



## **Annual Plan 2026**

**The Life Sciences & Health Industry of Northern Netherlands**

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*Topregion in Life Sciences & Health*

# The Life Sciences & Health industry of the Northern Netherlands

For the industry, by the industry



# In collaboration with our partners





## Background: 10+ years LIFE Cooperative

The LIFE Cooperative was founded in 2014 by entrepreneurs active in the LSH sector of the Northern Netherlands, aiming to enhance their innovativeness and create sustainable, growing employment.

Over the past 10 years, the LIFE Cooperative has become a leading national example of the power of collaboration among entrepreneurs.

Through dozens of prominent projects, the cooperative has generated over €100 million in shared investments and created more than 500 new high-quality jobs.

# Background: 10+ years

## LIFE Cooperative

**2014** Founding of the cooperative, 15 SMEs, €75M turnover & 750 fte

**2015** Pharma Portal & InnoLab, 20 SMEs, €100M turnover & 1.000 fte

**2016** Shared purchasing & training, 25 SMEs, €125M turnover & 1.250 fte

**2017** Pharma Connect Capital, 30 SMEs, €150M turnover & 1.500 fte

**2018** Open Diagnostics, 35 SMEs, €200M turnover & 2.000 fte

**2019** Accelerator MedTech, 40 SMEs, €250M turnover & 2.500 fte

**2020** InnoLab Chemistry 2.0, 45 SMEs, €300M turnover & 3.000 fte

**2021** Pharma-NL Growthfund, 46 SMEs, €350M turnover & 3.250 fte

**2022** LIFE Academy, 48 SMEs, €400M turnover & 3.750 fte

**2023** Conference & Award, 50 SMEs, €450M turnover & 4.250 fte

**2024** Improved governance, 55 SMEs, €475M turnover & 4.500 fte

**2025** Industry Agenda & Springboard integration, 60 SMEs, €500M turnover & 5.000 fte





# 1. Overview 2025

## Shared vision, an Industry Agenda

When 2025 started, the cooperative's focus was on building a more professional and sustainable organization to better support members in collaboration, innovation and human capital.

Two new Boardmembers (Annelies Wolters and Koos Koops) and a Managing Director (Ronald Hesse) were installed, and their fresh perspectives were reflected in 2025's annual plan.

# 1. Overview 2025 - Shared vision, an Industry Agenda

The Board is proud to conclude that 2025 turned out to be a productive year. The improved governance was effective in motivating members, partners, taskforces and team-members towards meaningful impact with respect for the cooperative's core values. The incorporation of Springboard's members during 2025, provides further proof to its value.

During 2025, the LIFE Cooperative introduced its Industry Agenda to identify and demonstrate regional economic capabilities and scalabilities. It has been the central topic in the LIFE Conference amongst others, providing a solid foundation for future development and partnerships.

During the 4th edition of the LIFE Conference, two of the cooperative's founders were honored with royal credits: Ton Vries and Johannes Wolters were awarded for their tireless efforts over the past decade.

During the LIFE Conference, the 2025 LIFE Innovation Award was awarded to CC Diagnostics for their innovation and impactful progress over the past 12 months.

2025 also saw several important projects granted aimed at innovation and facilities, such as Pharma-NL's Human Capital Growth (Bio-processing and Imaging Education) and Shared Development Infrastructure (Imaging Facility), as well as the LSH Portal and other regional SNN programs (Care2Change amongst others). This further strengthened collaboration between members and partners and creates additional infrastructure to support growth and innovation.

**By the end of 2025, the LIFE Cooperative has over 60 members that together employ over 5.000 FTE and generate over € 500 million in turnover.**





## 1. Perspective 2030 an EU-front runner

The LIFE Cooperative aims to become a recognized front runner in Europe by 2030, for its excellence in cluster management and societal and economic impact. That entails a growth ambition that matches its members', and a united focus on societal and technological transitions.

The LIFE Industry Agenda that was initiated in 2025 provides a solid foundation for a regional innovation and investment strategies, which will require intensified collaborations with the cooperative's partners in the region.

# 1. Perspective 2030 - an EU-front runner

The cooperative will continue its efforts to stimulate the availability and facilitating access to talent, knowledge, facilities and funding. It furthermore aims to expand its entrepreneurial, economic and societal impact capabilities in:

- Biomarkers, Diagnostics & Drug Development
- Polymers for Health & Drug Delivery
- Enabling Health Technologies
- Green Chemistry & Pharmaceutical Manufacturing
- Nuclear & Molecular Imaging

*More detail in Chapter 4.*

The anticipated growth of the cooperative is best described in the following metrics:

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
<b>Members</b>	70+	75+	80+	85+	90+
<b>FTE</b>	5,500	6,000	6,400	6,800	7,000
<b>Turnover</b>	550M	600M	640M	700M	750M



## 2. Vision, Mission & Focus

**Vision:** The LIFE Cooperative strives to create an environment in which its members' knowledge development and power to innovate contributes sustainably to health and well-being.

**Mission:** The LIFE Cooperative strengthens the position of its members in the regional Life Sciences & Health sector by facilitating collaboration, providing access to talent, knowledge, facilities, and funding, stimulating innovation and sustainable economic activities, and representing the interests of its members with partners such as policymakers, educational and research institutes, investors, and suppliers.

## 2. Vision, Mission & Focus

### **Focus:**

- Network and collaboration
- Impact-entrepreneurship
- Sustainable innovation
- Member representation
- Access to technology
- Talent, facilities & funding
- Talent-development & leadership

### **Goals 2026:**

During 2026, the translation of the Industry Agenda into fundable programs and projects will be prioritized. It will require thematic focus- and expert-groups and improved communication-, decision making- and data-processes and -infrastructure as well as the necessary financial sponsors.

An overview of performance-indicators can be found in Attachment 2.





### 3. Members, Partners & Representation

The members of the LIFE Cooperative are companies active in the Life Sciences & Health (LSH) sector in the three northern provinces of the Netherlands.

The cooperative's members work in a variety of fields, such as (Bio) Medical Technology & Devices, Molecules & Materials, Contract Research, Development & Manufacturing, Pharmaceuticals & Therapeutics, etcetera. They are all highly innovative, held to high-quality (ethical and regulatory) standards and strive to improve human health and optimize well-being.

By the end of 2025, the LIFE Cooperative has over 60 members that together employ more than 5.000 FTE and generate over € 500 million in turnover.

### 3. Members, Partners & Representation

The members of the LIFE cooperative set the strategic direction during the semi-annual General Member Meetings. The Board and the Managing Director translate this direction into annual plans and oversee their implementation through regular board meetings. Support is provided by an experienced Management Team, contracted from Campus Groningen. *See Chapter 8 for more info on Organization & Budget.*

To support execution, various Working Groups are established with participants from members and partners, focusing on areas such as Human Resources, Business Development, Funding and Compliance. In addition, the LIFE Cooperative participates in several project structures on behalf of its members.

In 2026, several thematic taskforces will be launched to drive progress on key topics of the Industry Agenda.





### 3. Members, Partners & Representation

The LIFE cooperative has a group of highly valued partners, including knowledge- and research-institutes, governments, suppliers and individuals (ambassadors). All partners share a synergistic mentality with the cooperative's members.

This network is actively supported through physical meetings, online knowledge exchange and project-based collaboration. The cooperative aims to foster an increasingly accessible and engaged community. To monitor member needs and effectively represent their interests, an annual factsheet is produced outlining key developments.

At the events and community level, the LIFE Cooperative will organize the 5th edition of the LIFE Sciences Conference in 2026, along with returning events such as LIFE Connect and the LIFE Barbecue. It also facilitates joint participation in relevant industry events, including the Dutch Life Sciences Days, the BCF Career Event and BIO EU Spring & Fall; arranging shared representation where appropriate.

An overview of all meetings is attached (Appendix 3).

Brand positioning and external visibility are strengthened through regional press coverage, national advertising and targeted public relations. In 2026, the cooperative will launch a new interactive website focusing on user-friendliness, community features and integrated communication channels such as newsletters and social media. In parallel, the cooperative will explore the development of an accessible communication platform for members to exchange ideas and collaborate.

The LIFE Cooperative shares impact stories through its website, newsletters and social media, develops a media and press kit, and engages in active PR to bring success stories to the attention of regional and national media. An annual Impact Report highlights the cooperative's main achievements and overall impact. Maintaining relationships with external stakeholders and media partners remains an integral part of these communication efforts.



## 4. Industry Agenda

In 2025, the Life Cooperative developed a comprehensive industry agenda focused on innovation and further growth. Technology roadmaps were developed focusing on five key areas: In all areas, the preconditions for collaboration, innovation, and growth must be improved to further enhance these key areas' competitive advantage. Investments in human capital, facilities, innovation programs, and financing are therefore central. In total, the LIFE Cooperative expects to realize over €400 million in investments over the next 10 years, from a mix of private and public sources. This is expected to generate an additional annual revenue of over €100 million.

## 4. Industry Agenda

The Industry Agenda is central to the cooperative's strategy in 2026. Deepened collaboration with partners is vital in building fundable programs and projects on a regional (e.g. NijBegun), national (e.g. Wennink), and international (e.g. Draghi) scale. Technology roadmaps were developed for five key areas and investments in preconditions are central in all areas (ie. human capital, facilities, innovation programs and funding solutions).

- **Polymers for health:** Over 1,250 FTE from 20+ companies are working on high-quality drug delivery systems, stents and coatings, and other end products based on, among other things, excellent polymer chemistry. This group has contributed to the well-being of 10+ million patients worldwide. With joint investments in start- & scale-ups, state-of-the-art (GMP) cleanrooms, and high-end, innovative equipment, the region can take a major step toward expanding its competitive advantage.
- **Biomarkers & Drug Development:** More than 20 companies with over 1,500 FTEs and €175 million in revenue already form a global player in contract research and development. Significant investments have been made in regional knowledge and startup infrastructure over the past 20 years, creating significant opportunities. The region can now strengthen its economic position and increase its impact on well-being through long-term commitment to follow-up funding for startups and scale-ups and joint investments in facilities and equipment.
- **Enabling Health Tech:** A dynamic, innovative group of more than 20 companies with a combined turnover of approximately €50 million and 750 FTEs creates products that contribute to the well-being of patients at all stages of their lives, from before birth. The shared ambition lies in preventive, personalized, and sustainable Enabling Health Tech, supported by the latest technologies such as AI. The region has a strong knowledge base but lacks the infrastructure for commercial scale-up and industrialization. With broad investment in the value chain, specifically in joint testing and production facilities, the region can develop into a European hotspot.
- **Nuclear & Molecular Imaging:** to be developed; a strong foundation of knowledge and infrastructure with global leadership potential.
- **Meaningful & Sustainable Pharma Production:** to be developed; autonomy in drug production for generic and innovative drug-products.



## 5. Talent & Knowledge

### LIFE Academy

To address the growing challenges in the field of Human Capital, the LIFE Cooperative initiated the development of its Academy in 2023; a platform for strategic collaboration in finding, retaining, (further) developing, and exchanging talent, knowledge, and skills.



## 5. Talent & Knowledge - LIFE Capital, move people forward

### Professionalizing the Academy:

*LIFE Capital - 'move people forward'*



The LIFE Academy is undergoing a significant transition: from a program with several projects to an independent entity within the LIFE Cooperative. This new phase marks a strategic step toward a future-proof organization that sustainably adds value to the life sciences and health ecosystem in the region and beyond.

To successfully position this entity, a sustainable revenue model is being developed together with a new brand. This ensures that LIFE Capital can not only continue its activities but also grow and innovate resulting in more and focused Human Capital activities.

Within LIFE Capital, HR Captains are appointed from member and partner organizations. They play an advisory role at both tactical and strategic levels and contribute to the further professionalization of the cooperative's academy. Their expertise supports policy development, strengthens talent development activities, enhances company engagement and helps realize the organization's ambitions: organize sufficient and qualified talent to boost the competitive position of member organizations.

Once set up, the portfolio of meaningful activities all over the talent pipeline (LLO, career events, curricula development, etc.) can be extended based on the needs of the LIFE Cooperative members.



## 6. Startups & Funding

Central to almost all the cooperative's activities are innovations, and a large part of its members are startups. During 2026, further research will be conducted into the needs of these innovators. Important topics include Compliance, Health Economics, Financial Engineering and Fund-Matchmaking.



## 6. Startups & Funding

The cooperative's startups generally experience a lot of value from its network and the informal meetings. That is why the cooperative regularly organizes LIFE Startup Events (e.g., breakfasts, drinks, founders events).

Access to funding is an important topics to innovation in general: private such as Future Tech Ventures, the Northern Development Agency (NV NOM), the Rabobank (Innovation Loan) and NextGen Ventures; public such as the Just Transition Fund (JTF), European Regional Development Fund (EFRO) and the National Program Groningen (NPG) / NijBegun. The LIFE Cooperative therefore invests in the establishment of the LIFE Portal, which helps to link startups to suitable resources and acts as a linking pin in the LSH startup ecosystem.

Through LIFE Portal, members can work on plans to develop a proposition within the region's distinctiveness in LSH. Until mid-2028, the cooperative has budgeted 2,3m euro to realize impactful plans in line with our industry agenda. The Portal is subsidized by the European Fund for Regional Development (SNN-EFRO).

The cooperative aims to develop a shared CRM to better monitor and guide its startups and innovations. To this end, there is close cooperation with Founded, a partnership that also includes access to PHX Fundraising and Investor- and Market-Readiness programs. In addition, the LIFE Cooperative offers podia for its startups, e.g., through the Innovation Award during the LIFE Science Conference.



## 7. Facilities & Services

The LIFE Cooperative is committed to continuously explore the potential for economies of scale, to facilitate more efficient and cost-effective access to, and, if possible, shared use of, crucial equipment and facilities.

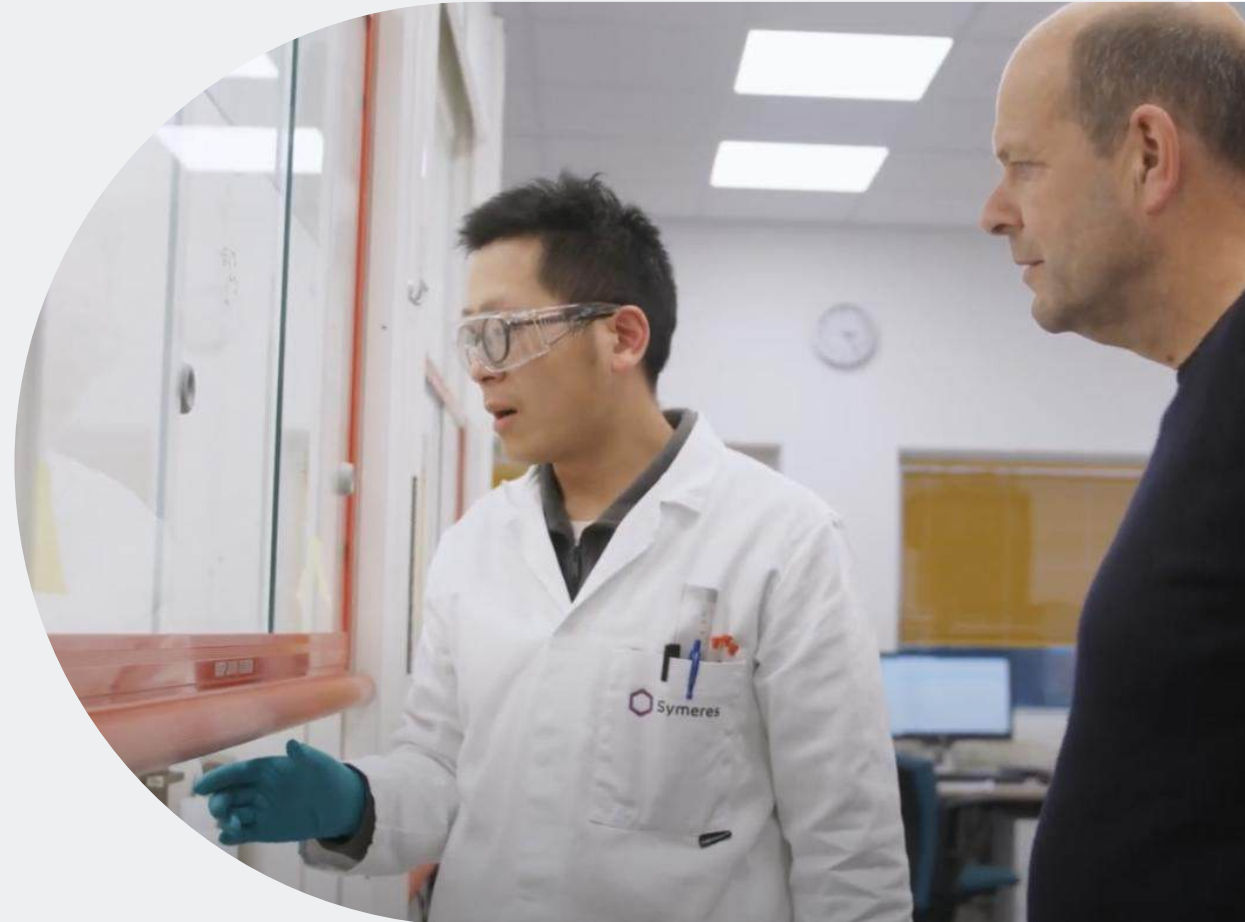
By working together, members can optimally utilize, accelerate, and de-risk investments, which also applies to maintenance and service contracts.

## 7. Facilities & Services

By conducting a strategic inventory of the equipment currently in use and assessing members' needs, the cooperative aims to facilitate effective investments, maintenance, and usage.

To take targeted action, a member survey is essential. The pipeline targets areas such as BioAnalytics & Genomics, Polymers & Drug Delivery, Green Chemistry & Bioprocessing, and Diagnostics & Imaging, including GMP production and laboratory facilities.

Furthermore, the cooperative expects to explore the feasibility of a 'shared equipment fund' during 2026. Such a fund could provide services such as 'buy-lease-back' solutions.





## 8. Organization & Budget

The LIFE Cooperative strives to be an efficient and transparent organization, focused on three core areas: governance and supervision, bylaws and regulations, and administrative organization and control.



## 8. Organization & Budget

An evaluation was conducted in 2024 to identify legal bottlenecks. In 2025, the statutes and regulations were updated. Members and partners were involved in these revisions, ensuring relevance and compliance.

Given the cooperative's ambitions, the roles and responsibilities of the board and management team are continuously recalibrated. Their effectiveness is ensured through transparency and accountability towards all members and partners.

With more standardized procedures, the LIFE Cooperative will increase its efficiency and reliability. Internal control systems and periodic audits minimize risks, strengthen the cooperative's integrity, improve its internal functioning, and increase the trust and involvement of its members and partners.



# 8. Organisation & Budget

## LIFE Cooperative's Management Team

**Ronald Hesse**  
Managing Director  
*Partnerships & Facilities*



**Selma van der Veen**  
Project Coordinator  
*Members & Partners*



**Sven Stielstra**  
Business Developer  
*Human Capital*



**Amber van der Schaaf**  
Communication Manager  
*Content, Creative & Events*



**Daan van Oldeniel**  
Business Developer  
*Startups, Innovation & Funding*



**Kelly Kroeze**  
Communication Expert  
*Content, Creative & Events*





# 8. Organisation & Budget

## LIFE Cooperative's Board

**Peter Ketelaar**  
CEO iPSomics  
*Chairman & Partnerships*



**Annelies Wolters**  
CEO Lode Holding  
*Treasurer & Communications*



**Robert Hof, VP Corporate Development InnoCore**  
*Facilities & Services*



**Melloney Dröge**  
Managing Director Symeres  
*Human Capital*



**Koos Koops**  
LSH-investor  
*Innovation & Funding*



**Linda Dijkshoorn**  
CBO EV Biotech  
*Startups & Innovation*





# Appendices

Appendix 1: Budget Summary 2026

Appendix 2: Targeted Objectives & Performance Indicators 2026

Appendix 3: Event Planning 2026

# Appendix 1: Budget Summary 2026

The LIFE Cooperative facilitates cost-sharing with the aim to break-even.

	Revenue	Costs	Results
1. Members / management	175.000	180.000	- 5.000
2. Meetings / events	95.000	90.000	+ 5.000
3. Academy / trainings	350.000	350.000	0
4. Projects / facilities	330.000	325.000	+ 5.000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>950.000</b>	<b>945.000</b>	<b>+ 5.000</b>

## Appendix 2: 2026's Targeted Objectives & Performance indicators

TARGETED OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Translating the Industry Agenda into fundable projects.</li><li>- Implementing thematic focus- and expert-groups.</li><li>- Implementing improvements to communication-, decision making- and data-processes and -infrastructure.</li><li>- Organizing increasingly impactful events, i.e., the LIFE Conference and the LIFE Connects.</li><li>- Publishing the first edition of "LIFE Impact Report" for 2025.</li></ul>	<table><tr><td>MEMBERS 60+</td><td>MEETINGS 10+</td></tr><tr><td>PARTNERS 25+</td><td>TRAININGS 10+</td></tr><tr><td>SMEs 35 Startups 25 Institutes 10 Individuals 5 Sponsors 10</td><td>PROJECTS 10+</td></tr></table>	MEMBERS 60+	MEETINGS 10+	PARTNERS 25+	TRAININGS 10+	SMEs 35 Startups 25 Institutes 10 Individuals 5 Sponsors 10	PROJECTS 10+
MEMBERS 60+	MEETINGS 10+						
PARTNERS 25+	TRAININGS 10+						
SMEs 35 Startups 25 Institutes 10 Individuals 5 Sponsors 10	PROJECTS 10+						

# Appendix 3: Event Planning 2026

Date	Name, location	Status
HUMAN CAPITAL		
February 3th	Meet & Greet Life Sciences	Preparation
March 12-13th	Beta Business Days	Exploration
May 28th	BCF Career Event	Preparation
June 2-5th	ISCOMS	Exploration
ACQUISITIE / BRANDING		
March 17-19th		Preparation
April 3rd		Preparation
June 16-19th		Exploration
June 22-28th		Exploration
November 3-5th		Exploration
December 11th		Exploration
INTERN / OVERIG		
March 5th	LIFE Connect	Preparation
May 7th	LIFE Connect	Preparation
July 6th	LIFE BBQ	Preparation
September 22th	LIFE Science Conference	Preparation
October 8th	LIFE Connect	Preparation
December 10th	LIFE Connect	Preparation
LEARNING COMMUNITIES		
March 12th	QA/RA-Compliance	Preparation
March 13th	Strategic HR	Preparation
t.b.d.	Sustainability	Exploration
t.b.d. (quarterly)	QA/RA-Compliance	Exploration
t.b.d. (quarterly)	Strategic HR	Exploration

