

PRESS RELEASE:**THE NORDIC-BALTIC PROGRAMME ON LIVING LABS TURNS AMBITIONS INTO ACTION WITH FUNDING**

As a Nordic country takes over the EU presidency, the program of Living Labs in the North (LILAN) will turn ambitions into action. Key stakeholders in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Iceland have already dedicated themselves to jointly fund research and development via a selected mechanism for innovation called Living Labs. There is now a budget of around €2 million to strengthen collaboration in the five Nordic countries as well as in the Baltic countries Lithuania and Latvia. In the autumn of 2009 the program will be ready to receive proposals for financing from organisations and ready for strategic cross-border collaboration with other Nordic-Baltic countries.

The initiative's objective is to create actual cross-border innovative work by promoting projects in line with the concept of Living Labs. The initiative will empower organisations to share innovations, to develop ideas and engage people in their everyday context in the innovation process.

To do this a consortium of research and innovation organisations in the region has established a research and innovation programme to call for proposals of funding in collaboration with NordForsk. Living Labs applies a specific methodology for User Driven Innovation and provides a forum within the field for the development of new products, services and processes. Living Labs will encourage co-operation and co-creation between research and development industry and the public sector and work across organisations, sectors and countries.

Under current circumstances in the world economy it is imperative for organisations to be innovative and sensitive to users' needs to decrease development costs and increase income. It is the belief of the consortium partners that Living Labs will provide the necessary tools for organisations of the region to create value by providing new solutions, products, services and business models.

The full programme description, guidelines for applicants and the call text are available for consultation on the LILAN web site www.lilan.org.

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