

ELSA Labs: background information

Reference model:

Seven criteria and a process were set up for recognition of a lab as an ELSA Lab. ELSA Labs are participatory and inclusive 'quadruple helix' innovation environments where parties work together on an equal footing to tackle both social and business challenges. More specifically, these labs meet the following seven, inextricably linked conditions:

1. The labs work on challenges formulated by society that are aimed at achieving broader prosperity. Examples are good care for everybody, every child getting to develop its talents, living without hunger, jobs for all, safe at all times, never lonely again, responsible living, lifelong learning, and so forth. The seventeen Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations and the necessary transformations that follow on from them inspire social challenges. In this context, we should also refer to the research agendas for mission-driven innovation by the Dutch key sectors.
2. The understandings acquired are collated and documented in a multi-stakeholder setup. They are validated using scientific methods where possible and made available to all the lab's participants and the associated national AI ecosystem.
3. Solutions are developed using one of the key enabling design methods (such as 'design thinking'), with testing handled using successive improvement cycles in relevant practical situations. The approach is based on the broad definition of the design process that includes all the stakeholders: end users, specialists, technicians, policymakers and administrators.
4. ELSA Lab projects focus on meaningful and human centric solutions that are data-intensive and AI-based.
5. ELSA Labs represent the quadruple helix dimensions: all four of them participate actively and jointly ensure that the activities are managed and coordinated properly, as well as actively involving and influencing the broader social ecosystem in which they operate.
6. ELSA Labs have an active policy of communicating their findings transparently to stakeholders, involving stakeholders and engaging in a dialogue with society.
7. ELSA Labs have a responsibility to scale up the solutions and transfer them to society.

ELSA Lab development model

All ELSA Labs go through the following phases before they are eligible for support from the Netherlands AI Coalition:

1. Drafting the first idea based on the above-mentioned reference model (approximately one A4).
2. Intake interview with the coordinator and chair of the Human Centric AI working group.
3. The concept is then worked out in greater detail using the template, based on the seven criteria.
4. Independent testing and awarding the status of an ELSA Lab in the form of the NL AIC Label.
Note: this predicate is a quality mark rather than signifying backing from the NL AIC.