Guidelines for LDE Program Climate and Biodiversity Projects - 2026

What is the mission of the LDE Program Climate and Biodiversity?

We believe today's challenges on climate change and biodiversity loss should be approached together. The mission of the LDE Program Climate and Biodiversity is to stimulate practice-oriented research and education at this nexus — working towards a more just and liveable planet. We act as a knowledge hub, connecting researchers and educators from the Leiden-Delft-Erasmus universities with societal partners. Through our growing network, we organize activities that link existing initiatives and foster new collaborations. We also initiate practice-oriented research and education around climate and biodiversity in Living Labs, by providing Seed Funds and hosting interdisciplinary Thesis Labs. In doing so, we support projects and initiatives that align with our program's guidelines and contribute to our shared mission.

What is our perspective on Living Labs?

From our perspective, a Living Lab is a place-based, user-centered approach to practice-oriented research and education conducted in a real-life context. It brings together researchers, students, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and other societal partners in transdisciplinary collaborations to co-create, test, and evaluate innovative solutions for climate and biodiversity challenges. By connecting science and society in concrete settings, Living Labs foster experimentation and learning that potentially contribute to transformative changes towards a more just and livable planet.

What are our X Guidelines of Practice-oriented Research and Education?

I. Focus on the nexus
Project objectives address the interconnected challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss.

II. Place-based learning
Projects are rooted in a physical outdoor location (e.g. regions, landscapes, cities, or communities) or living lab (e.g. Green Village, Polderlab, Buurtlab070, Diergaarde Blijdorp, Flood Proof Holland, Innovation District Delft) in the Netherlands.

III. Societal orientation
Project activities are society-oriented, and therefore actively try to incorporate solutions for societal challenges (including the SDGs) and/or engage with approaches such as citizen science.

IV. Practical relevance
The project deliverables go beyond the scientific domain and are directly useful for practice or societal partners and/or showcases the potential of the project for societal usability soon.

V. Open and accessible
The project deliverables are open-access and include active science communication.

VI. Interdisciplinary approach
The project consortium brings together multiple fields (e.g. climate science, adaptation, governance, economics and finance, legal studies, urban ecology, spatial design, biodiversity monitoring, ecosystem services, food systems, and beyond).

VII. Transdisciplinary partnerships
The project consortium includes both knowledge institutions (universities, universities of applied sciences) and societal partners (industry, government, NGOs).

VIII. Long-term potential
Project activities may be short-term and local, but should demonstrate potential for long-term continuity and future impact (societal, economic/technological and/or scientific).

IX. Sustainable practices
Project activities contribute to a just and liveable planet by minimizing environmental and societal footprints (e.g. avoiding unnecessary air travel).

X. Inclusive environment
The project consortium fosters diversity, inclusion, and a socially safe working environment.