

Letter of support

Utrecht, Netherlands, May 20th 2019

Subject Horizon Impact Award for Institutions for Collective Action

Dear Members of the European Committee,

“May you live in interesting times”, apparently an old Chinese curse that could well have been a Dutch one. The Netherlands is undergoing interesting times in our (civil) society and the social developments. The Institutions for Collective Action helps us understand recent developments. Therefore and with this letter I underline our support for the ICAs in their application for the Horizon Impact Award.

It is with great pleasure that the Landelijk Samenwerkingsverband Actieve Bewoners (LSA Bewoners) writes this letter to endorse the application of ICAs. They provide us with crucial insights in collective action, the role and history of commons and the position and role of community initiatives in the Netherlands. We especially appreciate the long term perspective in times of quick positions and little time for public discourse. The interaction between research and day to day practice helps us understand in what way we can support and give voice to the community sector.

For the LSA Bewoners ICAs is an important partner in knowledge and innovation. The Landelijk Samenwerkingsverband Actieve bewoners (LSA) is the national association for community led organisations in the Netherlands. We believe community is the answer to many of society's questions, and our members work tirelessly to build strong, inclusive and thriving communities. All of our members are community led, some are particularly enterprising, some focus on influencing local policy, and some focus on small scale activities in their neighbourhood. We support our members by facilitating knowledge exchange, by giving a collective voice to the movement and speaking truth to power (generally national government) and by instigating innovative new practices.

To us, the impact of the work of ICAs is evident. The societal benefits are in our opinion considerably and utterly relevant. For example: we worked together in a study of the functions of representative community organizations in a society of change. It helps us with reshaping and refunctioning some of our member organizations. ICAs is also involved in a joint movement of grassroots initiatives called ‘we do it ourselves’ (‘We doen het zelf’ in Dutch).

We sincerely hope that you will grant the Horizon Impact Award to the IASc. It would be a great boost for the ICAs, but also for the community sector and everybody involved in collective action in the Netherlands.

Yours sincerely,

Thijs van Mierlo
Director Landelijk Samenwerkingsverband Actieve bewoners

