



Innovation in Governance for Urban Nature-based Solutions, 2024–2025

This capacity development programme at Lund University is multidisciplinary and will focus on governance and leadership innovation in the area of nature-based solutions for improved urban environments. The programme will be running from June 2024 to May 2025. The programme is given by Lund University and is carried out with financial support from the Swedish Institute within the framework of the Public Sector Innovation Programme. The application period is between 19 February – 12 May 2024.

BACKGROUND AND PROGRAMME CONTENT

The programme lies in the sphere of the physical environment in cities (urban environments). A rationale for working with the quality of urban environment is provided by the promise of nature-based solutions (NBS). NBS use the properties of nature to address urban challenges. Global megatrends such as accelerating urbanisation, escalating carbon emission constraints, extreme weather events induced by global heating underline the increasing importance of sustainable urban environments. Moreover, as governments pursue development goals, social issues such as securing improved health outcomes for different groups of society are also in focus. NBS provide an alternative

to conventional methods of urban planning and development that rely on so-called “grey infrastructure” – as NBS can provide multi-faceted interventions capable of creating ecological, economic, social and urban planning benefits. As environmental examples, NBS have been seen to be able to address the risks of climate change, including adaptation to increasing heat stress in cities, enhancing the quality and quantity of water available under drought conditions, mitigating the impacts of flooding, and increasing biodiversity. In the social sphere, it has been observed that NBS can contribute to benefits including improvements to physical and mental health, access to green space creating opportunities for play and recreation, fostering greater inclusion, and addressing environmental justice needs.

However, while various technical innovations for NBS have been established and deployed for decades, they are not yet mainstream within urban development, planning or governance processes. Governance forms that embrace new ways of doing things (e.g. NBS) require increased capacity for individuals and organisations to innovate for change – and change requires new forms of collaboration/cooperation, and the exchange of experiences between administrations and between academia and practice.

Transformational skills and leadership from public administrations will be required if NBS is to deliver its promise. Within this programme, NBS innovation is the focus example for an area where administrations and their personnel must transform and innovate in order to meet future challenges – e.g. embodied by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thus capacity building in the areas of transformational skills and leadership, and innovation in management is at the core of this programme. The purpose of the programme is to strengthen capacity for innovation and sustainable governance among public administrations that govern larger towns and cities. The programme will mainly focus on the following SDGs: 6 Clean water and sanitation; 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure; 11 Sustainable cities and societies; 12 Responsible consumption; 13 Climate action; 15 Life on Land; and 17 Partnerships for the goals.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

- **STAGE 1:** Preparation and Programme Setup (10 June - 15 September 2024) including course preparatory tasks online. The participants will learn of the scope of the programme and prepare for the start of stage 2. Educational material will be available online and the participants will work on preparatory tasks.
- **STAGE 2:** Distance Education (19 September 2024 – 11 April 2025) including the needs assessment workshop and monthly online modules. These include themes such as external & internal analysis, stakeholder mapping, governance strategies, business models and innovation pathways. Stage 2 will prepare learners with both theoretical learnings and with their own 'from the field' inputs for the next programme activities. This stage also includes time for the participants to be working on their projects.
- **STAGE 3:** Lund Intensive (preliminary dates: 18 April - 26 April 2025): The module onsite in Lund, Sweden, is a 8-day programme. It will involve creative interaction among learners, topical seminars, lectures, or presentations, workshops and site visits.
- **STAGE 4:** Finalisation, Programme Reporting and Planning (April–May 2025): In the final stage, the participants return to their home jurisdictions to complete the course project. Work is to be performed

by each participant but must be deeply-integrated with the home administration. The participants will also deliver a final report.

Throughout the programme, the participants will be working on their project. This project is to be finalised, reported and presented in stage 4 of the programme.

TEACHING AND COORDINATING STAFF

The programme is coordinated by [Lund University's International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics \(IIIEE\)](#) in collaboration with guest teachers from various departments at Lund University and in partnership with international organizations. The programme is delivered with the support of [Lund University Commissioned Education \(LUCE\)](#), the department focusing on professional development and capacity development programmes.

The IIIEE produces and shares actionable knowledge for sound decision making at all levels, from the local to the global, and educates future leaders and change agents. The IIIEE's research and education advance strategies for sustainable solutions. They explore and advance knowledge in the design, application and evaluation of policy and business strategies and concrete actions to meet global environmental challenges. The IIIEE research and education has a genuine interdisciplinary approach synthesising insights not only from economic theory and practice but also from natural sciences, engineering, political science, organisational, legal and behavioural studies.

In the area of urban transformations, the programme focuses on how to develop policy, tools and approaches supporting effective urban governance leading to a sustainable society. These include collaborative dialogues, urban living labs, financing models, local regulations and innovation procurement for urban transition processes.

Responsible academic staff for the programme are Lecturer Bernadett Kiss and Researcher Björn Wickenberg.

TARGET GROUP

Targeted applicants are persons involved in the governance of built infrastructure and systems that relate to natural resources.

The main target group is mid-to-upper-level managers in larger city administrations in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, but persons working in civil society, academia and multilateral organisations in these countries are also welcome to apply. It is of central importance that participants work closely with management and/or governance activities or issues that are directly relevant to urban and peri-urban natural

resources. It is thus anticipated that backgrounds will span engineering, environmental science and management; and also span accountabilities for both the built environment (eg. buildings, transport infrastructure, water and waste infrastructure, etc.) or the natural environment (e.g. urban forests, parks and gardens, waterways, and urban biodiversity, etc.). Applicants should be mid-career (typically 35–50 years of age), and need to have a good command of the English language.

Women are encouraged to apply to the programme since we strive to obtain an equal gender distribution.

YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY IF YOU:

- are involved in the governance of built infrastructure and systems that relate to natural resource
- are a mid-to-upper-level manager in a larger city administration or working in civil society, academia or a multilateral organisation in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova or Ukraine
- work closely with management and/or governance activities or issues that are directly relevant to urban and peri-urban natural resources
- are between 35–50 years of age
- have a good command of English

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Total period of the programme: June 2024–May 2025

Preliminary dates of the module in Lund, Sweden: 18–26 April 2025 (dates might change slightly)

Number of participants: 20–25

Costs: Participation in this programme is free of charge. It includes travel to and from Sweden and meals and accommodation during the onsite module in Sweden. The participant's organisation is responsible for the costs for visas.

Language of instruction: English

Application period: 19 Feb –12 May 2024

APPLY HERE: dinkurs.se/NBS2024

Questions about the programme and the application process:

NBSinnovation@education.lu.se