



PARTNER PROFILE

Fundacja Laboratorium Badań i Działań Społecznych "SocLab"

1. Formal data

Full legal name (National Language)	Fundacja Laboratorium Badań i Działań Społecznych "SocLab"
Full legal name (Latin characters)	Fundacja Laboratorium Badań i Działań Społecznych "SocLab"
PIC Number	939589822
OID Number	E10097970
Address (Headquarters legal address)	ul. Zwierzyniecka 17/16, 15-312 Białystok Poland
Country	Poland
Region	Podlaskie Voivodeship
Post Code	15-312 Białystok
City	Białystok
Address (Field Office)	ul. Lipowa 14 lok. 19 15-427 Białystok Poland
Email	soclab@soclab.org.pl
Website	https://soclab.org.pl/
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/fundacja_soclab/
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/fundacjasoclab/

2. Profile

Type of Organisation	Foundation
Is the partner organisation a public body?	No
Is the partner organisation a non-profit?	Yes

3. Status

X	Local (L)
X	Regional (R)
X	National (L)
X	European (E)
X	International (I)

4. Presentation of the organisation

(Aims, objectives and principles, key activities, affiliations, size of the organisation).

Foundation Laboratory of Research and Social Actions "SocLab" was established in 2011, located in Białystok (Poland).

The Foundation's **mission** is to increase the involvement of citizens in public life, to support them to become aware and active citizens, especially in their local communities.

Main areas of activity:

PARTICIPATION&DEMOCRACY

SocLab designs and leads participatory processes, especially public consultations at the local level. We provide training and expert support for local authorities, social organisations and communities on civic participation. We create conditions for a common conversation and for citizens to influence decisions on public matters.

Areas of our participatory initiatives include:

- promoting effective ways of communicating with citizens
- professional moderation of public meetings and discussions during public consultations and activities related to the participatory budget
- participation training
- designing and carrying out public consultation processes, e.g. on spatial planning, revitalisation projects, strategic document drafting, etc.
- school and youth participatory budget
- international educational measures for participation.

RESEARCH&EVALUATION

We conduct social research, diagnoses and evaluations for local authorities, cultural institutions, community organisations. Cooperating with various research centres, we provide robust analyses for knowledge-based decision making. Areas of our research activities include:

- identification of needs and potential in municipalities, institutions, and organisations
- evaluation of projects, programs, initiatives, local policies
- culture research: cultural institutions, cultural policies, creative circles, cultural education
- social research

SOCIAL INNOVATION

SocLab promotes social innovation, also in the field of introducing new technologies, into social organisations and local governments, with a close eye on civic tech solutions. Areas of our social innovation activities include:

- Creative workshops utilising design thinking to solve problems in the local community or organisation
- implementing effective communication between local government and citizens using the CitizenLab platform

The latest publications are available on the organisation's website:

<https://soclab.org.pl/publikacje/>

SOCLAB TEAM

The SocLab Foundation is a team of sociologists (five members with PhD in sociology) - researchers, evaluators, trainers and animators in the field of public consultation, facilitators, including academics from the fields of sociology and pedagogy at the University of Bialystok and the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn.

Our team members have experience in the fields of civic participation, sociology, adult and youth education, IT, evaluation, research projects. We also cooperate with volunteers.

Currently the SocLab has 5 board members and 6 permanent employees. While realising the projects, the Foundation engages additional co-workers and volunteers.

SocLab cooperates with many stakeholders - public administration, educational institutions, non-governmental organisations and companies in the country and in Europe.

Key activities

Since 2013 the Foundation has carried out projects in order to support democracy, strengthen social and civil activity and provide them with knowledge and skills through trainings, counselling and social animation.

5. Main activities and experience

Youth sector projects:

Topic: SCHOOL PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING (SPB)

SocLab Foundation has supported 34 schools in the implementation of this tool of civic engagement since 2020. In addition, in an international group of practitioners of school participatory budgeting within Erasmus+ project, we have developed a practical manual with useful and proven educational materials for educators and teachers wishing to implement, among other things, school participatory budgets. These are available at <https://youthpb.eu/>

Our model involves training for coordination teams, including students and teachers, mentoring support for implementation and evaluation. We aim SPB as a youth-led process.

Our projects:

1. "Youth PB Accelerator", funded by the European Union, the Erasmus+ programme, duration 2019-2022, labelled as good practice of the Erasmus + programme.
2. "Active Citizens Accelerator", financed by the governmental programme - Civic Initiatives Fund, duration 2020
3. "School PB - We Decide Together", financed by the governmental programme "NOWE FIO Civic Initiatives Fund, duration 2021 - 2022
4. "School PB - Youth Time", financed by the Active Citizens Regional Fund; duration - 2022-2023

5. "School participatory budget in the Municipality of Wasilków", funded by Engaging Central Europe -a project of the German Marshall Fund of the United States, duration 2023-2024
6. "School Participatory Budget in Bialystok - training and support", financed by the City of Białystok and the SocLab Foundation, duration - 2024
7. "School Participatory Budget - a tool to foster school democracy", financed by the European Union, the Erasmus+ programme, duration 2023-2025
8. "Youth Active in Local Community", funded by the governmental programme Youth Fund, duration 2024-2025

A total of nearly 11500 people participated in the SPB projects we organised.

Topic: YOUTH INITIATIVES

SocLab actively champions youth development in Bialystok through our dynamic Youthstok programme, which supports youth initiatives with grants and training. To date, we have successfully completed two editions of this programme, engaging a total of 70 participants. The upcoming edition is set to begin in September 2024.

Central to the Youthstok programme is a hackathon where youth groups develop their projects. A group of mentors then selects the winning projects, which receive funding, training, and ongoing mentoring support.

Our projects:

Youthstok#1: "School PB - Youth Time," funded by the Active Citizens Regional Fund and the Municipalist Network, duration 2023

Youthstok#2: "Action Participation - Bialystok Incubator of Youth Initiatives", funded by the PROTEUS programme of the Transatlantic Foundation and the German Marshall Fund, and co-financed by the European Union, duration 2024

Youthstok#3: "Young People Active in Local Government," funded by the governmental programme Youth Fund, duration 2024-2025

Beyond Youthstok, SocLab has also implemented the "Competencies of the Future. Let's Act!" project funded by the Empiria and Knowledge Foundation under the InvestorJa programme. This initiative provided youth training in essential skills such as cooperation, creativity, critical thinking, and communication, while also supporting the implementation of local youth initiatives.

Additionally, as part of the EU Horizon 2020 project "JoinUs4Health," SocLab organized a youth-oriented event called Hackathon4Health. This pioneering event held in Bialystok aimed to engage young people from secondary schools in enquiry-based learning to devise solutions for health issues relevant to them. As part of the event, one winning team received all necessary support to create a social media campaign aimed at young people, addressing the issue of a sedentary lifestyle.

Adult education sector projects:

Topic: DEMOCRACY&CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Our projects:

1. Action "You have a Voice" - the campaign of Batory Foundation is open to social organisations and informal groups of residents, especially those from small towns and at the beginning of their activities, who want to do something good for their local community during this year. The SocLab Foundation has been coordinating the action in three Polish regions since 2019. Since then, we have supported 35 local groups and organisations each year by training, mentoring and mini grants.
2. "Informed PołCZYN", within the framework of the CERV, funded by the European Commission's programme ('Building Bridges - Civic Capital in Local Communities'), 2024 - training of local leaders and organisations, citizens' assembly about green spaces.
3. e-DEMOCRACY. Residents have the power! - in two municipalities in Poland: Augustow and Wasilkow, we were conducting a model of participatory processes using the Go Vocal (former Citizenlab) digital platform and direct activities with residents. For example, we realised a diagnosis of the needs of young people in the municipality, elections for the Youth City Council were held, or an online participatory budget was implemented. [The book about e-participation](#) was published, and [e-Participation Festival](#) was organised.
4. Since 2015, the Foundation has been a partner/co-organizer of the national event "Forum of Practitioners of Participation" – which is a cyclic educational event nationwide for civic participation. The forums are attended every year by about 200-300 people.

Topic: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Our projects:

1. "EURECA (European Urban Ecology Academy)" - an international project, implemented and funded through the EU's Erasmus+ programme. It consists of a series of online classes on urban biodiversity and practical approaches to minimising human impact on the environment. The classes, aimed at adults, will equip the audience with knowledge on how to protect the environment in everyday life, in their home, work, garden, and community. Topics include home maintenance (water, energy), gardening, construction work, space planning, etc..
2. In 2021 Foundation SocLab was selected to implement a pilot and then to implement an entire citizens' panel on climate change in Poland. The work of the panel consisted of going through an educational process on the climate and ecological crisis from a global perspective. Then, through deep deliberation, proposals were developed for presentation at the UN climate conference COP26 in November 2021. In 2022, we were a regional partner of the Warsaw-based Stocznia Foundation, with whom we conducted a series of meetings on the topic of rising energy costs and the associated worsening fuel poverty. The meetings served to develop joint recommendations for the Polish authorities in the area of energy policy.
3. In 2018, we joined the social anti-smog campaign in Bialystok. We participate and create events popularising the problem of air pollution and activities aimed at increasing the awareness of residents about the negative impact of pollution. We also offer local authorities solutions that can be implemented in Bialystok and improve air quality.

Topic: SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

Our projects:

1. "JoinUs4Health" / Horizon 2020 - project partner,
<https://joinus4health.eu/about>, no. 101006518

The JoinUs4Health was an innovative project, led by a consortium of eleven partners, including three universities from three European countries. Activities aim to work on health and population research, influence science and develop health-related solutions.

2. "E-citizen – effective inclusion through e-governance services"- an international project, implemented and funded through the EU's Erasmus+ programme.

Our aim was to exchange experiences between partners from Poland, the Czech Republic, Spain and Turkey on the social aspects of creating and using public e-services. Labelled as good practice of the Erasmus + programme.

6. List of ERASMUS+ projects

Period (start and end date)	Project Reference No	Title, funding programme	Role BEN/PARTNER	Website (if any)
2023-2026	2023-1-PL01-KA220-YOU-000167508	School Participatory Budget - a tool to foster school democracy <u>Type:</u> Strategic Partnerships for youth	PARTNER	Not yet available
2023-2025	2023-1-PL01-KA220-ADU-000153945	Eureca - European Urban Ecology Academy, <u>Type:</u> Cooperation partnerships in adult education	BEN	https://www.eurecaedu.eu/
2019-2022	2019-2-PL01-KA205-066321	Youth PB Accelerator Erasmus+, <u>Type:</u> Strategic Partnerships for youth	BEN	www.youthpb.eu
2017-2019	2017-1-PL01-KA204-038688	E-citizen – effective inclusion through e-governance services <u>Type:</u> Strategic Partnerships for adult education	BEN	https://www.facebook.com/ecitizens/?ref=page_internal

7. Organization's target groups.

1. Youth (14-30 years old)

Profile: This group includes students, youngsters. They are at a crucial developmental stage, exploring identities, careers, and personal beliefs.

Needs: Focus on fostering civic engagement, youth participation and democratic values, leadership and 4 C's skills development.

2. Adults (Beyond 30 years old)

Profile: This group includes adult learners, activists, active citizens.

Needs: Programmes geared towards lifelong learning, civic engagement and environmental/sustainability awareness.