Privacy statement: NATURELAB EU (HE)

Date: 30th of June 2026

The Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (hereinafter: "**VU"**) and the Laboratorio Nacional de Engenharia Civil (hereafter “LNEC”), attaches great importance to the protection of your privacy and the security of your personal data. In this privacy statement we describe how we handle your personal data as part of the research project “Nature-based interventions in the Gardens of Brasa in Amsterdam South-East, the Netherlands”. This research has the purpose of conducting health-related research, including analyzing barriers to accessing healthcare, identifying and testing nature-based interventions (such as spending time in green spaces, engaging in outdoor activities, or participating in gardening), and evaluating their effectiveness in improving health, well-being, and community resilience.
We process your personal data in accordance with applicable privacy legislation, including the General Data Protection Act (hereinafter: "**GDPR "**) and the General Data Protection Implementation Act.

1. Who is responsible for the processing of my personal data?

Stichting VU is responsible for the data processing operations described in this privacy statement.

Stichting VU maintains the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam as a privately run university in accordance with the Higher Education and Research Act of The Netherlands (‘*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek’).* Stichting VU has its registered office at De Boelelaan 1105 in (1081 HV) Amsterdam and is registered with the Chamber of Commerce under number 53815211.

Data will be shared with the project coordinator “LNEC” (PIC 998850517, AV DO BRASIL 101, Lisboa 1700-066, Portugal) with the NatureLab participants app. These data are pseudonymous (individuals are not directly identifiable).

2. What (categories of) personal data will be processed?

We will process the following personal data:

a. Name and address/e-mail address details, mobile number, digital signature

b. Professional details (education, employment status, current or past profession)

c. Age, gender, marital status, household composition, household income level, migration background

d. Completed questionnaires*, structured observations, transcripts or recordings of interviews, audio recordings:

*Questionnaires are about your mental health history, cognitive impairment, acute conditions, current psychotherapeutic or psychopharmacological intervention, suicidal thoughts, well-being, stress, quality of life, self-esteem, self-stigma, loneliness, chronic illnesses, allergies, smoking habits, and blood pressure and heart rate measurements, nature connection, perceived quality of natural areas.

* The study uses a health and psychological screening that includes self-report questionnaires on past mental health diagnoses and acute medical conditions, together with additional measures of psychological and physical wellbeing. Cardiovascular and respiratory status will be measured before and after each session. For participants under 16, only allergy status will be recorded.

- We register your attendance and assessment completion
- We will observe selected NBI sessions to understand how they are delivered and how participants interact.
- We will interview you (alone, or in a group) about your experiences with the program, including benefits, challenges, and everyday impact. If you agree, these conversations will be audio-recorded.

3. For which purposes are my personal data processed, and on the basis of which legal grounds?

The personal data will only be used for the following purposes:

a. This processing is necessary for scientific research, transdisciplinary health studies, and the advancement of medical knowledge. Data might be presented at conference or published in scientific publications.

We process your personal data on the basis of the following legal grounds:

- You have given consent to the processing of your personal data. In that case you have the right to withdraw your consent at any time by contacting us via the contact details below.

4. Who has access to my personal data?

The personal data will only be accessed by employees of the VU who by reason of their function have a role in the processing of your personal data for the abovementioned purposes and for whom it is necessary that they have access to the personal data. Your directly identifying personal data (e.g. signed consent forms; name and contact details) will be assigned a code. This code will only be accessible to the VU research team and kept separate from other data. Selected personal data (e.g, names and contact details) will be shared with facilitators of the group activities in nature for logistical, quality and safety reasons (e.g. to be able check who is present during sessions, where needed reschedule sessions in case of bad weather conditions, use participants by name to establish rapport and create positive group dynamics, etc.). Also, for participants making use of the free childcare services offered during group sessions, their contact details will be shared with volunteers responsible for childcare services. GroenplatVorm ZuidOost, as subcontracted partner to the VU, supports the VU in the recruitment and screening of participants, therefore they may have temporary access to personal data of some participants. Any personal data collected by GroenplatVorm ZuidOost will be shared with the VU as soon as possible. Only the VU will store the personal data. LNEC will have only access to pseudonymous data.

5. Will my personal data be shared with third parties?

When processing your personal data, we may use service providers (processors) who process your personal data on behalf of and under the responsibility of the VU and LNEC. The VU and LNEC concludes processing agreements with these service providers to ensure that your personal data is processed carefully, securely and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We remain solely responsible for these processing activities.

Your personal data will not be shared with other parties. Should this be the case at any time, we will inform you of this. We only disclose personal data to third parties to the extent permitted by privacy law, for example because you have given your prior consent or we are legally obliged to do so.

6. Will my personal data be transferred to countries outside of the European Economic Area?

The research uses Qualtrics for the screening questionnaire and consent form for participation. Qualtrics is a secure online survey tool that follows data protection rules (GDPR). It allows participants to fill in the screening and consent forms online. The system safely collects, stores, and shares the data in protected form. The screening answers will only be used to check if someone can take part in the study. They will not be connected to personal details given in the consent form, except for what is needed to contact participants. This results in personal data being transferred to the United States. Qualtrics is certified under the EU–US Data Privacy Framework, which constitutes an adequacy decision by the European Commission and therefore ensures an adequate level of data protection.

7. For how long will my personal data be retained?

We will not retain your personal data for longer than is necessary to achieve the predetermined purposes or as long as required by law.

Categories of personal data	Retention period
Names, contact information	10 years after the last publication
Professional details	10 years after the last publication
Basic demographic characteristrics	10 years after the last publication
Information about health conditions* (see 2.)	10 years after the last publication
Consent data (consent forms, participant agreements)	10 years

8. How will my personal data be secured?

The VU takes appropriate technical and organizational measures to protect your personal data against loss and any form of unlawful processing. All personal data will be stored by on **Research Drive** (VU's protected cloud environment designed for collaborative research data storage, with access restricted to authorised team members). Data will be backed-up on **SurfDrive**, a secure cloud service compliant with GDPR standards, enduring data continuity. All pseudonymous data will be stored on **Yoda** (our data management platform that supports FAIR data principles and provides controlled access). By using different platforms, we immediately separate sensitive data (i.e. personal data) from less sensitive data (i.e. pseudonymous data).

9. Who can I contact with questions about the processing of my personal data?

You can ask questions about how we process your personal data via c.meierzubiesen@vu.nl.

10. How can I exercise my privacy rights?

On the basis of the GDPR you have the right – under certain conditions – to access your personal data that we process, to correct your personal data if it contains factual inaccuracies, to delete your personal data, to limit the processing of your personal data, to portability of your personal data and to object to the processing of your personal data.

If you wish to exercise any of these privacy rights, you can contact the Data Protection Officer of VU Amsterdam via:

Data Protection Officer
De Boelelaan 1105
1081 HV AMSTERDAM
functionarisgegevensbescherming@vu.nl

To be able to deal with your request, you may be asked to identify yourself on the basis of additional personal data that the VU has of you. If this method of identification is not possible, you may be asked to identify yourself with an identification card. In this way it will be verified that the request has been made by the right person. If you are not satisfied with the way in which we deal with your personal data, you always have the right to submit a complaint with a supervisory authority.

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