

## Funding for Living Labs at Freie Universität Berlin

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## In a nutshell

Key points	Description
<b>Brief description</b>	<p>The 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration aims to consider climate impacts in all decisions and planning. This can best be achieved by university members from as many disciplines as possible taking an active role in the innovation and implementation processes. The goal of this call is to make greater use of the university and its campus as a real-world laboratory to tackle sustainable development.</p> <p>Living labs should encourage and enable all university members to help develop sustainability-oriented innovations. In addition, they involve stakeholders from teaching, research and campus management equally and in a practice-oriented manner in processes that address the future and sustainability capabilities of the university. Cross-departmental implementation teams bring in the university's professional diversity.</p> <p>Living labs are a special opportunity to build communities of creatives that shape studying and working at the university in new and meaningful ways.</p>
<b>Aim and starting points</b>	<p>The goal is to promote the establishment of communities of research and practice (living labs) at Freie Universität Berlin that address and utilize the university itself as a driving force for sustainability.</p> <p>Cross-divisional teams of academic and non-academic university staff from teaching, research, and administration jointly implement innovative projects that are research- and teaching-based and demonstrate sustainable solutions for the university.</p> <p>Starting points for living labs may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research that addresses global environmental, social, economic, and cultural questions addressing future issues.</li> <li>- New forms of teaching, learning and knowledge transfer that integrate sustainability content and methods into the university curriculum.</li> <li>- Campus management that improves our status of a climate-neutral and biodiversity-promoting university in the areas of finance, human resources, procurement, energy, construction, IT, (green) space, waste or mobility management.</li> </ul>
<b>Funding amount</b>	Maximum € 60,000 per individual project (total € 150.000,- per year)
<b>Funding period</b>	One year maximum
<b>Eligible for funding</b>	<p>Members of Freie Universität Berlin</p> <p>Attention: only as a team from scientific and non-scientific areas, i.e. two persons in the project team submitting the application from each of the two areas.</p>
<b>Submission deadline</b>	Application without time limit

	Decisions are made at the beginning of each quarter (a processing time of approx. 4 weeks must be taken into account).
<b>Eligible costs</b>	<p>The money in the fund may solely be used for the defined purpose. Only expenses actually incurred and necessary for the implementation of the living lab are eligible for funding.</p> <p>The following costs are eligible for funding*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Material resources</li> <li>- Contracts for work that are not designed for regularity</li> <li>- Travel costs by train by arrangement</li> </ul> <p>Not eligible for funding are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation of start-ups</li> <li>- Any activities that generate income</li> <li>- Travel expenses (exception travel expenses see above)</li> <li>- Internal working meals, attentions, tips or similar.</li> </ul> <p>*Please refer to the <a href="#">respective regulations</a> around budgetary funds.</p>
<b>Language</b>	German (English possible)
<b>Contact</b>	<p>Sustainability and Energy Unit (NE)</p> <p>- Project Coordination Ideas &amp; Innovation Management</p> <p>Sabine Heckmann</p> <p>Schwendenerstraße 17, 14195 Berlin</p> <p>E-Mail: <a href="mailto:sabine.heckmann@fu-berlin.de">sabine.heckmann@fu-berlin.de</a></p> <p>Tel: +49 30 838 – 70984</p>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="#">NE - Ideas &amp; Innovation Management</a>

## Aim of this funding scheme

In the context of sustainable developments at universities, living labs are to be initiated and promoted that attempt to solve a concrete sustainability problem by means of an innovation process, using the university and the campus as a driving force and community. In this way, scientists, students, and members of the university management and administration contribute hand in hand to the sustainability transformation. Together, they support the university in fulfilling its social responsibility in this important area.

## Who is the target group for this funding?

All members of Freie Universität Berlin who want to solve a sustainability problem in the long term as a cross-departmental team from scientific (teaching and/or research) and non-scientific areas (administration) using a living lab approach can apply.

Since this is a larger project, academic and nonacademic employees of Freie Universität are more likely to be the addressees. However, students are not excluded. Nevertheless, they should be aware of the project effort.

## What projects are excluded?

■ Funding will not be provided for projects that:

- already exist, in order to exclude double funding
- arise from regular operations, i.e. it will be carried out even without funding
- do not meet the formal criteria (e.g., the applicants are not members of Freie Universität Berlin, missing documents)
- do not have a sufficiently substantiated and plausible problem and project description
- do not provide for the participation of others
- want to generate their own funds, e.g. through donations or sales
- are not scalable or do not seem to be sustainable.

Projects that are planning to establish new businesses or start-ups can contact the Profund Innovation service unit at Freie Universität.

## Explanation of terms

**Living labs:** We understand a living lab as an innovative application project aimed at integrating research, teaching, and administration that tests and further develops ideas, products, services, or processes in a practical way in the university context. The projects must have a point of reference to the goals and content of the [Climate Emergency Declaration of December 2019](#) and to the [Sustainability Mission Statement of Freie Universität \(2016\)](#).

**Innovation:** We understand innovations as incremental to radical improvements of a current state through novel and qualitative products, services or processes to create sustainable value.

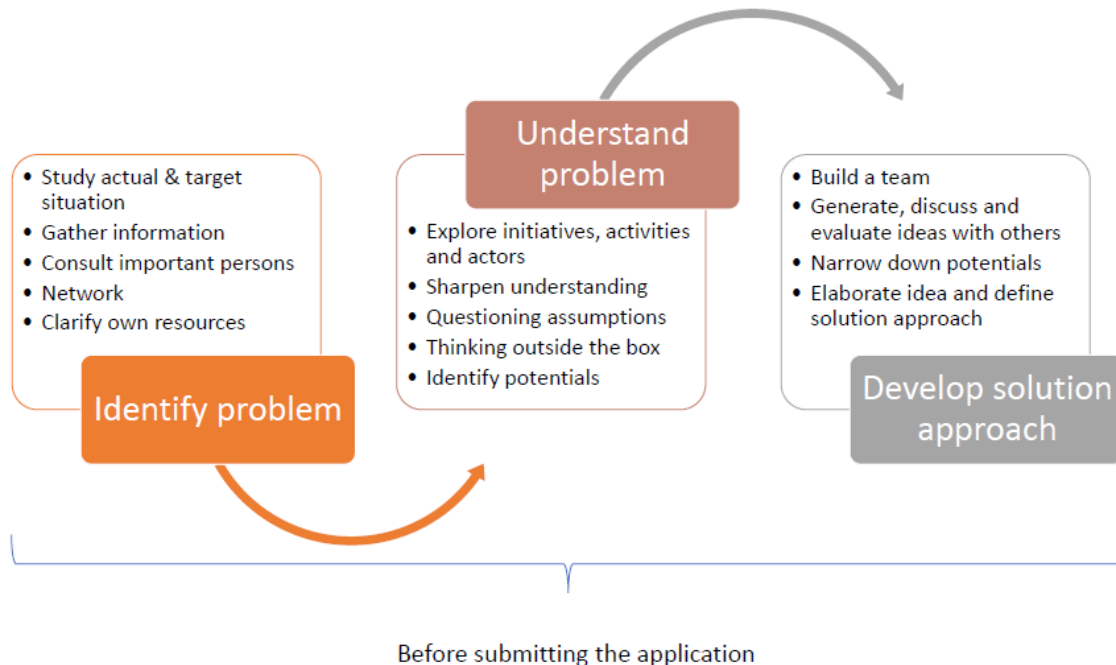
**Innovation process:** For us, an innovation process describes the path from the recognition of a problem to the application of an innovative solution. The starting point is a problem definition, in which the effects and affected groups are presented and analyzed in detail. Based on this problem, ideas are developed and repeatedly tested in order to finally find a solution and realize its implementation steps. A rigid processing of checklists or project plans is not the goal.

**Problem:** A problem exists for us when the desired achievement of a goal is in question because obstacles are in the way that cannot be eliminated by means of routines.

## Process

The idea generation process begins with identifying the thematic framework for an innovation idea.

*Figure 1: Model for the idea generation process before the application is submitted*



Before submitting an application, it is important to describe in a differentiated manner the problem for which no satisfactory solution has yet been found. From this, a solution approach should be developed that serves the implementation of the goals set out in the climate emergency declaration and the sustainability mission statement.

It is important that relevant persons and/or institutes from teaching, research and administration, which have a direct or indirect relation to the problem are involved at an early stage. In some cases, it is worthwhile to involve also e.g. suppliers, service providers, residents or other groups of actors in the process.

The participation of others helps to correct one's own assumptions, to better understand correlations, to correctly identify the needs and expectations of users, and to find potential contributors.

The following methods are suitable for the problem analysis:

- Interviews
- Surveys
- Participatory observation
- 6-W questions-Method
- 5-Why-Method
- Stakeholder-Analysis
- Mental Mapping
- Personas
- Field analysis
- SWOC, inter alias

## **The involvement of other project participants is a basic requirement for funding.**

Based on a differentiated understanding of the problem, ideas are generated that are discussed and evaluated together with experts and stakeholders. From this, a step-by-step approach to a solution can be developed for the application.

The following methods are suitable:

- Brainstorming
- Scenario technique
- Trend analyses
- Benchmark
- Six Thinking Hats
- Expert workshops
- Cascade-Method
- FeedForward, inter alias.

Innovation processes are open and flexible - it is quite common to go back a step, discard the original idea and think again.

An essential element of promising innovation processes is the right selection of relevant people who have a direct or indirect connection to the problem.

Since setting up a living lab involves a conceptual effort, it makes sense to draw on existing infrastructures and networks.

It is important to thoroughly reflect on one's own time resources and personal motivation.

### **What are the formal requirements?**

An application can only be submitted as a project team consisting of (at least) two persons. The two persons submitting the proposal must each come from research or teaching and administration. Applicants must be members of Freie Universität Berlin from the beginning to the end of the funding period.

### **What does the funding look like?**

The Sustainability and Energy Unit (hereafter: NE) provides support through networking and training opportunities in the area of sustainability management and mentoring by NE colleagues.

### **How much is the funding?**

The upper limit of funding for a submitted project is a maximum of € 60,000. A total of up to €150,000 per year is available for the funding of living labs.

### **What can and cannot be promoted?**

Eligible costs are all costs attributable to the project that were incurred directly, actually and during the funding period. Only costs that are supported by documentary evidence (invoices, bank statements, etc.) can be recognized. Only costs incurred after the submission of the application and the specified start of the project will be recognized. Funding is subject to budgetary law.

■ The funding for living lab projects comes from budgetary resources and is subject to regulations, which you can view [here](#).

■ A cumulation with the call [FUturist](#) is excluded.

## What criteria are used to evaluate grant applications?

Funding applications are evaluated according to these criteria:

- **Holistic and participatory approach:** *The core of a living lab is the connection of different areas and activities of the university in research, teaching, management and administration as well as the active participation of university members in the innovation process.*
  - The extent to which the approach is suitable for obtaining and effectively combining the knowledge and experience of involved individuals, projects and areas is evaluated. The selection and relevance of the involved persons, projects and areas, the sustainability relevance, the diversity aspect and the intensity in which they are involved are evaluated.
  - ✓ All relevant persons/projects/areas are involved and their needs are taken into account.
  - ✓ Relevant persons/projects/areas are already involved in the problem analysis.
  - ✓ Regular and targeted participation processes take place during implementation.
- **Sustainability and climate action connection:** *The FU living labs have a clear connection to the goals of the [sustainability mission statement](#) adopted in 2016 and/or to the commitments of the [climate emergency declaration](#) of December 2019*
  - The projects are evaluated according to the extent to which their content is anchored in the topics of sustainable development and climate protection.
  - ✓ The direct objective of the project specifically addresses one or more aspects of the sustainability mission statement and/or the climate emergency declaration.
  - ✓ It is clear that the project is directly related to Freie Universität Berlin.
- **Innovation potential:** *Innovations claim to improve a current status incrementally to radically through novel and qualitative products, services or processes with the aim of creating sustainable value.*
  - The potential of innovations in the area of the problem is considered. For this purpose, existing initiatives, activities, processes, products or services are analyzed in terms of the extent to which they already solve the identified problem.
  - The question of how far reaching or comprehensive a solution to the problem is will be considered, too.
  - ✓ The application has successfully implemented the phase of problem identification, and understanding as well as solution development.
  - ✓ The solution approach does not yet exist.
  - ✓ The solution approach focuses on a new and qualitatively improved situation.
  - ✓ The solution approach seems to be feasible.
- **Relevance:** *How would the problem develop in the future if no action is taken?*
  - The impact of the identified problem is considered, i.e., what effects and consequences could result.
  - Consideration is also given to the size of the groups and areas involved.
  - ✓ There is a relevant and understandable problem with immediate implications.
  - ✓ The solution approach can largely reduce or avoid the implications of the problem.
- **Qualification:** *Living labs require perseverance, technical knowledge and methodological competence.*
  - Knowledge and experience of innovation methods, content-related expertise for solution development, and team composition and development are assessed.

- The ability to observe oneself in order to analyze consequences of actions and make changes if necessary also plays a role in the evaluation.
- ✓ Prior experience or skills in participatory process design and project management exist.
- ✓ Competencies exist for designing, managing, and facilitating group processes.
- ✓ The project team is sufficiently qualified to achieve the project goal. The project team is broadly positioned and demonstrates a wide range of competencies.
- ✓ The team is highly motivated and has sufficient resources (e.g., time, networks).
- **Transfer:** *Living labs are based on change processes whose learning effects are important and should be disseminated across several levels.*
  - The extent to which the knowledge gained is transferred to other areas of the university and groups of people is evaluated.
  - Opportunities for interaction among living lab participants and others are considered.
  - ✓ Findings and experiences will be made available to others.
  - ✓ Information on the status of developments is provided via public media.
  - ✓ Regular interactions, such as workshops, are organized to ensure knowledge transfer and learning with all participants.
  - ✓ It is reflected where the learning experiences can also be applied.

Which documents are required for submission?

- Project description for grant applications,
- Work plan,
- Cost plan,
- Curricula vitae of the applicants,
- Consent data,
- Optional: other additions, overviews, graphical representations, etc.

■ The project must be clearly distinguished from projects that have already been funded.

### Submission

Applications for funding can be submitted on an ongoing basis.

Applications can only be submitted online via e-mail ([sabine.heckmann@fu-berlin.de](mailto:sabine.heckmann@fu-berlin.de)).

### How does the submission process work?

1. Download and fill in the [template](#)
2. Enter overall cost calculation
3. Compile the required documents
4. Finalize and send application

Not required: sign and submit by mail.

After submitting the grant application, applicants will receive an automatic confirmation letter via e-mail.



If a grant application is incomplete, project-relevant information may be added upon request within a reasonable period of time.

#### Confidential data?

■ The personal data of applicants and recipients provided by the data subject in the course of the grant application will be used exclusively for the purpose of contacting and assigning them in the context of the grant and will not be disclosed to third parties without the consent of the persons concerned. The data will be stored in a form that allows identification of the persons concerned only for as long as necessary and only for the purposes for which they are processed.

#### Evaluation and decision

##### How is the evaluation done?

Submitted projects are processed on the basis of the above mentioned criteria. If necessary, further inquiries are made to the applicants. If necessary, additional on-site research or interviews are conducted by NE staff.

Subsequently, the project ideas are passed on by a voluntary committee for professional assessment.

##### Who will make the decision?

As a result of the evaluation process, a voluntary committee from teaching, research and administration makes recommendations on feasibility. The director of NE decides on the funding in consultation with the Executive Board and on the basis of the committee's professional assessment.

##### What to do in the event of rejection?

In the event of a rejection, you will be informed in writing about the reasons. The notification will indicate whether it makes sense to re-apply.

#### Funding procedure

##### How does the funding take place?

If a grant is provided, NE sends a temporary offer of funding to the applicants. If the applicants accept the offer, including the conditions, in writing within a specified period, the funding is granted. The following information is provided: Recipients, project title, amount of eligible project costs, start and end of the funding period, reporting obligations and, if applicable, additional conditions.

The funding amount will be transferred to the respective cost center ('Kostenstelle') of the applicant. If no cost center is available, NE can help out.

##### What are the conditions to be considered?

Support for public relations work: The grantees agree to cooperate with NE as needed to support outreach efforts. This applies in particular to the provision of non-confidential project information and image material for media dissemination portals. Furthermore, they agree to present the funded project at professional events or FU networks.

Documentation: The grantees provide information about their projects and results on their respective websites or on the website provided by NE. In addition, they undertake to provide reports on the documentation and the results achieved, which address the future and sustainability capability of Freie Universität Berlin, for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Proof of use: After completion of the project, a final technical report with numerical evidence and other documents (e.g. documentation) must be submitted to NE in written form as a PDF via e-mail.

Changes: The project goals may change during the innovation process. The interim report should address the reasons and explain the adaptation of further planning. Based on this, an evaluation is carried out by NE on the further course of the project.

Public relations: The guidelines of Freie Universität Berlin regarding corporate design, gender-appropriate language, or questions of copyright and personal rights apply. Further information can be found at the Center for Digital Systems ([CeDiS](#)).

### How are grant installments disbursed?

If the application has been approved and conditions have been fulfilled, the first installment is paid out. As a rule, three installments are paid out (start-up funding, installment after interim report, installment up to 3 months before project end).

Further installments are paid out according to the progress of the project:

- After review of the interim report
- If necessary, after fulfillment of further conditions

■ Attention: If grant funds flow during the term of the project, this does not yet mean cost recognition!

### What reports and statements are required?

Expenditures must be supported by invoices, copies of bank transfers, order confirmations, receipts, or similar - in the original. For all payments not made in cash, account receipts showing the amount and the name of the applicant must be submitted.

■ Within three months after the end of the project, a final technical report and a final statement of account must be submitted by e-mail in PDF format.

### What is the general rule for invoices etc.?

Recipients of funding are obligated to provide the following evidence:

- Generally: statements of accounts as proof of use of the awarded and disbursed funding.
- After half of the project period: Interim report on the work carried out to date (if necessary, explanations regarding changes in objectives) and proof of use.
- At the end of the funding period: final technical report on work performed and funded, as well as final statement of accounts.

### Changes in the project during the term (duration of the project)?

This funding assumes that adjustments and changes in innovation projects are the rule. Therefore, on the one hand, the project planning must be concretized in the application only for the beginning, and on the other hand, adjustments to the content of the project are possible. NE offers support if you wish to do so.

■ Changes to deadlines or the funding period must be justified and requested by e-mail.

### In which cases will a project be canceled?

In principle, changes to the project objectives are possible in consultation with NE.

In certain cases, the termination of the funding project is necessary and reasonable. Therefore, NE can decide to terminate a project on the basis of the interim report. Reasons for termination can be:

- The solutions pursued by the project turn out not to be feasible.
- It turns out that standard solutions are being implemented.
- In the course of the project, it turns out that the intended effects cannot be achieved.

In these cases, eligible costs can be settled and recognized up to the reporting date. Funds that have already been disbursed will not be reclaimed if the project is implemented properly and communicated promptly.

#### Can the funding period be extended?

The funding period can be extended for a maximum of six months at no cost if the project objectives have not yet been achieved and the approved budget has not yet been exceeded.

Prerequisites:

- Delay through no fault of the applicants.
- Project is still eligible for funding
- Application for extension within the approved project duration by e-mail

#### What happens after the project ends?

At the end of the project period, the recipients submit a professional final report with final accounts. The original receipts must be provided. In addition to the reports, on-site inspections by NE may take place during or after the end of the project period.

Regarding the funding: If the original budgeted costs are achieved, the specified final installment will be transferred. Funding will be reduced if there are substantive, formal or legal reasons for doing so.