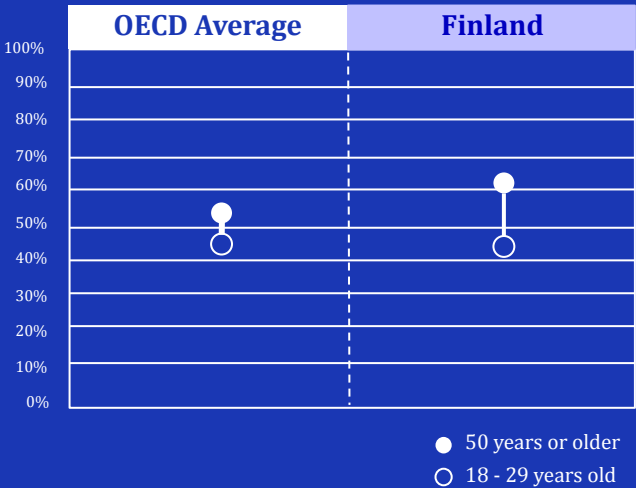
Additionally, they lack formal organizations that represent their specific concerns and many view traditional political mechanisms, particularly voting, as ineffective.

“The Youth Council was set up to give a voice to those who couldn’t yet vote.”

— Youth Citizens Council, 2025

Elderly (65+): They have a strong trust in government and recognize that although public demands may take time to be addressed, institutions will eventually respond. They see voting as the most important tool for shaping policy. However, their trust may be at risk due to increasing digitalization of government services, which they often find confusing or insecure. Experiences with scams and complex platforms make them more cautious and potentially less engaged.

"People believe those influencing the internet. If there is no voting there is no democracy."
— Elderly Citizens Council, 2025



Source: OECD Survey On Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions - 2024
Results © OECD 2024

A higher share of older (52%) compared to younger people (32%) have high or moderately high trust in the national government, which places the Finnish age trust gap far above the OECD average of 7 percentage points. (OECD, 2024)

Trust between generations and across CSOs remains a challenge. While each group or association considers itself an expert on issues that affect them directly, there is a growing need to identify when intergenerational and cross-sectoral dialogue is essential, especially for decisions that impact everyone.

Opportunity 1:

The third commitment of the Open Government Action Plan (2023-2027) recommends sharing good practices and methods to strengthen the participation of children and young people. By building on the influence of this document and harnessing the momentum of the 2025 refreshment period, its scope can be broadened to ensure that different age groups are represented.

2

Common Ground

Groups have distinct goals that can interlock into collective opportunities.

Generational polarization creates barriers to collaboration, particularly when it comes to sensitive issues like pensions, housing, and healthcare. Civil Society Associations such as the Swedish-speaking Pensioner's Alliance have expressed frustration with the lack of intergenerational dialogue in crucial discussions, especially regarding pension reforms. The sense that some issues belong to specific age groups often drives resistance to intergenerational collaboration. When groups close their agendas, focusing solely on issues that they believe are relevant to their own demographics, they dismiss opportunities to establish common ground.

“There’s a need to understand each other better. A common ground could be found through shared themes.”

—Swedish Pensioners fund

However, common ground can be found on big picture issues such as loneliness, public infrastructure, digitalization, and climate change. While these might affect generations in different ways, a collective approach could help ensure actionability and effectiveness.

The analysis of these findings align with Donella Meadows’ systems thinking framework, and in particular the phenomenon of “policy resistance” (Meadows, 2008). It describes a systems trap where policies, even if well-intentioned, encounter resistance from actors within the system, leading to unintended consequences and a return to the original problem. To counter this, Meadows suggests bringing together all the actors and using the energy previously expended on resistance to seek out mutually satisfactory ways for goals to be realized.

“There are issues connecting the different generations, including accessibility, COVID-19, climate change & infrastructure planning.”

—Elderly Citizens Council, 2025

Opportunity 2:

Create spaces and moments for intergenerational empathy and exchange, helping generations envision how their specific and immediate concerns would fit within larger shared issues that affect everyone (e.g. climate change, economic inequality, loneliness).

3

Future Perceptions

Our future is shared yet its outlook across generations is understood differently.

“We are the Future.”

— Youth Citizens Council, 2025

The concept of “the future” is not universally understood; it depends on the perception of time which differs greatly from generation to generation. While the distant future is often framed as being shaped by younger or future generations, they’re often more focused on decisions that feel more immediate and personal, spanning just months or a few years.

Meanwhile, older generations are often absent from discussions about shaping that same future, despite their tendency to think in longer time frames such as retirement or the legacy they will leave behind.

“The elderly have a future too... A 30 year gap between 65-95 is a lifetime.”

— Elderly Citizens Council, 2025

This generational discrepancy influences how they relate to societal change, policy, and planning. For younger people, this might take the form of “fast-food participation”—a desire for immediate impact—which can lead to eroded trust when change doesn’t come quickly. Ultimately, the power to define the future—in terms of its temporal outlook—influences not only what is seen as possible or desirable, but also the processes of engagement and the decisions we make right now.

“

“In general, discussion on the future is reserved for those leading society. However, we need ideas from all elements of society to build a good and dignified future for all.”

—Deaconess Foundation, 2025

Opportunity 3:

Finland’s emphasis on future work and anticipatory governance, as demonstrated in the Open Government Action Plan (2023-2027) and reported in the OECD’s Anticipatory Innovation Governance Model in Finland (2022), reflects a desire to align policy with long-term societal needs. This opens an opportunity to explore how diverse temporal and generational perspectives could substantiate these efforts.



Ideation

The insights were presented to our project partners from the Ministry of Finance, sparking new ideas for supporting intergenerational collaboration while recognizing the need to strengthen trust, common understanding and future vision alignment. The results of the analysis are presented in Figure 2.

Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 2025. Sushmita Charlu, Paul Grandchamp, Xuan Huang, Warda Mohamed, Valeria Nova, and Design for Government course at Aalto University



Figure 2: Thematic analysis of the ideation session with project partners.

Key Ideas from the Analysis Included:

- Adopting a life-course perspective of civic engagement across all stages of life.
- Involving older adults in mentorship and career guidance for younger generations.
- Promoting intergenerational projects to encourage shared ownership.
- Building new tools to complement National Dialogues to drive concrete actions.
- Creating celebratory moments and formats for connection and empathy building.
- Building a common ground for different generations where collective imagination moves towards the future.

Narrative for Change

In response to our research, we propose to expand the role of Open Government beyond its traditional focus on transparency, participation, and accountability, toward a model that actively prioritizes intergenerational trust, security, and confidence in the future. At the heart of this reframing is the integration of inclusive foresight and intergenerational dialogue as core principles of Open Government. This approach calls for more than procedural openness but for structural inclusivity, cultural responsiveness, and long-term imagination.

This shift is also supported by recent findings showing that while Finns generally perceive their society as fair, trust in institutions is not evenly distributed. The OECD's *Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions in Finland* (2021) report finds that intergenerational mobility has slowed, and certain groups, particularly those from immigrant or marginalized backgrounds, may feel that policies have left them behind. Furthermore, the Sitra *Future Barometers Report* (2025) found that only 15% of Finns believe they can influence the future of municipal decision-making, exposing a significant gap between democratic ideals and lived reality. To uphold fairness and trust, Open Government must address these gaps through stronger intergenerational dialogue and structural reforms that prevent exclusion across all life stages.

Thus, rather than treating older adults as passive recipients of public services, we recenter them as essential contributors to democratic and pluralistic futures. We shift the question from “How can we get more citizens to engage?” to “Whose visions of the future are missing?—and what patterns, structures, and narratives determine who feels entitled, empowered, or even allowed to participate?” By acknowledging and addressing the cultural and systemic barriers that exclude older populations from government and futures-oriented processes, we reimagine Open Government as a platform for shared agency, care, and responsibility across generations.

Greater Confidence in the Future

Connecting generations to build trust and ownership of what comes next



Intergenerational dialogue becomes normalized



Legacy thinking and long-term planning are valued



Lived experience and wisdom are honored



Institutionalized intergenerational participation



Funding for long-term, multigenerational initiatives



Age-inclusive design in civic spaces and engagement tools

Intergenerational Futures Narrative

Reframing futures work to include youth and those we've left out

Vision

We envision a future where Open Government champions intercultural, intergenerational agency and fosters shared ownership over our collective future.

We propose an intergenerational model that promotes mutual understanding through dialogue and civic engagement. By building trust across generations, this approach will foster a collective sense of purpose and hope for the future. It also ensures that diverse voices, particularly those of older adults, are actively involved in shaping the future of Finland. This rethinks the current approach to transparency, participation, and accountability by shifting from information delivery (through action plans and dialogues) towards genuine co-creation and inclusiveness. It addresses the growing disconnect between the public institutions and citizen groups, particularly the elderly population and those who feel unseen or unheard in the decision-making process.

≡ Guiding Principles



Dialogue as the basis for intergenerational trust

Our research suggests that trust grows when generations and institutions come together to listen and learn from one another. To set the context for common understanding, a shared space for the experience of older generations and the ideas of younger generations is required. This approach fosters mutual understanding, values elders as contributors, and empowers youth to influence policy while strengthening empathy across age groups.



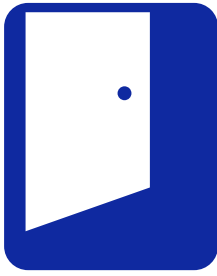
Expanding the Open Government's toolkits

Finland already has a strong set of Open Government tools which are designed to foster transparency and participation. Building on this solid foundation, we propose initiatives and participatory formats that move towards more dynamic, collaborative settings where people of different backgrounds and age groups can explore challenges and imagine solutions.



Lived experience as a resource for strategic foresight

Foresight activities often focus on expert opinions and might overlook the everyday realities of citizens. Lived experiences can offer essential insights into how policy decisions play out in real life. Open Government can approach foresight more holistically and make decisions that are more inclusive, resilient, and grounded in real-life understanding to ensure that everyone, regardless of age or background, has a meaningful role in shaping what comes next.



Entry Points

Using the outcomes from the ideation session with the Ministry of Finance’s Open Government team, we identified two entry points aligned with our narrative for change and rooted in our guiding principles. We build on them, first, by utilizing existing mechanisms that already exist; and second, by pioneering new initiatives that invite even broader participation.

Utilizing Existing Mechanisms

Action Plan

National
Dialogues

Pioneering New Initiatives

Futurethon

Utilizing Existing Initiatives

As stated previously, Open Government Finland has an existing set of effective and well-established mechanisms that can be leveraged to achieve our desired shift—an intergenerational culture that is collaborative, inclusive, and oriented toward building a shared future. We identified The Action Plan and the National Dialogues as some of the most relevant mechanisms toward this end.



“During this refresh, the IRM recommends the Ministry of Finance to tap into the collective expertise of the Open Government working group and the new Open Democracy network to raise the ambition of the commitments and develop measurable outcome-level indicators to monitor their progress.”

—OGP Independent Review Mechanism (Open Government Partnership, 2024)

The Action Plan

The Action Plans are the core component of the International Open Government Partnership. Finland has chosen to organize Action Plans that follow a 4-year cycle with a refresh period every 2 years.

The current Open Government Action Plan Finland (2023-2027) is in its refresh period (2025). This presents a timely and powerful opportunity to work on how an intergenerational culture can continually embrace Open Government principles in everyday work.



Source: Cottonbro Studio, pexels.com

Intergenerational Consultations

The commitments for the current Action Plan were created after gathering input from a number of CSOs and government institutions at events such as the National CSO Academy, dedicated meetings across Finland, online surveys, and discussions in the OGP Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF). There is merit in dedicating a focused duration of time to bring various actors from different generations into the same room to review and co-create the Action Plan.

Intergenerational Councils

Establishing intergenerational councils as part of the consultation process can offer valuable perspectives, drawing on a diverse range of lived experiences. This approach broadens the dialogue beyond the viewpoints typically represented—often limited to civil servants or stakeholders from specific age groups or social strata—and allows for a more inclusive examination of short-, mid-, and long-term futures. Such diversity can meaningfully inform the development of a future-oriented and aging-friendly Action Plan.

Youth and young adults who are statistically less active in civic life and have low presence at public in-person events, have low awareness of the Open Government initiative.

Open Government Finland has a “Good Practices” section on their website to showcase work that is being done on the ground that is aligned with Open Government principles.

Allowing these engagement channels to be embedded on contributors’ own platforms, such as their websites, blogs, or social media accounts, and encouraging them to share updates on social media can significantly increase the visibility of Open Government initiatives, especially among younger audiences who are more active on these platforms.

“We need more than an Open Government bible. We need to root the principles in our everyday work.”
—Participation Expert, City of Helsinki

Channels to Spark Action

There is no dearth of significant work that is happening on the ground that already aligns with Open Government objectives. However, these are detached from Open Government “branding” and do not appear to have an obvious relation to Open Government Finland. In the current system, feedback is sought from the different stakeholders, including civil servants, who are a part of the Open Government Working group. There is an opportunity to go beyond feedback, to channeling action.

The National Dialogues

The National Dialogues are highly effective in making voices heard. There is an opportunity to take these dialogues to the next level by using them to build a collective voice about future aspirations and a space for intentionally building common ground.

“It’s about the moment of participation, to feel invited and heard.”
—Representative, Open Government Finland

The dialogues could bring together mixed groups including decision-makers, companies, communities and individuals coming from different moments and milestones in their life.

“To have more mixed groups and more formats where decision-makers can meet with citizens could have a huge impact. We need to scale-up the model.”
—Representative, Dialogues Academy

Making the mode of the dialogues intergenerational can help shift the discourse from only the present, to midterm and long-term futures. This directly aligns with Open Government Finland’s goal of using the outcomes in their foresight reports.

“We will utilize the National Dialogues and their results as part of the Government’s futures work, for example in the preparation of foresight reports.”
—Open Government Action Plan, 2023-2027

Pioneering New Initiatives

During our ideation session, one idea stood out: the *Futurethon*. Inspired by the format of traditional hackathons—which typically draw participation from younger adults in focused, timebound, and competitive environments—we propose reimagining these events as inclusive, intergenerational spaces.

“Most Finns believe that we can influence the future – this is a resource for Finland that we could be utilizing better.”
— Sitra Future Barometers Report, 2025

The National Futurethon

Rather than centering only youth, the *Futurethon* would invite older adults to participate as equal contributors, leveraging their lived experience and untapped wisdom and creative potential. This event is not just about solving problems but about building confidence, reshaping perceptions of aging, and demonstrating that older adults have both a stake and a role to play in shaping what comes next.

Since the National Dialogues are a successful model that showcase ownership and civic engagement through discourse. The National Futurethon would complement this effort through hands-on co-creation, bringing different generations together to imagine their shared futures by working on tangible solutions.

We envision that the National Futurethon would follow the same decentralized model as the National Dialogues, with Civil Society Organizations and Government Institutions as the permanent organizers. The difference however, is that these Futurethons would take place at the same time all over Finland as a way to build momentum and focused urgency.



Work on common goals



Strengthened intergenerational dialogue



Creative civic participation



Democratized foresight



Creates a sense of urgency



Increased confidence in ability to shape the future

Examples of this approach can be found internationally. For instance, Taiwan hosts a presidential hackathon every year, using Open data to address social challenges. This open challenge champions interdisciplinary participation.



Source: Taiwan Presidential Office

Critical Reflection

Working on this project has profoundly shaped our understanding of the often invisible dynamics of age and power in society. Early on, we recognized a deep tension between generations over the future and aimed to take an empathetic approach, framing aging as a shared human experience rather than as a burden or societal cost. As we began conducting interviews, it became clear that we had struck a chord. There was not only a strong emotional response to the exclusion of older adults from future narratives but also a deeper realization: the way we talk about the future shapes how we design for it. Narratives about who the future is *for* influence structural participation mechanisms, shape behavioral patterns, and even contribute to phenomena like declining confidence in the future. From that point onward, our work became about fitting the pieces together, uncovering how these underlying assumptions have contributed to generational divides, systemic exclusion, and missed opportunities for collective futures thinking.

Applying systems thinking and an iterative narrative approach helped us reframe this issue in a way that felt both compelling and emotionally resonant, a tactic we found particularly useful at a more upstream, political level. While we couldn't pursue every thread, especially regarding the exclusion of other marginalized groups such as immigrants or people with disabilities, we saw the intergenerational approach as a strategic entry point for broader inclusion. In this sense, intergenerational futures work is more than a thematic proposal but a stress test of Open Government itself. It challenges short-termism and surface-level solutions; asking whether current efforts, like separate Elderly or Youth Citizens' Councils, truly shift the system or merely manage its symptoms.

So, whose future of Finland are we really building? If some citizens do not feel seen, valued, and a part of that future, then it threatens the trust, security, and confidence that Open Government seeks to build. As one of the world's fastest aging societies, we believe that Finland must challenge the ageist assumption that the future belongs to the young by adopting an intergenerational model grounded in inclusion, trust, and shared responsibility.

By building on tools like the Open Government Action Plan and the National Dialogues, and introducing new initiatives such as the Futurethon, Finland has proven means of redefining civic participation as a lifelong right and responsibility. The question then no longer becomes whether older adults belong in futures work or not, but how we can design systems that recognize their relevance, value their insights, and support their ongoing contributions to the future of Finland.

While intergenerational collaboration has been positively received as a concept, translating it into practice presents a far more complex challenge. Bridging generations requires intentional design, facilitation expertise, and a deep sensitivity to the nuances of age and lived realities. Convening a representative intergenerational council and establishing clear, inclusive processes is no small undertaking. Lastly, we realize that the Futurethon, the most exciting intervention, is also the most ambitious and resource intensive, dependent on private sector sponsorship and know-how for successful implementation. As we hand off this proposal to our partners, we look forward to seeing how they build upon these ideas and resources to further advance Open Government in Finland.

Here's to our shared future!



Sushmita Charlu
Collaborative and
Industrial Design
sushmita.charlu@aalto.fi



Paul Grandchamp
Creative Sustainability (Design)
paul.grandchamp@aalto.fi



Xuan Huang
Environmental Design
Creative Sustainability (Design)
huangxuan0112@gmail.com



Warda Mohamed
Collaborative and
Industrial Design
warda.mohamed@aalto.fi



Valeria Nova
Creative Sustainability (Design)
valeria.novacazares@aalto.fi

References

Deaconess Foundation. (2025, May 15). *Participatory Futures Work*. Deaconess Foundation. Diakonissalaitos. <https://www.hdl.fi/en/participatory-futures-work/>

Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). (n.d.). *Ageing Policy*. Retrieved May 28, 2025, from <https://thl.fi/en/topics/ageing/ageing-policy>

Meadows, Donella H. (2008). *Thinking in systems*. Chelsea Green Publishing.

OECD. (2021). *Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions in Finland*. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/drivers-of-trust-in-public-institutions-in-finland_52600c9e-en.html

OECD. (2024). *OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions 2024 Results - Country Notes: Finland*. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-survey-on-drivers-of-trust-in-public-institutions-2024-results-country-notes_a8004759-en/finland_596ba5da-en.html

Open Government Finland. (2023). *Action Plan 2023-2027*. https://avoinhallinto.fi/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Action-plan_Open-Gov-Finland_2023-2027.pdf

Open Government Partnership. (2024, March 28). *Finland Action Plan Review 2023-2027*. <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/finland-action-plan-review-2023-2027/>

Sitra. (2025). *Future Barometers Report*. Sitra.fi. <https://www.sitra.fi/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/sitra-tulevaisuusbarometri-2025.pdf>

Steinberg, Marco. (2025). *Working towards an age-friendly Finland* [Lecture]. Design for Government Final Show, Aalto University.

Appendix

Glossary

Action Plan

Toimintaohjelma

Outlines a country's commitments and objectives for promoting open government principles.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Civil society organizations are indispensable actors in the OGP process. May include community groups, non-governmental organizations, think tanks, advocacy groups, labor unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, foundations, and individuals.

Entry Point

Is a strategic place within a system that unlocks new opportunities towards the proposed direction of change.

Foresight

Ennakointi

The ability to predict what will happen or be needed in the future.

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM)

Is an independent body guided by but not directly accountable to, the Steering Committee of the Open Government Partnership. An International Experts Panel (IEP) directly oversees the IRM.

Intergenerational

Sukupolvien välinen

Relating to, involving, or affecting several generations.

National Dialogues

Kansalliset dialogit

Is a way of carrying out societal dialogue in cooperation between citizens, communities, and authorities.

Open Government

Avoin hallinto

Promotes transparency by ensuring public access to information and services, and fosters a responsive governance culture that is responsive to new ideas, evolving needs, and diverse perspectives.

OGP multi-stakeholder forum

A space for participation in the development and review of the Action Plan during the co-creation process.



Figure 2: Thematic analysis of the ideation session with project partners.

Interview Context Notes

Interview with Youth Citizens Council 2025

Q: How do you support young people in communicating their proposals to the government?

A: The Youth Council was set up to give a voice to those who couldn't yet vote.

Q: What does the future mean to you?

A: We are the Future. We youth are the ones who make the future.

Engagements with Elderly Citizens Council 2025

Q: What emerging trends do you see shaping the future of Open Government in Finland?

A: People believe those influencing the internet. If there is no voting there is no democracy.

Q: Is there a room—or need for stronger intergenerational alliances within elderly advocacy?

A: There are issues connecting the different generations, including accessibility, COVID-19, climate change & infrastructure planning.

Q: Through the HECC and Senior Influencers, you collaborate with several other organizations to advocate for older adults' rights. So, what key issues do you believe should be prioritized in your advocacy work this year?

A: The elderly have a future too... A 30 year gap between 65-95 is a lifetime.

Interview with Swedish Pensioners' Fund

Q: Is there a room—or need for stronger intergenerational alliances within advocacy? How might SPF and younger generations collaborate to co-create more inclusive civic structures or mutual campaigns?

A: There's a need to understand each other better. A common ground could be found through shared themes.

Interview with Participation Expert, City of Helsinki

Q: In your experience, how has the Action Plan translated to on ground action

A: We need more than an Open Government bible. We need to root the principles in our everyday work.

Engagements with Open Government Finland, Ministry of Finance (Roundtable)

Q: *In context of discussing the effectiveness of the National Dialogues*

A: It's about the moment of participation, to feel invited and heard.

Interview Research Themes

Organization: Deaconess Foundation

Aim: Best practices for intergenerational exchange and participation. Understanding strategies for social inclusion.

Keywords: intergenerational culture, common ground, agency, participatory futures, open governance

Organization: Dialogue Academy

Aim: Explore what are the main challenges and opportunities today in participation and dialogue in Finland, how to access diversity in participants.

Keywords: organizational mechanisms, National dialogues, diversity, impact, intergenerational dialogue, future perspectives

Organization: Helsinki Elderly Citizens Council

Aim: Understand how the Helsinki Elderly Citizens Council represents diverse elderly needs through collaboration with civil society organizations.

Keywords: housing, care service provision, Elderly Ombudsman, senior influencers, intergenerational culture, civil society organizations

Organization: Helsinki municipality

Aim: Understand methods, challenges and impact of participatory approaches at the municipal level and the roles of civic society in shaping age-friendly governance.

Keywords: inclusive participation, collaboration, Open Government

Organization: Helsinki Youth Council

Aim: The focus is to understand how trust, intergenerational justice, and perceptions or biases shape engagement for youth. We want to investigate attitudes towards inclusion, dialogue, and open government. Exploring the Possibilities of cross-age collaboration between youth and elderly.

Keywords: youth participation, intergeneration, decision-making, diversity

Organization: Jade Community

Aim: Explore the strategies to support aging immigrants in Finland, their collaboration networks and grassroot initiatives to amplify elderly immigrant voices in civic participation.

Keywords: aging immigrants, communication, empowerment, civic engagement

Organization: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Aim: To understand how elderly and youth in rural areas perceive participation, what challenges they face, and how their voices can be better included in decision-making.

Keywords: inclusion, intergenerational participation, trust, *open government

Interview Research Themes

Organization: Ministry of Finance

Aim: Learn about the process of Action Plan implementation, Open Government upstream and downstream interventions, Oulu success.

Keywords: trust, civic engagement, open government, incentives and motivations

Organization: Oulu Municipality

Aim: We want to explore how the City of Oulu is approaching Open Government in the context of becoming a more age-friendly and inclusive city. We are particularly interested in understanding how participation, civic engagement, and intergenerational perspectives are or could be integrated into local governance.

Keywords: inclusion, civic engagement, participation, intergenerational

Organization: Swedish Pensioner's Fund

Aim: Understand how SPF and other CSOs advocate for older adults in governance, and how it envisions intergenerational collaboration strengthening democratic participation and social equity.

Keywords: advocacy, pensioners, intergenerational

Organization: Valli Ry

Aim: Understand best practices for intergenerational exchange and participation as well as strategies for social inclusion.

Keywords: social inclusion, intergenerational, participation, age-friendly