

Innovative research methods herald the Climate Research Initiative Netherlands' inaugural programme, promising to expedite system transitions.

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The Climate Research Initiative Netherlands (KIN), established by NWO and KNAW, has initiated its first working programme aimed at accelerating climate transitions in urban neighbourhoods. The programme diverges from the conventional approach in the Netherlands by eschewing competition in favour of a more inclusive and collaborative approach to research and innovation. This research methodology is novel and aligns with the urgency of initiating climate transitions.

The KIN working programmes aim to accelerate the just system transitions needed to make the Netherlands climate-neutral and climate-resilient. The impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly apparent, necessitating innovative approaches to address this challenge urgently. KIN operates with a new research paradigm, shifting the focus from doctoral candidates and postdocs to citizen engagement and policy relevance. Accordingly, the working programmes are based on co-creation rather than the traditional "calls for funding", emphasizing mission-driven and transdisciplinary approaches where knowledge from both academia and practice converge.

Important Milestone

The initiation of this first working programme follows this innovative research approach and marks a significant milestone for KIN. The programme aims to accelerate just climate transitions by developing local action trajectories and agendas and facilitating collaboration among stakeholders who previously operated in silos, such as residents, housing associations, civil servants, local entrepreneurs, and sustainability professionals.



Marc Dijk, project leader of the first working programme, states: "As a sustainability researcher, I see this programme as a crucial step in deepening the connection between science and society. The new research approach is an exciting development that pushes us out of our ivory tower and deeper into transdisciplinary research." As an example of this transdisciplinary approach, Dijk highlights collaboration in the programme with the municipalities of Maastricht, Nijmegen, and Rotterdam, where practical knowledge, challenges, and tasks from the municipalities are expected to provide valuable input for the research in the working programme, and vice versa.

From practical challenges to research questions

Following the KIN approach, the programme commenced with a concrete and urgent transition needed in the Netherlands: the sustainable transformation of urban neighbourhoods. Subsequently, researchers and stakeholders convened last autumn to develop a joint working programme in a so-called Crutzen workshop. The programme will engage and support local parties and citizens in developing sustainable solutions for a just climate transition. Next steps include defining work packages, elaborating a concrete schedule, and planning meetings with various neighbourhoods. Dijk remarks, "We look forward to collaborating with the diverse stakeholders, translating practical challenges into research questions."

Climate justice playing a significant role

A notable aspect of this inaugural KIN working programme is the significant emphasis placed on the concept of climate justice. This entails a deliberate examination of whether the proposed measures (or research findings) create or exacerbate societal divides. The importance lies in developing policies that can garner broader support than those solely inspired by technical considerations.

More programmes in the upcoming years

In the upcoming years, KIN will develop more programmes in a similar fashion, utilizing other instruments that may be more grassroots and/or unifying in nature. The underlying theme in all programmes will remain consistent: activities aimed at advancing a climate-neutral, climate-resilient, and climate-just society.

Collaborative partners in alphabetical order:

Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, Arizona State University, USA, BUas, Centre for Unusual Collaboration, Deltares, Delft University of

Technology, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Gemeente Maastricht (City of Maastricht), Gemeente Nijmegen (City of Nijmegen), HAN University of Applied Sciences, Jonge klimaatbeweging (Young Climate movement), Klimaatplein Netherlands, Maastricht University, NIOD, Open University, Postgroei Nederland, Provincie Utrecht (Province of Utrecht), Radboud University, RIVM, Rodenburg Wateradvies, Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, TNO, The Hague University of Applied Sciences, UMC Utrecht, Utrecht University, University of Groningen, University of Twente, Wageningen University & Research.

About the KIN

The Climate Research Initiative Netherlands (KIN) connects, broadens, deepens, and disseminates knowledge for transitions towards a climate-neutral and climate-resilient society. With KIN, we aim to enhance the contribution of science to accelerating system transitions.

Learn more about KIN at www.hetkin.nl or visit the [web page about ACT](#) for more information on the approach, outcomes, partners, and downloads. Explore the [perskit](#) which includes photos among others, or view the [press folder](#), containing the Word-files of the press release in Dutch and English.