The EU Project Linked Design is part of the 7th Framework Programme of the European Commission and is intended to develop an interactive platform to integrate and provide enterprise data of the different phases in product lifecycle management (PLM). In particular, the project focuses on the design, development and manufacture phase in PLM, in order to allow a fluent information interchange between the several phases in manufacturing industries, as well as interdisciplinary data analysis and knowledge exploitation. A manufacturer, for instance, needs immediate and complete access on design and development data, whereas designers and manufacturers need complete access on cost data. For large enterprises, such a platform seems inevitable, especially if data often changes within the several phases of the product lifecycle.

Next to a holistic view on enterprise data, data analysis plays an important part in Linked Design, particularly with respect to fault detection and troubleshooting. Insights from a specific phase can be exploited in a previous phase. For instance, designers can improve and rectify the product in the upcoming cycle when they obtain specific error reports from the manufacturing phase. The platform will therefore include tools to automatically analyze and evaluate data to detect the cause of faults and errors.

The European Commission funds the 13 members of the 42-months project with an amount of 8.1 million Euros. In order to give concrete use-cases, the three industry partners Volkswagen, Comau and Aker Solutions joined the project. According to its requirements and field of use, data integration, data analysis, knowledge management, reasoning, virtualization and communication are key elements of the project. The WDI Lab will thus contribute to the data integration part of Linked Design, and especially concentrates on Object Matching. Besides, it is the lead of the Data Integration Work Package and Data Task Force.