

LIVING LABS: Main Elements

- **Cooperation and Participation** – Cooperation between users, public and private organisations and research institutes regarding innovation.
- **Openness** – Open innovation processes to include suppliers, customers and competitors, and to attract users and stakeholders at all stages.
- **Technology** – Information and communication technology enables innovative new products and service solutions, as well as collaborative and shared environments for distributed development.
- **User involvement** – User involvement is a key element of Living Labs. This includes both experimentation and methodology.

IMPACT AND BENEFITS

Living Labs enable users to participate in the entire innovation process, from concept generation to development and testing, thus ensuring that highly appreciated and reliable products and services, desired by the users, enter the market. New and improved research and user interaction methodologies are adopted.

REDUCTION OF TECHNOLOGY AND BUSINESS RISK

The Living Labs methodology and approach are good for SMEs and start-ups as they can share resources without the need for substantial venture capital, and large companies gain access to a broader base of ideas.

LIVING LAB DEFINITION

Living Labs comprise an organised set of methods and stakeholders that focus on user involvement, user-centric research methodology for sensing, prototyping and validating solutions in evolving, real-life contexts.

MEMBER PARTNERS ARE:

- Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems (VINNOVA) Coordinator
- Danish Council for Strategic Research (DASTI)
- Finnish Innovation Fund (SITRA)
- The Icelandic Centre for Research (RANNIS)
- Investment and Development Agency of Latvia (LIAA)
- Information Society Development Committee, Lithuania (ISDC)
- The Research Council of Norway (RCN)

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Innovative minds of the North, unite!



A Nordic-Baltic programme on Living Labs.
Funding research and innovation.

LIVING LABS IN THE NORTH

Seven countries in the Nordic-Baltic region have joined an initiative named LILAN (Living Labs in the North), financed by NordForsk. The objective of this initiative is to establish Nordic-Baltic cooperation and a joint research and innovation (R&I) project funding programme in the field of Living Labs.

LILAN wants to enhance innovation by empowering users. LILAN also seeks to increase the competitiveness of organisations and improve people's quality of life. This is done through funding of R&I projects involving people in everyday situations together with a structured setting of openly collaborating companies, researchers and public authorities.

Today, companies are faced with the challenge of being globally competitive and at the same time addressing the trends of individualisation. Industry needs new business models and innovation methods to remain successful. Correspondingly, consumers are faced with an information society, where options are overwhelming and their choices influence not only their own well-being, but also the state of the planet.

One way of meeting this challenge is developing new products and services rooted in a wider market and offering solutions that meet people's needs and are in harmony with desirable behaviour. The LILAN initiative is convinced that the Nordic-Baltic region has the characteristics on which such development can be built.

WHY CONNECT LIVING LABS ACROSS BOARDERS?

Living Labs connect people and organisations, and empower them to create, change and improve. Often, the problems faced are not limited to national borders, nor is the right expertise. Living Labs provide the opportunity to access user groups in other countries and platforms to build new markets. These are strong incentives to increase the possibility of wider collaboration and cross-border research and innovation development projects.

The trends are clear and an infrastructure of Living Labs has already been built up. The European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL) comprises of 129 different existing Living Labs, which have committed to sharing experiences and developing new ways of collaborating.



WHY A LIVING LAB?

The Living Lab concept originated at the MediaLab and School of Architecture and City Planning MIT in Boston. The Living Lab is a forum for research and innovation applied to the development of new products, services and contents. It employs approaches to involve users in the entire development process and recognises the needs of users and the working conditions of service providers. By nature, the Living Lab is open and objective with regard to technologies and business models.

The member countries of LILAN have shared challenges and common stakeholders, and there is major potential to share experiences and build upon the work of others. This is the background of why this joint effort was undertaken.

IMPORTANT REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- People's positive attitude towards participating and sharing experiences.
- High adoption of new technologies.
- Strong design traditions, especially functional design.
- Strong government R&D support and a tradition of democracy and equality.
- High general level of education.