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## **Project “Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja City”**

### **Project news**

*December 27, 2021*

#### **The Exposition of the Nature House is Complemented by the First Outdoor Installations**

On Monday, December 27, at 14:00pm two outdoor installations “Liepajas Metalurģs” and “Insect House” will be exhibited at the Nature House of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department Science and Education Innovation Center (ZIIC). The installations were created within the Norwegian (EEA) project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City".

"Liepajas Metalurģs" installation is only a part of the whole installation. The rest of it will be exhibited inside the Nature House. This outdoor installation was created by the artist Reinis Kuncitis, using the spare parts of the former "Liepajas Metalurģs" factory for the second time. The installation is designed so that during the warmer season, visitors can operate it interactively by using water flow. The main goal of the installation is to provide information about the industrial part of Liepaja and the role of industry in the development of the city, especially emphasizing the interaction of the city and industrial activities with the environment, air and the local lake ecosystem.

The second outdoor installation "Insect House" has been created by the experts of the Nature House, considering the advice of entomologists on the necessary environmental conditions for creating effective insect houses, as well as based on successful and less successful examples of insect houses elsewhere in Latvia. Natural materials were used in the construction of the house, a large part of which was obtained here even on Horse Island. An insect house is an artificial ecosystem designed to provide suitable living conditions for insects and to allow people to learn more about their secret lives. The house is as a place for insects to house their larvae, feed and shelter. If insects, such as lone bees, find the house appropriate, visitors will be able to see that the reed ends in the house are "corked" with a white mass, behind which will be the bee larvae.

Both installations are not only intended to delight visitors, but will be used for demonstrations in workshops organized by the Nature House, for teacher education and for the implementation of interest education programs. Thus, installations together with licensed lessons complement the curriculum of school curricula and make it interactive. The aim of the lessons is to stimulate students' interest in STEM and environmental sciences, as well as to motivate them to choose a career in environmental and other natural sciences.

The project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" is funded by the EEA/N grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Financial Instrument, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

For additional information:

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December 20, 2021

**The employees of the Science and Education Innovation Center supplement their knowledge  
in creating exhibitions**

From 7 to 10 December, the employees of the Science and Education Innovation Center (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education department went to the Trondheim Science Center (Vitensenteret) in Norway to learn the principles of design thinking in the development of science center exhibit together with the team of Daugavpils science center.

During two very active and creative days, the understanding of the basic principles of design thinking and how to use these principles in creating an exhibition, installations and exhibits based on the user experience was gained.

The design solutions company Inventus, the third leading company in the field in Norway, has led every science center employee to feel the "skin" of the user and understand what the intended result should be. The most interesting part of the process was the development and testing of a prototype of the planned exhibit. The analysis carried out after this stage helped to improve the idea in order to refine it.

In addition to the training, there was an exchange of experience with the employees of the Trondheim Science Center on the development of educational programs, the organization of work and the management of the centre's visit to the project, as well as the attraction of financial resources.

The experience exchange trip is being realized within the project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" that is funded by the European Economic Area and the Norway grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Grants, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

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December 16, 2021

### **The License is Granted to the Interest Education Program “Environmental Management II”**

On December 7, the interest education program “Environmental Management II” for students in the age group 11- 18 years obtained a license. The program has been developed within the Norwegian (EEA / N) grant project "Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja City" by the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department.

Sniedze Vise, an environment expert, states: "This program is different from the previous one because the lessons are even more integrated and the methods are based on our partners' experience and knowledge from Jaermuseet Regional Museum and Liepaja University (the Faculty of Science and Engineering). It is very likely that some of them will be an innovation and a unique experience in Latvia. The main goal is to arouse students' interest in STEM and environmental sciences but the emphasis is on the ability of students to practice, study and learn in areas such as hydrobiology, entomology, eco-technology, geography, geology, anatomy, etc., thus combining theoretical knowledge with practice-based activities. "

The program includes four different lessons - "Human Internal Organs", which is currently being tested online, while the lessons “Biotechnology”, "Exploration of Earth's crust" and "Zoology Under the Magnifying Glass" will be available to students during year 2022. Each lesson is designed to be unique, interactive, with the involvement of technological elements. In order to attract students to the interdisciplinary field of science that studies natural systems and their interaction with the modern human environment, various installations in the Nature House will be used in the learning process.

The interest education program “Environmental Management II” is being developed within the project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" that is funded by the EEA/N grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Financial Instrument, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

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November 23, 2021

### **Specialists of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department gain experience in Sweden**

Last week, employees of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department and the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) visited Sweden to attend the annual conference organized by the Nordic Science Centre Association and get acquainted with the Visualiseringscenter C in Norrköping.

The Nordic Science Centre Association - NSCA was established in 1987. It brings together science centers in the Nordic and Baltic countries, promoting co-operation and the exchange of ideas. The aim of the association is to promote science by using the opportunities provided by technology, thus educating and creating the audience's interest and experience in various topics and directions. Currently, the Association is represented by 40 science centers and since 2020 the Association has also included ZIIC.

This year's conference focused on a number of important areas, including the role and challenges of science centers as science heralds, how to engage citizens, and how to promote and expand research by reducing stereotypes that science is not accessible and comprehensible to all. There was also a broader insight into the members of the Association - science centers, their specifics and the exhibitions offered, as well as current events this year. The experience will help to develop and implement the activities and expositions planned in the project "Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja city".

The event took place at Norrköping Visualiseringscenter C, which is currently the most technologically advanced science center in Northern Europe. One of the Centre's ideas is to use technology to get to know science and visualize it in a way that is engaging and exciting to a wider audience - to create quality and authentic content, to surprise, to make everyone think and to stimulate interest.

During the visit, it was possible to see how the visual content offered by the Center makes it easier to grasp even the most complex topics, such as anatomy or, for example, astronomy. Visitors have the opportunity to get an idea of the planets, explore space, discover history and physics, learn about the human body, learn about the film industry and its special effects, etc., thus gaining a digital experience combined with modern technology and the benefits of a 3D dome.

Visualiseringscenter C works closely with the municipality and the Science Park of Norrköping, and with research teams at the Linköping University. The center's specialists work with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Hollywood film industry.

It is planned that in 2023 the annual conference of the Nordic Science Centre Association will be held in Denmark, and in a year - in Latvia, which will be one of the activities in the field of education on the way to Liepaja as the European Capital of Culture in 2027.

The experience exchange trip is being realized within the project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" that is funded by the European Economic Area and the Norway grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Grants, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

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November 15, 2021

### **Educational Institutions Invited to Apply for Online Lessons at the Nature House**

On November 24th, the co-creation space of the Science and Education Innovation Center (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department will start approbation of the second interest education program (for 11-18-year-old students) "Environmental Management II" lesson "Human Internal Organs".

In November and December, students have the opportunity to participate in a lesson that will provide insight into the invisible part of the human body, revealing the uniqueness and showing it as one whole, in which several systems interact perfectly.

Lessons will take place from November 24 to December 17 on the online platform ZOOM. Each lesson lasts 60 minutes and is free of charge. In the lessons, each student must connect to the device (computer or tablet). Registration starts on November 15, and the number of classes is limited.

Information to apply for lessons:

- Fill in the application form: <https://ej.uz/nodarbibadm>
- Your application has been registered after completing the form.

Additional information by phone 26644834 or e-mail [dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv](mailto:dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv).

The lesson "Human Internal Organs" is being implemented within the framework of the project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" that is funded by the European Economic Area and the Norway grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Grants, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

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October 28, 2021

### **Families are invited to participate in the creative competition "Ant's Journey"**

**The Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department and Cafe "Bernatu Dzintarins" invites families with a pupil from 3rd to 8th grade to participate in the creative competition "Ant's Journey". The competition will also include an online training session that will demonstrate different techniques for completing the competition task.**

The competition requires the creation of a stop motion animation video with the family's idea of the ant's journey from Bernati to the Nature House. **In order to stimulate ideas for the task of the competition, as well as to demonstrate the technical techniques, ZIIC invites all interested participants to an online session on Wednesday, November 10, at 18:00.** During the lesson, everyone will be able to make sure that the task of the competition is exciting and easy to complete without specific technology skills. You can apply for the lesson here: [www.ej.uz/stopkadrnodarbibu](http://www.ej.uz/stopkadrnodarbibu).

The idea for the competition came to the team of the Cafe "Bernatu Dzintarins". The head of the company Laura Otanke tells about the idea: "We call ourselves ants of "Bernati Dzintarins". This fits in with the activities of the Nature House - ant house and ant lesson - thus the idea of a joint initiative was born. "Bernatu Dzintarins" house is in the forest, so it is only natural for the company to be a friend of nature, which, among other things, especially supports the efforts and achievements of children and young people".

Pupils, young people from Latvian educational institutions and their family members are invited to participate in the competition. The competition takes place from October 27 to November 22, during the time the team must apply and complete the competition task. Deadline for submission: November 22 at 17:00.

**The task** of the competition is to create a Stop-Motion animation about the ant's journey from Cafe "Bernatu Dzintarins" in Bernati to the Nature House. To photograph objects, people etc. in stop-motion image animation in different phases of motion; to create frames (photographs), which are combined by a video processing program. The final video has to be submitted as a competition work.

The winners will be announced in the following nominations:

- The most interesting story and video idea.
- The most creative performance.
- The most family-like ant's journey from Cafe " Bernatu Dzintarins" to the Nature House.

The winner of each nomination will receive a gift card worth 50 EUR and souvenirs from ants of "Bernati Dzintarins". All participants of the competition will be invited to the online lesson on ants at Nature House at a specified time.

Teams must apply and submit the competition entry (video) electronically here: [ej.uz/skudrascelojumu](http://ej.uz/skudrascelojumu). The application takes place at the same time as the submission of the completed task. The results will be announced on November 29 on the ZIIC Facebook page [facebook.com/LiepajaZIIC](https://www.facebook.com/LiepajaZIIC). Regulations of the competition can be found here: <https://ej.uz/skudram2>.

The activity is implemented within the project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" that is funded by the European Economic Area and the Norway grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Grants, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

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October 25, 2021

### **The team of the Science and Education Innovation Center gains experience in Norway**

October 19th to the 21st, employees of the Science and Education Innovation Center (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department visited Norway partners at the Jaermuseet Regional Museum to get acquainted with the activities of the science factory (Vitenfabrikken) and the science farm (Vitengarden).

ZIIC staff gained a wide range of insights and were able to see specific examples of how to organize non-formal education for students and teachers in STEM areas. It is a valuable experience that will help to develop and implement the activities planned in the project "Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja city".

In the science factory it was demonstrated how to allow children, as well as adults, to learn about physics, mathematics, anatomy, astronomy, various mechanisms, history and local culture in a simple and at the same time playful way. The astronomical exhibition is really impressive - a planetarium, which allows everybody to get acquainted with human efforts to get to the moon, explore space and stars, even flying around them.

Experts from ZIIC got acquainted with the partners' co-creation premises and equipment available there, as a co-creation space is also being developed in Liepaja. In addition, it was useful to see the learning process in which Norwegian students are working with embroidery machines, programming patterns for embroidery on fabric.

On a science farm, technology works hand in hand with nature. Although the exhibition in this museum is almost 20 years old, it is constantly being modified and supplemented in order to provide children, young people and anyone interested with as much knowledge and understanding of nature as possible in an easily comprehensible way. Starting with the first tractors, continuing with the swamp, birds and wind, this is a farm where the same animals live as in Latvia - pigs, chickens, cows and also bees. The environment gives children the opportunity to feel like a



veterinarian, get acquainted with the unique magic of wildlife, strengthen the knowledge of the life of ancestors and learn how biogas is produced. Besides, wind energy, as a renewable resource, is one of the learning topics.

In Jaermuseet regional museum the main emphasis is on learning by doing, through the acquisition of historical, cultural and folklore knowledge.

The experience exchange trip is being realized within the project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" that is funded by the European Economic Area and the Norway grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Grants, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

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September 28, 2021

**Educational institutions invited to apply for outdoor lessons at the Nature House**

In October, the co-creation space Nature House of the Science and Education Innovation Center (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department offers educational institutions (with students in the age group of 5-10 years) to participate in approbation process of lessons in the interest education program. There is an opportunity to apply for three topics:

**Bird Researcher**

Birds are one of the most typical inhabitants of the lake, who are often both seen and heard on Horse Island near the House of Nature, because Lake Liepaja is an important place for birds to travel, shed feathers, nest and feed. During the lesson, children will study not only about the inventions and inspiration of birds, but also to listen to the voices of birds, observe birds by using optical tools and experience much more as a bird researcher.

**Young Botanist**

Botany is an extensive science of plants that we all encounter on a daily basis, for example, plants can be used in food, housing, clothing, dyes, medicine, and so on. During the lesson, participants get an idea of who a botanist is. Children have the opportunity to play the role of plant researchers, to study the structure of the plant, to look for differences in plants with the help of a magnifying glass and a microscope. Together they will look for an answer where plants take colors to color our natural world. The lesson is intended for children aged 5-7.

**Protected nature territories**



Some geographically defined areas are specially protected in order to preserve their natural diversity. The Nature House is also located in one of them - the nature reserve "Liepaja lake". In the lesson, children will get acquainted with the characteristic features of animals and plants living in nature, using different senses - sight, hearing, touch and smell. As well as during the walk they will learn about the geographical and historical significance of the Horse Island and Lake Liepaja.

### Information to apply for lessons

1. Fill in the application form: <https://ej.uz/DMoktobris>
2. Your application has been registered after completing the form.

Participants have to dress according to the weather and suitable for outdoor activities. The beginning and the end of each lesson is at the Nature House.

Additional information by phone +37126644834 or e-mail [dabasmaja@liepaja.edu](mailto:dabasmaja@liepaja.edu) ..

Lessons are implemented within the project "Development of Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" that is funded by the European Economic Area and the Norway grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Grants, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

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September 24, 2021

Information for the media

### Specialists at the Nature House improve their professional skills

At the end of August and the beginning of September, Kristaps Vilks, a certified entomologist and lecturer at the Department of Zoology and Animal Ecology of the University of Latvia, visited the Nature House of the Science and Education Innovation Center (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department to conduct entomology training for the Nature House specialists.

Kristaps Vilks has been giving lectures and practical classes at the University of Latvia for 19 years. The professional is working at the Nature Conservation Agency as an expert in species and habitats for 7 years, actively working at the Entomological Society of Latvia, processing entomological collections of the Latvian National Museum of Natural History, and complementing the entomological collections for the study process at the University of Latvia.

The lecturer led the professional development training for the specialists at the Nature House, in which the classification of insects, the basics of determining the order and species of insects, the types of entomological collections, and the practical creation of collections were mastered. The main goal of the

training was to increase the skills of the Nature House team in creating collections, in order to later create one of the 15 installations - "Insects".

The installation will demonstrate real insect samples, promote understanding of nature diversity, the importance of environmental protection. It is planned to use the installation for the implementation of study content and Nature House lessons for pre-school, primary and secondary school students and pedagogues of educational institutions.

Entomological training and the establishment of insect collections are carried out in a way that respects nature and biodiversity - only one representative of the insect species is collected from the respective habitats, protected insect species are not harvested, insects are treated and plated according to generally accepted scientific, entomological collection principles.

The training and installation "Insects" are implemented within the project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" that is funded by the European Economic Area and the Norway grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Grants, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

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September 23, 2021

Information for the media

**The Science and Education Innovation Center implements teacher training in cooperation with Norwegian partner**

On September 20th and 21st, the team of the Science and Education Innovation Center (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Educational Department started teacher training, which is implemented within the project "Development of Innovation Center in Liepaja City".

Teacher training is led by project partners from the Jaermuseet Regional Museum. The activity is divided into two parts, where the first stage is completed online, but the second stage will be mastered in October, during a visit to Norway.

In the teaching process of pedagogues, innovative methods of teaching theory are mastered, experts' recommendations on the purchase of appropriate equipment and its application are listened to, as well as feedback and guidance for the improvement of the developed lessons are provided. In order to improve the lesson "Ant Researcher" presented in the approbation process, Justine Rusakova, the teacher of the Nature House, demonstrated the lesson to partners online, receiving positive feedback about the quality of the content, interactivity and used technologies.

However, experts from Jaermuseet demonstrated two environmental science classes online. For example, in the pig organ dissecting lesson students are studying the internal organs - the structure of the heart, lungs, tongue, larynx, trachea, veins and their functions. In the lesson about water quality students are taught to get to know ecosystem of the lake, find and study aquatic organisms, collect water samples, perform the analysis, as well as to draw conclusions together. In order to study the presence of acid rain or the impact of agriculture on the water, the pH level, the presence of ammonia, nitrites and phosphates are analyzed.

By listening the advice of Norwegian professionals and integrating innovative, engaging and diverse curriculum content into the learning process, the team of ZIIC plans to develop five educational programs for both students and educators to promote knowledge development and career choice in STEM and in environmental sciences.

The teacher training is implemented within the project "Development of Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" that is funded by the European Economic Area and the Norway grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Grants, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

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September 20, 2021

Information for the media

**The event "Human Library" will take place at the Nature House**

Saturday, September 25, at 14.00 Liepaja, Zirgu sala near the Nature House will host an event for young people the "Human Library". All the "books" involved are active, young people whose lives are directly or indirectly linked to the environment and nature.

The main goal of the event is to inform young people and other interested people about career opportunities in environmental sciences, to provide a deeper insight into various professions, as well as to give the participants of the event the opportunity to receive answers to their questions on various environmental topics.

Nowadays everybody knows the library where we go to select a book, read it, and then return it. However, often after reading a book, questions remain unanswered, discussions arise about what is read, or there is a desire to talk to the author of the book, so a great alternative to ordinary books is a library of living people, where a specialist in the field tells their story and experience.

In the "Human Library", visitors will be able to read four books:

1. Elina Medne "From frogs and snails to Hydroelectric Power Plant and you";
2. Nora Sudmale "Compost cultural worker";
3. Marcis Veits "ZeroPauna";
4. Kristers Krafts "From Mountains to Physics".

After the event, everyone is invited to stay in informal conversations with "books". Due to the fact that the event will take place outdoors, blankets and warm tea will be provided, but we invite you to dress according to the weather.

To participate in the event "Human Library" it is necessary to fill in the application form [https://ej.uz/dzivabiblioteka\\_dm](https://ej.uz/dzivabiblioteka_dm).

Due to restrictions, participation in the event is only possible with a Covid-19 certificate.

The event is implemented within the project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" that is funded by the European Economic Area and the Norway grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Grants, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

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August 2, 2021

Information for the media

### **Outdoor classes at the Nature House will continue in August**

**Also in August the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department continues summer outdoor lessons for children aged 5 to 10. Lessons will take place on weekdays at the Nature house, Horse Island. It is possible to apply for lessons from August 3. The number of places is limited.**

In August, children will have the opportunity to participate in the lesson "Young Botanist", during which they will get an idea of what a botanist is. Children will be able to play the role of plant researchers, study the structure of the plant, be attentive and look for differences in plants with the help of a magnifying glass and a microscope. Together we will look for an answer where plants take colors to color our natural world.

#### **Lesson schedule:**

- Wednesday (for children from 8 to 10 years old):
  - 14:00 – 14:40 **“Young Botanist ”**;
- Thursday (for children from 8 to 10 years old with parents):
  - 14:00 – 14:40 **“Young Botanist”**;
- Friday (for children from 5 to 7 years old with parents):
  - 14:00 – 14:40 **“Young Botanist”**;

Information to apply for lessons:

- Fill in the application form: <https://ej.uz/dmaugusts>

- Your application has been registered after completing the form.

Participants have to dress according to the weather and suitable for outdoor activities. The beginning and end of each lesson is at the Nature House.

Additional information about applying by phone +37126644834 or e-mail [dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv](mailto:dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv)

The project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City" is funded by the European Economic Area and the Norway grant programme "Research and Education". Its total cost is EUR 986 049.00, of which EUR 754 327.40 is co-financing of the Norwegian Grants, EUR 133 116.60 is co-financed by the State budget of Latvia and EUR 98 605.00 by Liepaja City Municipality.

For additional information:

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*June 30, 2021*

Information for the media

### **Outdoor classes at the Nature House will continue in July**

**In July, the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department continues summer outdoor lessons for children aged 5 to 10. Lessons will take place on weekdays at the Nature house, Horse Island. It is possible to apply for July classes from June 30. The number of places is limited.**

In July, children will have the opportunity to participate in the lessons "Bird Researcher" and "Young Geographer", during which they will go on an expedition around the Horse Island. In the "Bird Researcher" lesson, children will look into the world of birds, watch them, hear their voices and learn why a bird does not stay wet after a water bath? In addition, in the lesson "Young Geographer" there will be an opportunity to learn skills in orienting the environment and get acquainted with the work of a cartographer.

#### **Lesson schedule:**

- Wednesday (for children from 8 to 10 years old):
  - 14:00 – 14:40 "**Bird Researcher**";
  - 15:00 – 15:40 "**Young Geographer**".
- Thursday (for children from 8 to 10 years old with parents):
  - 14:00 – 14:40 "**Bird Researcher**";
  - 15:00 – 15:40 "**Young Geographer**".
- Friday (for children from 5 to 7 years old with parents):
  - 14:00 – 14:40 "**Bird Researcher**";
  - 15:00 – 15:40 "**Young Geographer**".

Information to apply for lessons:

- Fill in the application form: <https://ej.uz/dmjulijis>;

- Receive an e-mail confirmation of the reservation of a place in the lesson.

Participants have to dress according to the weather and suitable for outdoor activities. The beginning and end of each lesson is at the Nature House.

Additional information about applying by phone +37126644834 or e-mail [dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv](mailto:dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv)

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For additional information:

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**Norway**  
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June 2, 2021

Information for the media

### **Children invited to apply for summer lessons at the Nature House**

**On June 7, the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department will start leading summer outdoor lessons for children aged 5 to 10. Lessons will take place on working days at the Nature House, Horse Island. It is possible to apply for June lessons from June 2. The number of places is limited.**

In June, children will have the opportunity to participate in the lessons "Bird Researcher" and "Young Geographer", during which they will go on an expedition around the Horse Island. In the "Bird Researcher" lesson, children will look into the world of birds, watch them, hear their voices and learn why a bird does not stay wet after a water bath? In addition, in the lesson "Young Geographer" there will be an opportunity to learn skills in orienting the environment and get acquainted with the work of a cartographer.

From Monday to Wednesday, lessons are intended for children aged 8-10 at 14:00 ("Bird Researcher") and 15:00 ("Young Geographer"). On Thursdays and Fridays at 14:00 and 15:00, parents can join the lessons (on Thursdays for children aged 8-10 with parents and on Fridays for children aged 5-7 with parents). Each lesson lasts 40 minutes and is free of charge.

#### **Lesson schedule:**

- Monday (for children from 8 to 10 years old):  
14:00 – 14:40 "**Bird Researcher**";  
15:00 – 15:40 "**Young Geographer**".

- Tuesday (for children from 8 to 10 years old):  
14:00 – 14:40 “**Bird Researcher**”;  
15:00 – 15:40 “**Young Geographer**”.
- Wednesday (for children from 8 to 10 years old):  
14:00 – 14:40 “**Bird Researcher**”;  
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- Thursday (for children from 8 to 10 years old with parents):  
14:00 – 14:40 “**Bird Researcher**”;  
15:00 – 15:40 “**Young Geographer**”.
- Friday (for children from 5 to 7 years old with parents):  
14:00 – 14:40 “**Bird Researcher**”;  
15:00 – 15:40 “**Young Geographer**”.

Information to apply for lessons:

Fill in the application form: <https://ej.uz/dabasmajuvasara>;

Receive an e-mail confirmation of the reservation of a place in the lesson.

Participants have to dress according to the weather and suitable for outdoor activities. The beginning and end of each lesson is at the Nature House.

Additional information about applying by phone +37126644834 or e-mail [dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv](mailto:dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv)

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For additional information:

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**Norway**  
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June 2, 2021

Information for the media

**Children invited to apply for summer lessons at the Nature House**

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**place on working days at the Nature House, Horse Island. It is possible to apply for June lessons from June 2. The number of places is limited.**

In June, children will have the opportunity to participate in the lessons "Bird Researcher" and "Young Geographer", during which they will go on an expedition around the Horse Island. In the "Bird Researcher" lesson, children will look into the world of birds, watch them, hear their voices and learn why a bird does not stay wet after a water bath? In addition, in the lesson "Young Geographer" there will be an opportunity to learn skills in orienting the environment and get acquainted with the work of a cartographer.

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- Friday (for children from 5 to 7 years old with parents):  
14:00 – 14:40 "**Bird Researcher**";  
15:00 – 15:40 "**Young Geographer**".

Information to apply for lessons:

Fill in the application form: <https://ej.uz/dabasmajuvasara>;

Receive an e-mail confirmation of the reservation of a place in the lesson.

Participants have to dress according to the weather and suitable for outdoor activities. The beginning and end of each lesson is at the Nature House.

Additional information about applying by phone +37126644834 or e-mail [dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv](mailto:dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv)

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For additional information:

Liepaja Municipal Education department

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## Norway grants

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May 31, 2021

Information for the media

### Young people discuss the topicality of biodiversity in the city

**On May 28, the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department organized the second youth debate, this time within the framework of the International Biodiversity Day. The aim of the discussion was to encourage young people to think about the importance of biodiversity also in the context of the urban environment.**

The participants of the debate tried to answer the question: 'Is the biodiversity for those living in the city relevant or not?'. Considering the different places of residence of young people, as well as the epidemiological constraints in the country, the debate took place on the online platform Zoom.

Fifteen young people from different cities of Latvia - Daugavpils, Kraslava, Aizpute and Cesis attended the debate. Four specialists also worked with the youth:

- Elina Peksenā, environmental education project manager of the World Wildlife Fund. The expert is also working on the Latvian Environmental Protection Fund's project 'Building a youth community that protects nature diversity';
- Anda Andrusaite, head of the Vidzeme Nature Education Center of the Nature Protection Agency;
- Regina Indriķe, nature expert and head of Latgale Nature Education Center;
- Jolanta Bara, head of the Natural Resources Department of Daugavpils City Council.

During the debate, it was confirmed that biodiversity is also important for those living in the city, it should be thought about and acted upon, because it is nature that contributes to our physical and mental well-being. The young people also highlighted the alienation of the townspeople from nature, which creates various current problems that are closely linked to education and public awareness, such as the importance of biodiversity anywhere in the world.

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May 18, 2021

*Information for the media*

### **The Nature House invites You to get to know the birds**

**One of the first heralds of spring is birds that travel through or return home to start nesting. This time the birds have also arrived at the Nature House of the Science and Education Innovation Center (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department. This spring, the Nature House houses the traveling exhibitions “Let's Get to Know the Birds” and “Beaks, Wings, Feathers” from the Talsi Regional Museum, as well as large-format games from the “Latvian Ornithological Society”.**

Considering the restrictions set in the country and the epidemiological situation, the exhibition is placed in the spacious windows of the Nature House, which also provides visitors of Horse Island with the opportunity to get acquainted with the diversity of birds when going for a walk. The exhibition tells about the nesting sites of birds, the feeding net, bird eggs, the types of their feathers and much more. To make exhibitions more interactive, they are supplemented with QR codes, in which everybody can find not only some educational games, but also listen to the voices of some of the most common birds.

In addition, the first interest education program “Environmental Management” is being implemented in the Nature House, in which one of the lessons is being developed on birds - “Bird Researcher”. The aim of the lesson is to stimulate students' interest in STEM and environmental sciences and to motivate them to choose a career in environmental and other natural sciences. That is why all those interested are invited to look at the Instagram account of ZIIC Nature House (@ziic\_dabasmaja), which shows a conversation with an ornithologist about birds, as well as other useful information.

The Nature House on Horse Island is located in a specially protected nature territory, which was originally established as an ornithological reserve for the protection of nesting and migratory birds. Liepaja lake is an important place to provide an important resting, feeding, nesting and feathering place for waterfowl during spring and autumn migration. It is also a place to protect specially protected bird species in Latvia and the European Union. Therefore, everyone is invited to watch the birds on Horse Island, to hear the beautiful nature singers through QR codes, as well as to learn something new about them.

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For additional information:

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## Norway grants

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May 5, 2021

Information for the media

### **The first installation “Ant House” opens the exhibition of the Nature House**

At the end of April, the first installation “Ant House” was placed in the co-creation space Nature House of the Science and Education Innovation Center (ZEIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department. The installation has been developed within the Norwegian (EEA / N) grant project "Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja City".

The installation displays a live ant nest that houses a tropical species of Australian weaver ants with their mother, males and working ants. In the "Ant House" anybody can observe life, natural diversity and natural processes such as the insect's developmental phases, feeding, habitat building, colony organization, etc. It also represents the Madagascar hissing cockroach family, as cockroaches are an integral part of the ant feeding process. The aim of the installation is to allow visitors to understand the importance of nature conservation, revealing how amazing different species are, how delicate work is invested in creating each habitat.

"Ant House" is not only a part of the exhibition, but it will also be used for demonstration in workshops, for educating preschool, primary and secondary school children, pedagogues of educational institutions. The study process includes a licensed lesson about ants “Ant Researcher”, which involves teachers' stories, visual demonstrations, creative tasks, interactive games, thus supplementing the content of the school program. The aim of the lesson is to stimulate students' interest in STEM and environmental sciences, as well as to motivate them to choose a career in environmental and other natural sciences.

The lesson “Ant Researcher” is intended for children and students of two age stages: preschool groups and 1st grade students, as well as 2nd – 4th grade students. In this lesson, students gain knowledge about the structure, appearance, food, habitat, the role of ants in maintaining a healthy ecosystem and their mutual hierarchy. Children have the opportunity to watch the ant nest online in real time, watch close-up video clips of the ant nest and participate in interactive activities to gain new knowledge creatively and with satisfaction.

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For additional information:

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## Norway grants

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April 28, 2021

Information for the media

### **The license is granted to the interest educational program “Environmental Management”**

On April 13, the interest education program “Environmental Management” for students in the age group 5 - 10 years obtained a license. The program has been developed within the Norwegian (EEA / N) grant project "Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja City" by the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department.

Seven different lessons have been included in the program. “Ant Researcher” is one of the first lessons that schools from different regions of Latvia are actively studying online. Other classes "Protected Nature Areas", "Quality of water", "Young Botanist", "Young Eco-technologist", "Bird Researcher", "Young Geographer" are planned to be implemented over the course of the project. Thus, in the co-creation space Nature House on Horse Island, as well as now - during the communication restrictions, licensed interest education lessons will be available online for students and preschool children.

"Our main goal is to stimulate students' interest in the STEM and environmental sciences, to motivate them to research and study about natural sciences with creative and innovative teaching methods, as well as to understand their importance in human life," emphasizes ZIIC methodologist Laura Poruka. The interest educational program has been developed with the participation of ZIIC environmental science expert Sniedze Vise, developed in cooperation with the experts of the Faculty of Science and Engineering of the University of Liepaja Roberts Jurmalietis and Ance Elstina, as well as with Norwegian partners from the Jaermuseet Regional Museum.

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For additional information:

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## Norway grants

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April 7, 2021

Information for the media

### **It is possible to apply for free lessons on Ants at the Nature House**

On April 7, the Nature House of the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department has announced an application for online remote learning for all educational institutions throughout Latvia. All lessons are implemented using the ZOOM platform.

The Nature House offers online lessons for children and students:

- "Ant researcher" for preschool groups (age group: 5-6 years) and 1st grade students. Duration: 20 minutes. It is possible to apply for lessons on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 - 9:50, 10:10 - 10:30, 10:50 - 11:10, 11:30 - 11:50.
- "Ant researcher" for 2nd - 4th grade students. Duration: 40 minutes. It is possible to apply for lessons on Wednesdays and Fridays at 9:20 - 10:00, 10:10 - 10:50, 11:20 - 12:00, 12:10 - 12:50.

The class will be divided in half, so for one full class (30 children) it is necessary to reserve two times. Lessons for 2nd - 4th grade students will start on April 14, but for preschool groups and 1st grade students - on April 15.

### **To apply for a lesson:**

- Write the application email to the address [dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv](mailto:dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv);
- The e-mail must indicate the educational institution, class or group name, number of children, teacher, teacher's contact phone number and e-mail to which we will be able to send the ZOOM access link;
- The representative of ZIIC will contact each teacher individually about the approved lesson application by calling the contact telephone number indicated in the e-mail;
- If the educational institution does not have the technical equipment for communication in the online lesson (microphone and / or camera), please inform the representative of ZIIC by e-mail or telephone.

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### **For additional information:**

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## Norway grants

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March 17, 2021

Information for the media

### **Experts from the Trondheim Science Center share experiences with partners from Liepaja**

On March 10th and 15th, 2021, employees of the Science and Education Innovation Center (ZIIC), project management of the University of Liepaja, as well as representatives of the Daugavpils Innovation Center met online with Norwegian partners from the Trondheim Science Center.

Innovation, research, education and competitiveness are the priorities of the Norwegian (EEA/N) grant project "Development of the Innovation Centre in Liepaja City". In order to develop the message of the project "Working together for a green, competitive and inclusive Europe", it is important to strengthen partnerships with professionals in the field.

Since 1988, the Trondheim Science Center has been promoting public curiosity and creativity by offering exciting activities, experiments, a 3D planetarium, a 360-degree space journey and other interactive installations for the whole family. Martin Kulhawczuk, head of exposition and development, presented interactive installations and emphasized the importance of science capital in modern society. This applies to the aggregation of all science-related knowledge, attitudes and resources that a person accumulates throughout his or her lifetime.

Anna Priedola, project manager of the University of Liepaja, presented installations that are being created in cooperation with ZIIC science and environmental experts: aquaponics system, bird development, nature and biodiversity, underwater world research. On the other hand, scientific expert Reinis Balodis demonstrated one of multimedia installations - kaleidoscope. It is planned to exhibit all installations in the Nature House, Zirgu sala 2, Liepaja.

At the second meeting, partners from Daugavpils Innovation Center joined and it was jointly decided to organize a study visit to Trondheim Science Centre at the end of 2021. If there are still restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, team members of the project will transfer training process on effective integration of installations and study programs online.

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## Norway grants

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March 1, 2021

Information for the media

### **The Science and Innovation Centre meets online with Norwegian partners**

In order to promote fellowship, discuss the progress of the project, and share experiences, employees of the Norwegian (EEA / N) grant project "Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja city" of Liepaja Municipal Education Department organized a meeting with Norwegian partners from the Jaermuseet Regional Museum through the Zoom platform on February 25th, 2021.

As the project provides development and implementation of educational programs at the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC)- purchase of the equipment for the co-creation space development at Autoru Street, as well as for the development of installations intended for the Nature house, the Norwegian partner's experience is influential.

At the beginning of the meeting Kristine Niedre-Lathere, Head of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department, emphasized the importance of partnership in the development of education sector. Project manager Laura Grundmane, environmental science expert Sniedze Vise, educational methodologist Laura Poruka and expert Kitija Kuduma presented the current progress of the project and vision for the future. In addition, project manager Magne Hognestad and his colleagues represented The Jaermuseet Regional Museum. In order to involve everybody in a passionate teaching performance of mathematics, participants of the meeting played the game "Magic Mathematics".

This meeting is significant for the implementation of the project, because the Norwegian experts' experience will be considered when developing effective educational programs, and co-creation spaces of the Innovation Center in Liepaja. As well as dialogue will help to find solutions to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to promote students' interest of the STEM and environmental sciences, ZIIC is planning to transfer a part of the learning process online.

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## Norway grants

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January 27, 2021

Information for the media

### **Young people discuss environmental career choices**

On January 27th, 2021, a youth discussion on the choice of career in environmental areas and its perspectives was held by the Nature House of The Science and Education Innovation Centre of the Liepaja Municipal Education Department. The debate was organized through the Zoom platform in cooperation with the Centre for Debate. Sixteen young people from four schools in Liepaja (Oskars Kalpaks Liepaja Secondary School No 15, Friendly Invitation Liepaja Secondary School No 5, Janis Cakste Secondary School No 10, and Liepaja State Gymnasium 1) attended the discussion.

In order to support students with training for the debate, four professionals were attracted – Gunta Sneidere (Gunta Šneidere) (chemist - technologist at "Liepajas Udens" Ltd), Laima Lapina (Laima Lapiņa) (environmental manager specialist at "Liepajas RAS" Ltd), Andra Bekere (Andra Beķere) (geographical system information specialist at Rural Support Service), and Ilze Elbere (Ilze Elbere) (researcher and head of the Student Council of the Latvian Centre for Biomedical Studies). These specialists are educated in one of the environmental areas, and they practically work in positions in accordance with the acquired profession. The role of experts in the discussion was to support young people with their practical experience in the field.

The focus of the debate was on career choices in environmental fields, encouraging students to think about whether they have a perspective on their careers and what the motivation could be. In addition, we encourage debaters to think about how global processes such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the rapid technological and scientific development, the economic and political situation in the world, etc. affect young people's career choices, especially in environmental professions.

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## Norway grants

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October 14, 2020

Information for the media

### **The Science and Education Innovation Centre signs an agreement on cooperation with Liepaja University**

This year on October 15 at 4pm in the Nature house Kristīne Niedre-Lathere, Head of Liepaja Municipal Education Department, and Dace Markus, Rector of Liepaja University are going to sign the Partnership Agreement on implementation of the activities planned by the European Economic Area and Norway (EEA / N) grant project "Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja City" in the Nature House and Co-creation Room on Auru Street.

The project envisages development and implementation of educational programmes at the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZEIC)- purchase of the equipment for the co-creation space development at Auru Street, as well as for the development of installations intended for the Nature House.

The Faculty of Humanitarian Sciences and Arts of Liepaja University will develop the content of digital installations within the framework of cooperation, also an exhibit that will be on display at the Nature house. In its turn, the Faculty of Science and Engineering together with the ZEIC experts will work out 5 exciting educational programmes for children aged from 5 to 10 and youngsters aged from 11-18 in the STEM (science, technologies, engineering and mathematics) and environmental sciences, including a non-formal education programme for teachers.

Similarly, within the framework of cooperation, students of Liepaja University will be offered opportunities to do student internships in the Nature house and co-creation space, as well as activities of experience and skills development and masterclasses. Thus, there will be a possibility to apply the ZEIC technological provision, where students will be able to create real, applicable solutions – installations with sound, audio-visual or animation elements, including participation in creative classes and other activities directed towards the target group. Right now, cooperating with the Faculty of Science and Engineering, the classes "Life in Water" are being held in the Nature house within the framework of student internships.

The project "Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja City" is financed by the EEA / N grant program "Research and Education". Its total costs are 986 049 EUR, out of which 754 327.40 EUR is co-financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, 133 116.60 EUR is co-financed by the Latvia State Budget, but 98 605.00 EUR is co-financed by the Liepaja City Municipality. The Liepaja City Municipality is going to implement the project in close cooperation with the partners involved in the project - Trondheim Science Centre, Jærmuseet Regional Museum in Norway and Liepaja University, as well as other science and innovation centres in Latvia.

#### **Information prepared by**

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October 8, 2020



**In the Nature house an interactive travelling exhibition “Nature healing – swamp” has been opened**

Today on October 8 an interactive travelling exhibition “Nature healing – swamp” has been opened, which has arrived from the Regional Administration of Nature Conservation Agency Nature Education Centre “Forest House.” The exhibition tells us in an exciting way about the swamp from an unusual angle – how the swamp and its resources serve for human health rehabilitation and recreation.

The air of the swamp is free from dust and flue gas, and it has got antibacterial features, which emerge from substances excreted by the swamp plants – phytoncides. Even though the variety of the swamp nature is comparatively small, every part of it serves for our health. Swamp animal watching can become a healthy and soothing way of recreation. Lots of people have heard that healing sulphur waters are formed under the swamps of Ķemeri National Park. Both the water itself and the peat sludge enriched with it are traditionally used in medicine. The exhibition provides interesting information on the healing properties of the swamp.

An interactive class, accompanied by teachers, is also included in the visit to the exhibition. Groups of pre-school, schools and individual visitors are kindly invited to see the exhibition. On October 15 specialists from the Nature Conservation Agency are going to arrive in order to conduct masterclasses for four groups of pupils and pre-schools.

Visitors can attend the exhibition in the Nature house of the Science and Innovations Centre at 2 Zirgu sala (Horse Island), Liepaja till December 15. Visits should be arranged in advance by calling 26644834 or writing an email to: [dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv](mailto:dabasmaja@liepaja.edu.lv).

The time for pre-school and pupils' group visits: on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays at 9:30am and 11:30am. The time for individuals and groups: on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays at 2pm and 4pm, also on Saturdays at 11:30am, 2pm and 4pm.

The project "Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja City" is financed by the EEA / N grant program "Research and Education". Its total costs are 986 049 EUR, out of which 754 327 EUR is co-financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, 133 116 EUR is co-financed by the Latvia State Budget, but 98 605 EUR is co-financed by the Liepaja City Municipality.

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Science and Education Innovation Centre Nature house

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*August 27, 2020*



**In Liepaja the Nature house has been opened in a Festive Occasion**

In order to promote public interest in environmental science and nature studies, on Thursday, August 27 the Nature house on the Zirgu sala (Horse island) was opened in a festive occasion in the presence of the Minister of Education and Science, management of Liepaja City Council, project partners and specialists in the field of education.

In this place during the following three years an interactive exposition of environmental sciences will be created and a laboratory opened in which the inhabitants of Liepaja and its guests will be able to explore natural processes in an exciting way. During the next 36 months it has been planned to make 15 interactive installations, equip the laboratory of environmental sciences, develop new educational programmes for pupils and teachers, also arrange various masterclasses.

The visit to the Nature house during the project has been planned for free of charge, and it will be possible to apply for free classes and training as well.



"I am convinced that the visit to the Nature house for the young inhabitants of Liepaja and city guests, will be a once in a-lifetime experience, in which they will be able to acquire new knowledge and complement their existing knowledge through a completely different competency approach to learning. The unwritten purpose of this new place is to be close to nature, explore it and at the same time to become more knowledgeable. Today we have laid an important foundation for the growth of the new generation," emphasized Jānis Vilnītis, the Chairman of Liepaja City Council.

The Nature house is just one of the places where during the following years educational programmes related to environmental science are planned to be implemented – there is a plan to create a co-creation space at 4/6 Avotu Street, which will supplement the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) with state-of-the-art exhibits, technologies and equipment, as well as with new interest-related educational programmes. "We are proud that we together with our cooperation partners have managed to combine smartly such important things for Liepaja – nature and science. May this place be for all of us as a source of inspiration, where the people of Liepaja and city guests can get to know the versatile environmental science, enhance our knowledge and awareness of what is happening around us," said Kristīne Pujāte, Head of the ZIIC and the Nature house.

It is planned to implement the project in three years in order to promote development of pre-school children, pupils and teachers' knowledge in STEM (science, technologies, engineering and mathematics) and environmental areas.

Development of educational programmes and installations will start in the nearest months. However, it is possible to apply for a visit to the Nature house right now by calling or writing to the ZIIC.

Even though the exposition is merely in the development stage and the first exhibits are planned to be displayed in spring next year, currently in the Nature house it is possible to see the exhibits created by the ZIIC's specialists' and cooperation partners which is like a little glimpse into the envisaged. Visitors will be able to get familiar with the invasive species of Latvia till September 29, attending the exhibition of the Latvian Museum of Natural History "Strangers in Our Nature." Visits should be arranged in advance, the first visit for individual visitors has been planned at 4pm on August 28.

In its turn, starting from September, individual visitors can apply for visits from Wednesday to Saturday at 2pm and 4pm, on Saturdays at 11.30am. Groups of pupils will be offered visits in the morning hours. You can apply for classes by contacting ZIIC specialists – email: [ziic@liepaja.edu.lv](mailto:ziic@liepaja.edu.lv), phone: 26644834, more information: [www.facebook.com/LiepajaZIIC](https://www.facebook.com/LiepajaZIIC)

The exposition of the Nature House will be created within the framework of the EEA / N grant program "Research and Education" financed by the project "Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja City." Its total cost is 986 049 EUR, out of which 754 327 EUR is co – financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, 133 116 EUR is co-financed by the Latvia State Budget, but 98 605 EUR is co-financed by the Liepaja City Municipality.

The building of the Nature house was created with the support of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), within the framework of the event "Implementation of Community-led Local Development Strategies," the total costs of the building and environmental improvement is 458 703,65 EUR, out of which 270 000 EUR is from the EMFF and 188 703, 65 EUR from the Liepaja City Municipality.

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*July 23, 2020*

### **The Science and Education Innovation Centre of Liepaja launches a new development project**

On July 23 Dita Traidās, Director of the State Education Development Agency (SEDA) and Inga Ekuze, the acting director of Liepaja Municipal Education Department signed an agreement on the implementation of the European Economic Area and Norway (EEA/N) grant project “Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja City” in order to modernize the Science and Education Innovation Centre (ZIIC) in Liepaja.

The project envisages improvement of the Nature house and development of co-creation space which will supplement the ZIIC with modern exhibits, technologies and equipment, as well as new interest-related educational programmes. “It is important that we create new possibilities in regions of Latvia for a modern learning and co-creation environment development, which is going to be filled up with exciting educational programmes and classes for children and youngsters in the STEM (science, technologies, engineering and mathematics) areas. At the same time development of such innovation centres open up new cooperation forms between the comprehensive education, higher education and scientific institutions in Latvia and Norway,” emphasizes Dita Traidās, Director of the SEDA.

It is planned to implement the project in three years in order to promote development of the pre-school children, pupils and teachers’ knowledge in the STEM and environmental areas. It is planned to create co-creation space in the centre, also make an exposition in the Nature house. Development of the innovation centre will create new, modern and educational programmes both for youngsters and teachers about the STEM and environmental areas in order to change the stereotypes and concepts about the complex and serious nature of science and technologies. “Due to the project implementation, we will create opportunities for Liepaja residents and city guests to study environmental science in the Nature house, as well as acquire knowledge and skills in design thinking, implementing technically creative work. We are convinced that the project will promote development of the education sector in the city, exciting and contemporarily equipped learning environment will be as a foundation for pupils and also teachers in the development of their knowledge and skills,” mentions Inga Ekuze, the acting director of Liepaja Municipal Education Department. The project “Development of the Innovation Center in Liepaja City” is financed by the EEA / N grant program “Research and Education”. Its total costs are 986 049.00 EUR, out of which 754 327.40 EUR is co-financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, 133 116.60 EUR is co-financed by the Latvia State Budget, but 98 605.00 EUR is co-financed by the Liepaja City Municipality. The Liepaja City Municipality is going to implement the project in close cooperation with the partners involved in the project - Trondheim Science Centre, Jærmuseet Regional Museum in Norway and Liepaja University, as well as other science and innovation centres in Latvia.

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