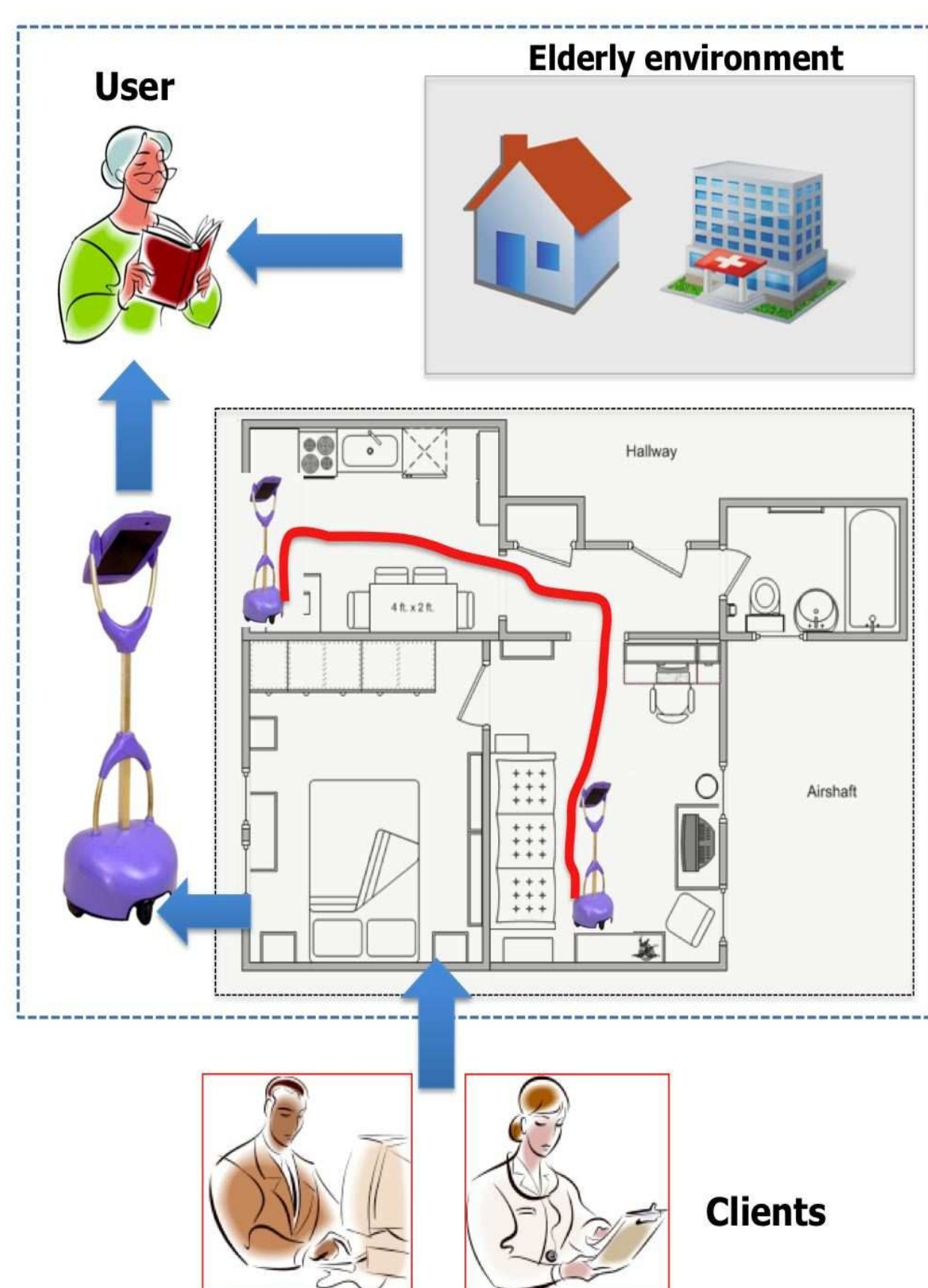# ExCITE

Enabling Social Interaction Through Embodiment

The **main objective** of ExCITE is to evaluate user requirements for social interaction through robotic telepresence. This evaluation is performed in situ, on a Pan European scale and with a longitudinal perspective. An existing prototype called the **Giraff** is deployed to the targeted end users, and is refined by tightly coupling the users and designers in the development cycles of the prototype throughout the project.

Tilt screen

Wide viewing angle

Adjustable height stalk

Impact resistance circular base

The Giraff

The Giraff is a device that allows caregivers with little computer experience to virtually enter a home and conduct a natural visit just as if they were physically there.

The Giraff unit consists of a screen and web camera, microphone and speaker that are mounted on a tilt unit attached to the robotic base.

On one end, there is a 163 cm high robot and on the other end there is a client interface from which a remote clients can pilot the robot while speaking through a microphone and a web camera.

The Giraff also has its own charging station to which the remote clients docks before terminating a call.

Central to the project is the **long term evaluation** of Giraff that is achieved via the **test sites**. In these test sites the Giraff unit is deployed to an end-users home or an elderly residence. Feedback from the users is used to refine the prototype. Below are three different generations of Giraffs with changes to functionality and appearance.

ExCITE Consortium

Örebro University, Sweden - Coordinating partner, Experimental Setup, Validation and Management

Giraff Technologies AB, Sweden - Giraff manufacturer, Prototype Deployment and Refinement

Consiglio Nazionale delle Richerche (ISTC-CNR), Italy - User Evaluations

Ratio Consulta, Italy - Communication and Infrastructure Development

University of Malaga, Spain - Improvement of Giraff Mobility and interface

Örebro City Council, Sweden - Dissemination and Exploitation

Technical improvements have been implemented following concerns of the users and to overcome the technical difficulties encountered in long term tests. Two examples are:
(a) new remote control that allows the elderly to call a pre-selected client user (call out user) but also to respond or deny a call.
(b) a database management system for users which allows care organizations to manage Giraffs and users and enables the creation of Giraff identities. It further allows for different permission settings e.g. emergency access.