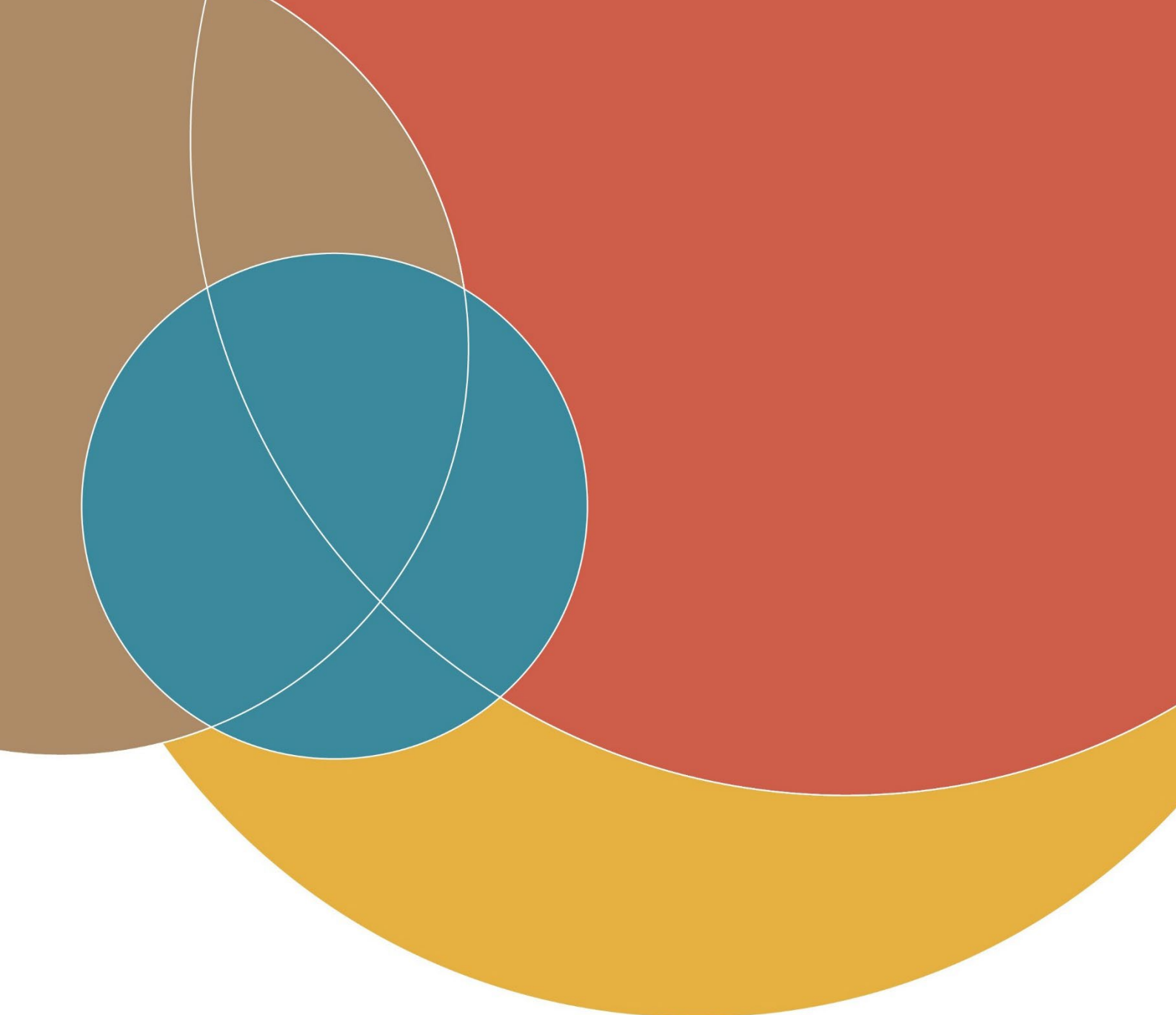




NGF-Creative Industries Immersive Impact Coalition: PRO (NGF-CIIC PRO)

Knowledge, methods and practical approaches for public values within Immersive Experiences

Call for proposals

Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH)
National Taskforce for Applied Research SIA

2026



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1 Summary and introduction

This chapter contains a brief summary of the round and an introduction.

The whole text of this Call for proposals has been published in both Dutch and English. The Dutch version is deemed authentic. For legal interpretation the text of the Dutch version will be decisive

1.1 Brief summary

Title: CIIC PRO.

Objective: Research projects aimed at developing knowledge, methods and practical approaches for the responsible development, application and upscaling of immersive experiences (IX), with a focus on public values (1st round).

Budget: The available grant amount is €3,600,000. The maximum grant that may be applied for per project is €700,000. It is expected that five proposals will be awarded funding in this round.

Funding other than from NWO: The consortium partners must contribute financially to the implementation of the project. This contribution must amount to at least 50 per cent of the grant applied for. This may be in cash or in-kind.

Own contribution from research organisations: Dutch and foreign research organisations, acting as lead or co-applicants, may contribute up to 10 per cent from their own resources towards the funding other than that provided by NWO.

Co-applicant's own contribution: At least 15 per cent of the funding other than that provided by NWO must come from the joint costs of the co-applicants.

Co-funding: not required, but possible in order to meet the required percentage of funding from sources other than NWO.

Submission deadline(s):

The deadline for submitting proposals is **11 March 2027, by 14:00:00 CET**. The matchmaking meeting will take place on 10 November 2026.

The deadline for submitting a request for assessment of organisations based in the Kingdom of the Netherlands (see section 3.1.1) is 20 working days before the submission deadline, i.e. **11 February 2027 by 14:00:00 CET**.

The deadline for submitting a request for assessment of foreign organisations is 20 working days before the submission deadline, **11 February 2027, by 14:00:00 CET**.

Procedure: Applicants must submit a complete proposal, which is then assessed by (some members of) the assessment committee. If more than 15 proposals are submitted, a selection will be made of those to be invited for an interview. The interview takes place

between the invited consortia and the assessment committee, after which the assessment committee will reach a final decision and submit its recommendation for the approval or rejection of proposals to the SIA board.

1.2 Introduction

This Call for proposals describes the application process for the “CIIC PRO” round which is part of Creative Industries Immersive Impact Coalition (CIIC) and consists of seven chapters. The proposal was awarded funding by the Dutch government in the context of the National Growth Fund (NGF). This Call for proposals falls under the responsibility of the Dutch Research Council (NWO). As this Call for proposals is being realised in the context of the National Growth Fund, the conditions which apply to it can differ from those in standard NWO Calls for proposals.

The [NWO Grant Rules 2024](#) and [Approval of Funding for Scientific Research](#) apply to all applications.

NWO processes personal data in the context of this round in accordance with the [NWO Privacy Statement](#). NWO notes which personal data it shares with CIIC on the funding page.

2 Aim and background

This chapter provides information about the aim and background of the programme and the round.

2.1 Objective of the NGF-CIIC programme

On 15 March 2024, the government gave the go-ahead for the first phase (2025–2027) of the National Growth Fund Programme Creative Industry Immersive Impact Coalition (CIIC), which runs until 2029. The programme is funded by the National Growth Fund and falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW); organisationally, it falls under CLICKNL, the creative industry's knowledge and innovation network.

CIIC is the support programme for Immersive Experiences (IX). The content of this programme has been developed in close collaboration with the creative industries and the relevant application sectors. The Innovation Agenda (see section 7.5.1) serves as the guiding principle for this support programme.

IX create immersive user experiences in which digital and physical elements converge. It is not just about the technology itself, but also about the experience and its impact. IX therefore go beyond hardware such as VR and AR headsets. They can be regarded as an additional digital layer superimposed on reality, enabling deeper and richer experiences.

The aim of the CIIC funding programme is to capitalise on the opportunities in the field of IX in the Netherlands. This is because investing in the development of knowledge, research and innovation in the field of responsible and effective IX enhances the Netherlands' sustainable earning capacity in the medium to long term. Developments in this innovative field offer economic opportunities in particular for:

- Strengthening sectors such as the creative industries, ICT and the arts, where IX forms the core as a discipline.
- other sectors and areas of application where IX can contribute to solving societal challenges;
- creators, providers and users of high-quality IX applications and content.

IX is also expected to have significant potential in the coming decades as a driver of the third digital transition.

To mitigate any potential negative societal impacts of this digital transition, safeguarding public values – such as privacy, self-determination, health and safety – forms an important part of the CIIC funding programme. To this end, a guideline and a Public Values self-assessment tool have been drawn up.

To achieve the desired economic and societal impact with IX, we invite researchers, (semi-)governmental bodies, civil society organisations and the business community to collaborate, in co-creation with IX developers and users, on applied research into IX.

The CIIC funding programme comprises five action lines. NWO is involved in three of them:

- Action Line 1: Knowledge and Methods
- Action Line 2: Human Capital
- Action Line 3: Ecosystem and Facilities

The Taskforce for Applied Research SIA acts as the programme coordinator and is responsible for developing and implementing various calls for proposals for the aforementioned action lines. The emphasis is on applied research carried out by researchers from knowledge institutions in collaboration with SMEs and/or the public sector. Further information on the other calls for proposals that SIA is developing and implementing as part of the CIIC funding programme is available on the grant page for this call for proposals. Further information on the entire CIIC funding programme is available at www.ciic.nl.

2.2 Context and objective of CIIC PRO

Context

Immersive Experiences (IX) are developing at breakneck speed and are a key driver of digital transition. Technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality and mixed reality are changing the way people learn, work, communicate and participate in culture and society. These developments offer significant opportunities for innovation, the economy and society, but also entail societal risks, such as disinformation, exclusion, loss of autonomy and a growing digital divide. As it is not yet sufficiently understood what effects IX have on public values and how these effects translate into opportunities and risks, further research is needed.

Public values

Public values reflect what is regarded as important in society. In the context of digital technology, for example, values such as security, democracy, self-determination, non-discrimination, participation, privacy and inclusivity are frequently cited (work agenda on value-driven digitalisation). The CIIC's Public Values guideline also includes health and sustainability. There are other values and value frameworks relevant to this theme: the applicant must explain in the proposal why the relevant value(s) have been chosen.

Various factors mean that the long-term effects of IX on public values have not yet been mapped out. Firstly, there is a lack of knowledge and methods to systematically measure the long-term effects of IX's use on these values. Indeed, it is not always clear why immersive technology and immersive experiences sometimes lead to positive societal effects and sometimes, conversely, to negative effects. A complicating factor in the further development of IX is the increasing use of generative AI. Although generative AI can contribute to more personalised and creative IX content, there is a lack of knowledge regarding the impact of misinformation, manipulation and AI-generated content on values such as safety and self-determination.

It is also not yet sufficiently clear how insights into positive effects and risks can be translated into actual design or development choices. This concerns both the design and application of the technology and the creation of conditions and framework conditions that can amplify positive effects and mitigate risks.

Furthermore, there is a need for concrete practical approaches to implementation and use, enabling organisations and businesses to incorporate knowledge of public values into, amongst other things, business models, policy, governance, decision-making and commissioning.

Objective

In light of the knowledge gaps described, this Call invites consortia to develop validated knowledge, methods and practical approaches that contribute to:

- Uncovering and explaining the effects of Immersive Experiences on public values;
- Enabling assessments of the risks that need to be prevented and the positive effects that can be scaled up;
- Supporting public and private sector organisations in their capacity for adoption and commissioning.

The research encompasses both fundamental and practice-oriented aspects. It focuses on theory-building and methodological development to analyse the effects of IX on public values and on validating the assumptions and choices that play a role in this. In addition, the research encompasses the development of guidelines, evaluation frameworks, tools and practical approaches that are widely applicable within and across different fields of application and contribute to the impact of knowledge on policy, design and the application of IX.

Within the scope of this scheme, research into public values directly linked to the implementation of IX is eligible. A key development in this regard is the increasing integration of AI into IX. The integration of AI into IX applications may constitute a sub-theme within research into these values. A combination of values or themes is possible. Values other than those mentioned in the paragraph on 'Public Values' above may also be studied. The proposal must always substantiate how the chosen research direction fits within the framework of this Call. Organisations' capacity for adoption and their role as commissioning bodies, as well as the contribution to future earning capacity as part of the intended impact, must always form an integral part of the project.

Proposals must build upon and expand on the CIIC's existing Public Values Framework and the results of previous programmes within CIIC, both at NWO/Taskforce for Applied Research SIA and at other CIIC knowledge partners. Alignment with programmes at European level is also required where this is relevant to the research proposal. Finally, the scheme requires co-creation throughout the entire research process: from the articulation of the research question and the research design to implementation and impact. IX creators play a crucial role in the co-creation process: they can translate abstract public values into tangible creations and uncover bottlenecks that would otherwise remain hidden.

Intended Impact

The knowledge, methods and practical approaches to be developed under this scheme can be used to improve and expand the applications of IX. Translating knowledge into targeted evaluation and assessment frameworks, guides and tools helps various stakeholders – such as SMEs, educational institutions and policymakers – to integrate public values into the design, development and application of IX. It also enables them to refine the enabling conditions that help to achieve this. The outcomes of this scheme therefore contribute to better alignment with target groups, the appropriate use of IX, effectively addressing sector-specific challenges, supporting design choices and policy-making, and informing legislation, regulations, certification and quality standards. In addition to a societal contribution, these outcomes also yield economic benefits for the Dutch IX sector. Reliable, transparent and secure IX are economic quality attributes that mitigate risks, simplify certification and auditing, and make export markets more accessible.

2.3 Background

NWO and the National Growth Fund

From 2021 to 2025, the government invests via the National Growth Fund (NGF) in projects that guarantee sustained economic growth. Among other initiatives, the NGF invests in projects focused on research, development, and innovation. NWO is participating in some of these projects, as one of the implementing organisations, for example in setting up grant programmes for fundamental, applied and practice-oriented research or for talent.

2.3.1 Societal impact of research

New knowledge and insights from scientific research can make an important contribution to developing solutions for the various issues society faces. By facilitating greater interaction and alignment between researchers and potential knowledge users, the chance of knowledge utilisation increases, as well as the likelihood of generating societal impact. Societal impact here stands for changes that (partly) result from research-generated knowledge and skills. These changes contribute to the well-being of people, planet and society for this and future generations. Through its policy on impact, NWO promotes the potential contribution that research can make to societal issues by encouraging productive interactions with societal stakeholders, both during the development stage and the subsequent implementation of research. It does so in a manner that is in accordance with the aim of the particular funding instrument. NWO encourages researchers to reflect on the potential desired and undesired impact of their research from a broad perspective.

In this programme, societal impact is aligned with CIIC. In doing so, NWO and CIIC contribute to the impact goals in line with the National Growth Fund objective. The societal impact in this programme should align with the following objective: IX contributes to public values (including ethics, safety, inclusivity and openness).

In the application, you describe the intended knowledge utilisation of the project in research, education and practice and how this contributes to achieving the above impact goals.

NWO offers an e-learning module that can help interested parties via [Online impact workshops | NWO](#). For more information on our policy on impact, please visit the website: [Knowledge utilisation | NWO](#).

2.4 Consortium formation

To increase the research's potential for impact, collaboration is essential between researchers, with researchers from other disciplines, and with societal partners, such as companies and social organisations. In this call for proposals, NWO supports consortium formation by organising a matchmaking event. This method is briefly explained below. More information about consortium formation can be found at [Consortium formation | NWO](#).

2.4.1 Matchmaking event

The aim of matchmaking is to bring together potential applicants, researchers, collaboration partners and stakeholders from various fields and sectors to exchange ideas for, or identify a need for, research relating to the theme and the impact described in the call for proposals.

During the one-off matchmaking event on **10 November 2026**, participants will have the opportunity to exchange ideas, network and identify any gaps in expertise. It is up to the participants themselves to decide how to follow up on the results of the matchmaking.

In addition, further information on the application process will be provided during the matchmaking session.

Further information about the matchmaking session will be published on the webpage for this call for proposals. Participation in the matchmaking session is recommended but not compulsory.

3 Preparation and submission

This chapter contains information on how to prepare and submit a proposal. The term ‘proposal’ also refers to a letter of intent or pre-proposal, insofar as these items are applicable for this round.

The use of generative AI when preparing a proposal is not explicitly prohibited as long as this happens responsibly. Applicants are not permitted to include hidden prompts¹ in their application. For guidance, see the [NWO policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence \(GAI\) | NWO](#).

3.1 Timeline

The submission deadlines and a timeline for the entire assessment procedure for this round are given below. NWO reserves the right to make adjustments to this timeline in the course of the procedure if needed. These will be communicated to the main applicant. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration by NWO

Proposals

26 October 2026	Information session
10 November 2026	Matchmaking session
November 2026	The application forms are available on ISAAC
11 February 2027 by 14:00:00 CET applicable)	Deadline for assessment of research organisations (if applicable)
11 March 2027 by 14:00:00 CET	Deadline for proposals
April 2027	Preliminary advice from the assessment committee
May 2027	Interview selection, interviews and assessment committee meeting
July 2027	Decision by the SIA Board

3.2 Who can apply

Proposals are to be submitted by the main applicant and one or more co-applicants on behalf of the consortium.

A proposal is drafted by a consortium, which may include other participating parties in addition to the applicants.

There are four categories of participants within a consortium:

- main applicant;
- co-applicant(s);
- cooperation partner(s) (optional);
- co-funder(s) (optional).

¹ A hidden prompt is a command given to a GAI application that is not, or only partially, visible to the reader of a document, with the intention of influencing the GAI application's output. An example would be instructing the GAI to generate a positive assessment of the text in question. The use of hidden prompts is not permitted under any circumstances.

A consortium should consist of at least one main applicant and at least two co-applicants from organisations other than those mentioned in 3.2.1. This must include at least two SMEs or two public sector organisations from the professional field, or at least one SME together with a public sector organisation from the professional field. The conditions for each participant are further explained in the following sections. Only main- and co-applicants applying under this Call for proposals are eligible to receive funding.

3.2.1 Main applicant

To be eligible to submit a proposal, researchers must be employed for an indefinite period (with the associated employment contract*) or have a tenure track appointment at any of the following research organisations:

- universities and universities of applied sciences, as described in section 1.8, subsection 1 of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act, or universities referred to in the [Policy Rules for Universities](#) in the Kingdom of the Netherlands;
- university medical centres, as described in section 1.13, subsection 1 of the Higher Education and Research Act;
- [KNAW institutes](#) and [NWO institutes](#);
- TO2-institutes²;
- Netherlands Cancer Institute;
- Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen;
- Naturalis Biodiversity Center;
- Advanced Research Centre for NanoLithography (ARCNL);
- Princess Máxima Center.

* Lectors employed at a university of applied sciences and researchers employed at a TO2 institute may also submit as a main applicant if they have at least a salaried position for a limited period.

Individuals with a zero-hour or fixed-term employment contract (other than a tenure track appointment and the exception mentioned above for lectors employed by a university of applied sciences and researchers employed by a TO2 institute) cannot submit a proposal. Applicants with a part-time appointment must ensure adequate supervision of the project and all project members for whom funding is requested.

It may be that the main applicant or a co-applicant's tenure track employment contract ends before the intended completion date of the project for which grant funding is being requested, or that the main or co-applicant's tenure agreement ends before this date due to their reaching retirement age. In such cases, the proposal must include a statement from the employer. In this statement, the research organisation in question guarantees that the project and all project members for whom funding is being requested will receive adequate supervision for the full duration of the project.

3.2.2 Additional conditions for main applicants and co-applicants

A main applicant may act as main applicant for only one proposal under this call for proposals. A main applicant may also participate as a co-applicant in another consortium no more than once under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant may participate as a co-applicant in a maximum of two proposals under this CIIC PRO scheme.

3.2.3 Co-applicants

Employees from the following organisations may act as co-applicants:

- (1) the research organisations listed under 'main applicant' in section 3.1.1;
- 2) Dutch research organisations other than the research organisations referred to under 'main applicant' in section 3.2.1 that meet the assessment criteria for organisations based in the Netherlands;

² The TO2 Institutes are Deltares, NLR, TNO, WUR and MARIN

- (3) foreign research organisations that meet the assessment criteria for organisations based abroad;
- (4) enterprises and other public and private organisations (hereafter: enterprises and civil society organisations) other than the research organisations listed under ‘main applicant’ in section 3.2.1..

Ad 1

For the employees from research organisations listed under 1, the same conditions apply as those stated under section 3.2.1.

Ad 2 and 3

Dutch and foreign research organisations must meet the following cumulative conditions:

- the organisation must be based in the Netherlands;
- the organisation must be a foundation, an organisation or a legal entity under public law (in Dutch: publiekrechtelijke rechtspersoon) (all other legal forms, including private and public limited companies, are excluded);
- the organisation must be principally engaged in conducting fundamental research, industrial research or experimental development independently or in the broad dissemination of the results of its own research activities through education, publications or knowledge transfer;
- the organisation must be able to declare that the organisation keeps separate accounts with regard to economic/non-economic activities and that companies with decisive influence on the organisation do not have preferential access to the organisation's research results.

Note: Prior to submission of a proposal, NWO will assess whether an organisation complies with Article 1.1, subsection 4 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024 and is thus eligible to participate as co-applicant based on the above conditions. This assessment also helps to ensure NWO's compliance with regulations prohibiting state aid.

To enable the assessment to be carried out, the intended co-applicant's organisation must submit the following documents by email to ngf-ciic@nwo.nl no later than twenty working days before the submission deadline (i.e. by 11 February 2027, 14:00:00 CET):

- a recent extract from the Chamber of Commerce, or, in the case of a foreign research organisation, the equivalent thereof in the country of establishment;
- a deed of establishment and/or current articles of association;
- the most recently available annual accounts, including an audit report³;
- a completed Research Organisation Statement, which is available on the funding page of this Call for proposals.

Documents must be in English or Dutch. Other relevant documents may also be included. NWO may also request additional information if the above documents do not allow for adequate determination of the organisation's eligibility to act as co-applicant.

If the intended co-applicant's organisation has already been assessed and found to comply with these conditions as part of a different NWO programme, please contact NWO at the above email address well before the applicable deadline to determine whether further assessment is necessary.

If the intended co-applicant's organisation fails to submit the documents required for assessment on time, NWO will not accept the organisation as co-applicant

- a recent extract from the Chamber of Commerce, or, in the case of a foreign research organisation, the equivalent thereof in the country of establishment;
- a deed of establishment and/or current articles of association;
- the most recently available annual accounts, including an audit report¹;

³ No audit report is necessary for organisations not legally required to have their annual accounts audited. However, such organisations must be able to provide proof of exemption from this legal requirement.

- a completed Research Organisation Statement, which is available on the funding page of this Call for proposals.

Documents must be in English or Dutch. If a research organisation was already assessed and approved as a co-applicant before submitting the pre-proposal, there is no need to have it assessed again for the submission of the proposal

Ad 4

Employees of organisations listed under 4 can participate as a co-applicant in the consortium provided that:

- they have permanent employment contract for at least 0.6 fte;
- their organisation has demonstrable Research & Development (R&D) activities in the Netherlands or is based in the Netherlands.

Additional conditions for businesses and civil society organisations as co-applicants

An SME, including a self-employed person, may act as a co-applicant only if it meets the following criteria:

- it is a business, namely: an entity, regardless of its legal form, that carries out an economic activity.
- the enterprise is registered with the Chamber of Commerce.
- it is an enterprise with fewer than 250 employees and either an annual turnover of less than €50 million or a balance sheet total of less than €43 million.

A public organisation may act as a co-applicant only if it meets the following criteria:

- organisations whose purpose is to carry out a public and/or statutory task;
- have no profit motive or commercial interest;
- are (partially) funded and/or subsidised by public funds.

In addition to the public bodies that meet the above criteria, the following organisations are also classified as public organisations:

- non-profit organisations that carry out public tasks, such as nature and environmental organisations;
- healthcare providers with a profit motive or commercial interest, such as physiotherapists or commercial hospitals, provided that the research focuses on practitioners working in these organisations;
- educational organisations, such as vocational education institutions, provided that the research focuses on practitioners working within these organisations;

In addition to the co-applicants who meet the above criteria and are necessary to fulfil the consortium requirements, additional businesses and civil society organisations may be included as co-applicants, provided they comply with the de minimis obligations (see section 3.5).

3.2.4 Cooperation partners

A cooperation partner is a party that does not receive a grant and does not contribute co-funding to the proposal, but is closely involved in the implementation of the research and the utilisation of knowledge. A collaboration partner is therefore not a main applicant or co-applicant or co-funder, but may, for example, be involved through participation in an advisory committee

Please: note personnel of organisations participating in the consortium as a cooperation partner is not eligible to apply for subsidies for salary or research costs as co-applicants. However, it is possible to reimburse costs by hiring these organisations as third parties via the modules “material costs”, “knowledge utilisation” or “project management” (see section 3.2 and annex 7.2).

3.2.5 Co-funders

A co-funder is an organisation that participates in the consortium and contributes cash and/or in-kind resources to the project. For further specific co-funding conditions that apply in this Call for proposals, see section 3.7.1. The role that these organisations play in the preparation, implementation and translation of the research into society must be described in the proposal.

A cash co-funder does not receive a grant from NWO on based on this Call for proposals. Nor is it possible to reimburse costs by hiring these organisations as third parties via the Material budget module.

3.3 What can be applied for

Per project, maximum €700,000 grant can be applied for. The maximum duration of the proposed project is 48 months/4 years.

At least 50% of the requested funding must go to research organisations listed under “Main applicant” in 3.2.1. NWO does not finance the total project scope. An proposal requires at least 50% of the requested funding in the form of **Funding other than provided by NWO**.

Funding other than provided by NWO consists of:

- i. The own contribution, i.e. the non-fundable part of the eligible costs contributed by enterprises and civil society organisations (see later in this section).
- ii. The own contribution from Dutch and foreign research organisations.
- iii. Any cash (excl. Dutch VAT) or in kind co-funding (see section 3.7.1).

Research organisations in section 3.2 mentioned under ‘Main applicant’ and at passage ‘Co-applicants’ under 2, cannot enter their own contribution as **Funding other than provided by NWO** or act as co-funder.

The main and co-applicants can claim costs in accordance with the available budget modules (including the maximum amounts) as listed below. Only claim what is essential to carry out the project. The rates and an explanation of these budget modules are provided in annex 7.

This Call for proposals makes a distinction between the budget modules for research organisations (as named in section 3.2.1 under 'main applicant' and in 3.2.3 under 'co-applicant' under 1.) and the maximum eligible costs for 'enterprises and civil society organisations' (as named in section 3.2.3 under 'co-applicant' under 2).

Funding percentages per type of applicant.

- Research organisation (see section 3.2.1)
Funding percentage 100% of eligible costs for non-economic activities.
- Enterprises and civil society organisations (see section 3.2.3 under “co-applicants” under 2)
Funding percentage Maximum 75% of eligible costs.

3.3.1 Personnel costs

Funding may be requested for salary costs of personnel contributing to the project. The amount depends on the type of appointment and the organisation where the personnel is employed.

In this Call for proposals the following rate systems can be applied:

- UNL salary tables + 50% premium (see annex 7.1);
- UMCNL salary tables + 50% premium (see annex 7.1);
- rates from Table 2.1 "Average direct salary costs", column 'Hourly rate productive hours, excl. Dutch VAT' of the manual for government rates (HOT rates) + 50% premium (see annex 7.1);

- integral cost system (IKS)⁴ as filed at the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) for the organisation concerned (see annex 7.6)⁵;

Annex 7 indicates the tariff system available for each type of applicant. The different tariff systems are incorporated in the budget format provided by NWO.

3.3.2 Budget modules for research organisations

For the research organisations referred to in section 3.1.1, both for the “main applicant” and the “co-applicant,” the budget modules (including the maximum amounts) as listed below apply. Only request what is essential to carry out the project. A more detailed explanation of the budget modules can be found in the annex to this Call for proposals (see annex 7.1).

3.3.3 Personnel

For the different tariff system that can be used, see section 3.3 and annex 7.1.

Please note: it is not possible to apply for a subsidy for the deployment of the main or co-applicants themselves other than via the budget modules ‘Replacement of applicants’ and ‘Personnel of universities of applied sciences and TO2 institutes’.

Personnel at a university in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, umc or a research organisation

For personnel working at a university in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, university medical centre (umc) or another research organisation, mentioned in Art. 1.1, first paragraph, subparagraphs c to h of the NWO Grant Rules 2024 salary costs can be claimed for the following positions: PhD student, Engineering Doctorate, postdoc, non-scientific personnel (NWP) and for research leave of the applicants. Salary costs for applicants are not eligible for subsidy

Please note: funding for the employment of the main applicant or co-applicants themselves can only be requested via research leave, up to a maximum of 5% of the budget requested from NWO.

An unlimited number of positions for the subsidy amount can be requested in accordance with:

- UNL salary tables plus a 50% premium, or
- Rate in accordance with the integrated cost system (IKS) as filed with RVO for the relevant main or co-applicants.

Funding for the Engineering Doctorate (EngD) position can only be applied for if funding for a PhD student or postdoc is also applied for.

An unlimited number of positions for the subsidy amount can be requested in accordance with:

- UNL salary tables plus a 50% premium, or
- UMCNL salary tables plus a 50% premium, or
- Rate in accordance with the integrated cost system (IKS) as filed with RVO for the relevant main or co-applicants.

Personnel of universities of applied sciences, educational institutions, TO2 institutes and other research organisations

It is possible to claim salary costs of personnel of universities of applied sciences, educational institutions, TO2 institutes, other organisations. A unlimited number of positions can be requested for, according to;

⁴ NWO subscribes to the RVO terminology: filed also implies that the tariffs have been approved by RVO..

⁵ If an applicant wishes to make use of the IKS rates, this choice automatically implies that they give NWO permission to request the IKS rates from RVO and to share them with the consortium partners of the application when a joint budget is drawn up.

- Applicable at the moment of grant rates from Table 2.1 'Average direct salary costs', column 'Hourly rate productive hours, excl. Dutch VAT' of the manual for government rates (HOT rates) + 50% premium, or
- Integral cost system (IKS) as filed at the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) for the organisation concerned for the relevant main or co-applicants.

Students

Costs for students can be included as material costs, as long as the students are working on the project and study at one of the research organisations listed in section 3.2. There is no maximum number of students who may work on a project

Scientific personnel at a research organisation abroad

It is possible to claim salary costs from foreign research organisations for scientific personnel. A unlimited number of positions up to 50% of the grant amount can be requested at research organisations abroad

Please note: prior to submitting a proposal, NWO will assess whether the foreign organisation complies with article 1.1, paragraphs 4 and 5 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024 (see section 3.2.3 and annex 7.1.3).

3.3.4 Materials

Funding may be requested for all project-specific material costs. These costs are subject to a maximum of 25% of the NWO grant amount.

Up to 50% of the material budget requested from NWO may be used for third-party work. A maximum of 50% of the grant amount for material costs can be applied for research organisations abroad.

3.3.5 Investments

Funding may be requested for investments in equipment, infrastructure and other research resources that have economic value or can be reused after the project ends. Salary costs of personnel who put the equipment, infrastructure and other research resources in a state of readiness can be claimed as part of the investments. The rates and conditions of Personnel apply here and the costs should be claimed as Investments

Only the depreciation costs involved are eligible for funding.

A maximum of 5% of the subsidy amount can be requested for investments.

3.3.6 Knowledge utilisation

Funding can be requested for activities that promote the use of knowledge from the research,⁶ in order to increase the societal impact of the research.

It is possible to include an amount for knowledge utilisation. These costs are at most 10% of the grant amount.

3.3.7 Project management

It is possible to use up to 5% of the total grant amount for project management. It is not mandatory to use this.

⁶ All activities applied for under this budget module must fit within the definition of "Knowledge Transfer Activities" used by the European Commission in the Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation (OJEU 2022, C 414).

3.3.8 Eligible costs for enterprises and civil society organisations

Under this Call for proposals, fundings will be provided to enterprises and civil society organisations on the basis of the de minimis regulation (Regulation (EU) No. 2023/2831 of the European Commission of December 13, 2023). Under the de minimis Regulation, an enterprise or civil society organisation may receive a maximum of €300,000 in de minimis aid over a period of three years.

For enterprises and social organisations, the maximum eligible costs are listed below. For these organisations, a maximum of 75% of the eligible costs will be reimbursed. These costs can be entered under the budget module “Personnel of other (research) organisations”.

A more detailed explanation of these eligible costs can also be found in the annex to this Call for proposals (see annex 7.5).

[Eligible costs for enterprises and civil society organisations.](#)

- Personnel costs for researchers, technicians and other support personnel insofar as they are involved in the research, as referred to in Article 25 para 3 sub a of the AGVV;
Maximum amount: Unlimited number of positions according to;
- the HOT rates applicable at the time of granting the subsidy, as set out in Table 2.1 “Average direct salary costs”, column “Hourly rate for productive hours, excluding VAT” of the Government Rates Manual plus a 50% surcharge, or
- a fixed hourly rate of €60, or
- a rate in accordance with the integral cost system (IKS) as filed with RVO for the main or co-applicants concerned.
- Investments: maximum 5% of the grant amount, limited to depreciation costs
- Knowledge utilisation: maximum 10% of the grant amount
- Costs of equipment and apparatus, as referred to in Article 25 para 3 sub b AGVV
Maximum amount: Maximum 25% of the grant amount, of which 50% third parties

3.4 Preparing and submitting a proposal in ISAAC

NWO makes use of the [ISAAC](#) system. Start preparations for your ISAAC proposal submission in good time

The steps involved in writing your proposal are:

- create an account or update your existing account details if necessary;
- use ISAAC to download the proposal form and required formats for annexes;
- save the completed proposal form as a PDF file and submit it in ISAAC. Submit any annexes separately;
- in ISAAC, fill in all the requested information, including the research fields [NWO research fields](#) | [NWO](#) and a summary for non-experts in Dutch and English; NWO will publish this summary for non-experts along with the press release about the grant awards. It should have a length of 50–100 words and be written for a general audience. Due to intellectual property concerns, no scientific summary is published;
- if you need to register an organisation that isn’t yet included in the ISAAC database, this is possible until five working days before the deadline by email to relatiebeheer@nwo.nl;
- the proposal is in English.

It is mandatory to upload the following annexes to the proposal in ISAAC:

- application form
- budget (Excel file);
- declaration de minimis regulation;
- form projectmembers;
- letter guaranteeing the continuity of the project supervision (PDF);

Always use the templates provided by NWO for all annexes. Annexes other than those listed above are not permitted. All attachments, with the exception of the budget, must be submitted as PDF files (without security). The budget must be submitted as an Excel file in ISAAC.

Documentation including proposal submission formats is also available on the funding page for this round on the NWO website.

For questions about ISAAC, use the 'Help' button in ISAAC to consult the ISAAC manual or contact the ISAAC helpdesk. The ISAAC helpdesk can be reached Monday to Friday between 10:00 and 17:00 at +31 (0) 70 34 40 600. Emails may be sent to isaac.helpdesk@nwo.nl. You will receive a reply within two working days

3.4.1 Co-funding

The NWO Co-funding rules applies to all proposals.

Additional definitions:

- co-funding contributions in kind: capitalised personnel and/or material costs paid by users;
- cash co-funding is used to cover a portion of the total project costs, and together with the grant provided by NWO constitutes the financial resources necessary for the project.

It is possible to include co-funders in the proposal to meet the requirement for funding other than that provided by NWO. A distinction is made between cash co-funding (to be collected by the applicant), which serves to cover the budget for the project activities described in the proposal, and in-kind co-funding, which may consist of personnel and/or material contributions from the organisations involved. Co-funding may be provided by parties that are not applying for a grant under this call for proposals.

Co-funding requirement

The co-funding must be committed to the main applicant via the application form. The committed co-funding refers to the net amount. If VAT applies to the committed co-funding, this is added to the committed amount.

Co-funding is subject to the following principles:

- NWO is the proposal's main funder. Proposals for projects where co-funding exceeds 50% of the total project costs will not be considered;
- contributions in kind will only be accepted provided that the co-funder's contribution forms an integral part of the project activities and can be traced or designated as an identifiable commitment. In case of uncertainty, NWO may request further explanation of and documentation for the rates used, and can request an adjustment of these rates. Additionally, any contributions in kind in the form of services or know-how must not already be present or available at the research organisations of the applicants;
- for the capitalisation of time spent on a project by personnel (personnel hours), fixed general hourly rates apply. For rates, see the Manual tariffs Dutch Government (HOT), Table 2, under 2.2 'Average total salary costs per salary scale', column 'Hourly rate for productive hours excluding VAT'. Use the rate that most closely approximates the actual salary costs;
- cash co-funding is the net amount the applicant receives from a co-funder. The applicant invoices the co-funder for the in-cash co-funding amount and any applicable VAT.

Not permissible as cash co-funding or in kind⁷:

- grant support provided by NWO;
- co-funding may not come from research organisations as referred to in sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.3 under 1;
- costs of overhead, supervision, consultancy services

⁷ The NWO Co-funding Scheme, Article 6 describes which types of co-funding are not permitted.

Co-funding declaration of participating co-funders

The co-funding organisation commits to financial support for the project and confirms the specified amount of co-funding in a co-funding declaration. It is mandatory to include co-funding declarations of every co-funder named in the proposal as annexes to the submitted proposal. The co-funding declaration must be signed by an authorised signatory for the co-funding organisation. The required format for the co-funding declaration can be found on the funding page of this Call for proposals on the NWO website and in ISAAC.

If the proposal is awarded funding, the co-funder must confirm their contributions in the consortium agreement. This agreement also contains details of any further arrangements concluded between the co-funders and the applicants (see section 5.1.3).

Accountability of cash co-funding or in kind

The percentage of co-funding, both in cash and in kind, compared to the grant awarded by NWO in this Call for proposals applies from the time of a proposal's submission until the grant has been determined. Cash co-funding affects the grant amount provided by NWO, as both NWO's contribution and the co-funded cash are being used for the same project-specific costs, unlike co-funding in kind.

Official indexation (see annex 7.2) due to the applicability of other rates after submission will not affect the percentages or co-funding requirements for the NWO contribution. These are calculated based on the percentages in the proposal budgets approved by NWO.

Once a project has been completed, the final grant amount is determined based on the final financial statement, the financial conditions and the co-funding percentages included in the proposal's budget.

In case of partial in-cash co-funding payments due to unexpected events such as bankruptcy, NWO will base its contribution on the originally awarded grant, taking into account the co-funding payments received and any applicable minimum co-funding requirements.

Calculations of the co-funded percentage compared to the grant awarded by NWO will also take any in-cash co-funding in excess of requirements into account. In the event of a project with cash co-funding in excess of the co-funding requirements and partially received co-funding payments at the time of determination, NWO's contribution will never exceed the original amount awarded in the grant. In that case, the percentage contributed by NWO will be limited to the maximum amount dictated by the co-funding requirement.

NWO should always be notified of any problems regarding anticipated co-funding, cash and in kind. Along with financial consequences for a project, NWO may also ask for sufficient changes to be made to the project to enable the research to continue as well as possible by means of a change request.

3.4.2 Declaration of support of cooperation partners

In a declaration of support (without co-funding) a cooperation partner states their support for the project and describes their role within the project. NWO will make a format available on the funding page.

If the proposal is awarded funding, the cooperation partner must confirm their contribution in the consortium agreement. This agreement also contains details of any further arrangements concluded between the co-funders and the applicants (see section 5.1.3).

3.5 General de minimis statement

For societal organisations funded under the de minimis regulation (see section 3.2.1), the general de minimis statement is part of the proposal. The proposal will be awarded on the condition that the de minimis threshold for the societal organisation in question is not exceeded at the time of award.

3.6 Requirements for consideration

NWO checks that a proposal meets all the conditions applicable to this Call for proposals, including those set out below. A proposal must meet these requirements to be taken into consideration.

Conditions:

- the proposal was received before the deadline;
- the main applicant and co-applicants meet the conditions stated in section 3.2;
- the co-funders meet the conditions stated in section 3.3.1
- the cooperation partners meet the conditions set out in section 3.2.4;
- the proposal complies with the DORA guidelines described in section 4.4.4;
- the proposal has been prepared using the forms provided in ISAAC and on the NWO website's funding page (web page) for this round;
- the data management section (showing how the applicants will handle data generated by the research) has been completed;
- the proposal form and the required annexes are, after a possible one-time request to make additions or changes, correct and complete and have been filled out according to the instructions;
- the proposal has been submitted via the main applicant's ISAAC account;
- the proposal is in English;
- the proposal meets the page count and word limit requirements;
- the budget for the proposal has been compiled according to the requirements of this Call for proposals, using the provided format with the most recent rates;
- the co-funding, after any request for additions or changes, has been correctly and fully committed through declarations of co-funding;
- the proposed project has a duration of 48 months/4 years;
- the proposal meets the required percentage of own contributions
- applicants who use the IKS rate system have given NWO permission to request their IKS rates from RVO;
- all required attachments have been completed in full, following any requests for additional information or changes, and have been prepared and submitted in accordance with the instructions and conditions of this Call for proposals.

Consideration of proposal and administrative corrections

After submission of the required documents, the applicant receives notice of whether NWO intends to take the proposal into consideration as soon as possible. Be aware that NWO may contact applicants for up to two weeks after the submission deadline to request any administrative corrections required to allow the conditions for submission to be met.

The applicant is given one opportunity to make these corrections, and must do so within five working days. If the corrected documents remain incomplete and/or incorrect, NWO will not take the proposal into further consideration.

Notification of own research organisation

NWO works on the assumption that applicants have informed the research organisations where they are employed about the proposal submission, and that these organisations have accepted the grant conditions pertaining to this Call for proposals. During the proposal process, NWO will communicate with the main applicant.

3.7 Grant conditions

The [NWO Grant Rules 2024](#) and [Approval of Funding for Scientific Research](#) apply to all applications with the exception of:

- Article 1.4 para 1, para 5 and para 6 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024 and article 2.1 of the Agreement on the Payment of Costs for Scientific Research; in the sense that under project costs, overhead is also reimbursed in this Call for proposals and that applicants must make a choice per (co-)applicant

between: 1) integral cost system (IKS) if their IKS accounting method is approved by RFO or 2) the regular NWO rates (UNL, UMCNL, HOT) + surcharge for 50% of overhead or 3) fixed hourly rate (€60).

- In addition to article 1.1. of the NWO Grant Rules 2024, enterprises and civil society organisations can apply for funding in this Call for proposals.
- Article 4.1.1 para 4 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024
- Article 5.1, introductory phrase and subparagraph of the NWO Grant Rules, phrase “without being the main applicant or co-applicant” is not applicable in case enterprises or civil society organisations will be contributed in-kind co-funding.

NWO verleent geen subsidie dan wel trekt de subsidie in, wanneer blijkt dat er sprake is van ongeoorloofde staatsteun in de zin van artikel 107 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie.

3.7.1 Conditions of the de minimis regulation

NWO funds applications in this Call for proposals in accordance with the de minimis regulation. NWO will not award a grant if it is not sufficiently plausible that the application fits within the definitions and conditions of the de minimis regulation.

Based on the de minimis Regulation, an enterprise or civil society organisation may receive a maximum of €300,000 in de minimis aid over a period of three years. By completing the De minimis aid declaration, enterprises and civil society organisations declare that they will not exceed the de minimis threshold as a result of the grant awarded by NWO. If an enterprise or civil society organisation finds that the NWO grant exceeds the de minimis limit, the enterprise or civil society organisation cannot apply for a grant from NWO.

When drawing up the project budget, the main and co-applicants must take the above into account and therefore check for each enterprise or civil society organisation whether the de minimis threshold is exceeded with the grant amount applied for. The De minimis aid declaration completed separately by these enterprises or civil society organisations forms part of the application.

4 Assessment

This chapter contains information on the assessment procedure for a proposal.

4.1 Criteria

The assessment is based on substantive assessment criteria and commences once a proposal has been taken into consideration. Proposals are substantively assessed against the following criteria:

1. Alignment with the objective of this grant round (Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory)

The committee assesses the extent to which the proposal aligns with the objectives of the Call for Proposals, as described in section 2.2. The committee assesses this as 'sufficient' or 'insufficient'.

2. Clarity of the proposal (20%)

Within the chosen objective, the panel assesses the proposal on:

- Whether the practical question is demonstrably related to current issues in professional practice.
- Whether the proposal clearly describes the process through which the question was formulated (workshops in the field, surveys, references to presentations, etc.), which parties were consulted, and how this process led to the formulated practical question.
- Whether the answer to the question, through the clearly defined intended impact, demonstrably meets a genuine need in professional practice, and whether the proposal contains a clear description of the expected practical benefits and their societal relevance.

3. Networking (20%)

Within the chosen objective, the committee assesses the proposal on the basis of:

- Whether the consortium partners play an active role in the research and whether the roles of the practice, research and education partners are clearly described.
- Whether the composition of the consortium is logically aligned with the intended project and whether the consortium demonstrably possesses sufficient research expertise, experience and quality to carry out the research.
- Whether the proposal describes how co-creation will be organised throughout the entire research process, from the formulation of the research question and the research design to implementation and impact.
- Whether the consortium of participating individuals and organisations does not operate in isolation, but is connected to relevant initiatives within the field, both nationally and/or internationally.

4. Research plan (60%)

Within the chosen objective, the committee assesses the proposal on the basis of:

- The extent to which the research plan demonstrates a thorough and up-to-date knowledge of the state of the art in professional practice and academia, both within and outside the Netherlands.
- The extent to which the research question is clearly formulated, stems from a practical need and contributes to new knowledge and insights.
- Whether any PhD research is demonstrably well integrated into the project and is being adequately supervised. This is evident from the budget and from the description of agreements regarding responsibilities.
- The clarity and justification of the chosen public value(s) and the way in which these are operationalised in the research.
- The extent to which the proposed methods and analytical techniques are clearly described in the research plan and convincingly substantiated. It is also made clear how these contribute to answering the research question. The chosen methods are appropriate to the nature of the research question. The methods and analytical techniques follow a systematic approach and are therefore transparent, reproducible and transferable. In the case of data collection in (professional) practice, there is a clear plan and/or guarantee that this will be carried out.
- The extent to which the research plan contains a convincing analysis of the risks and the proposed control measures.
- The extent to which the activity plan, as part of the research plan, contains measurable (interim) objectives and expected (interim) results, and clarifies who does what, when, why this is done and what the outcomes are. In doing so, the network partners jointly contribute to knowledge development by contributing their own knowledge (knowledge circulation).
- The extent to which the research plan convincingly describes how the knowledge, methods or tools developed contribute to organisations' capacity for adoption and/or good commissioning practice with regard to IX.
- The extent to which the research plan convincingly describes how the impact of the research findings will be realized in practice, the research community and education.
- The extent to which the research plan contains a convincing description of the feasibility and practicability of the project. This refers to:
 - i. the extent to which the requested funding is proportionate to the nature, scope and expected impact of the project proposal;
 - ii. the extent to which there is adequate staffing, as well as the extent of available resources and time commitment;
 - iii. the extent to which there is clearly assigned and qualified project management;
 - iv. the extent to which the professional community is prepared to make a substantial contribution to the implementation of the project (such as financially, by providing equipment, workspace, time spent on supervision, project participation and the like, or by making patents available through licences, etc.).

The committee assesses criterion 1 as 'satisfactory' or 'unsatisfactory'. Criteria 2, 3 and 4 are awarded a score. In doing so, the committee uses the SIA scoring table on a scale of 1 to 6, with 6 being the highest score.

All proposals receive a weighted average total score for criteria 2, 3 and 4 and are prioritised on the basis of this score. In rounds with five or more proposals, the scores of the members of the assessment committee are normalised in order to establish a ranking. NWO applies normalisation based on the median and the standard deviation.

To be eligible for a grant, a proposal must achieve a pass mark for criterion 1 and a score of 4.0 or higher for each of criteria 2, 3 and 4.

4.2 Procedure

The assessment procedure for a proposal consists of the following steps (see timeline in section 3.1):

- submission of the proposal;
- consideration of the proposal;
- pre-advice by assessment committee;
- interview selection;
- interview;
- assessment committee meeting;
- decision-making.

4.2.1 Information session

On 26 October 2026, NWO will organise an online information session. During this session, further details will be provided about the proposal and assessment process.

4.2.2 Matchmaking

On 10 November 2026, NWO will organise a matchmaking event for this call for proposals. Participation in this event is recommended but not compulsory.

Further information on the details and schedule of the matchmaking event will be announced via the website for this call for proposals, the SIA communication channels and on the CIIC website.

4.2.3 Submission of proposal

A standard form is available for submitting your proposal on the funding page of this Call for proposals on the NWO website. In your application, you must adhere to the questions listed in this form and the procedure described in the explanatory notes. You must also adhere to the conditions regarding the maximum number of words and pages.

Your fully completed application form must be received via ISAAC before the deadline (see section 1.3). After this time, you will no longer be able to submit a proposal. The main applicant will receive a confirmation of receipt after submitting the proposal.

4.2.4 Consideration of proposal

As soon as possible after you have submitted your proposal, you will be notified whether NWO will consider your proposal. NWO determines this on the basis of a number of administrative and technical criteria (see the formal conditions for submission, section 3.6). Only if your application meets these criteria can NWO consider it.

Please note that NWO may contact you within two weeks of the submission deadline to request any administrative corrections in order to (still) meet the conditions for submission. You will be given one opportunity to make the corrections, for which you will have ten working days.

4.2.5 Pre-advice by assessment committee

The proposal is shared with the assessment committee for review. Preferably, at least two pre-advisers should be appointed for each proposal. The pre-advisers provide written, substantive and reasoned responses to each proposal. They formulate these responses based on the substantive assessment criteria (see section 4.1) and give the proposal numerical scores for each assessment criterion. Scores are determined based on the NWO score table using a scale of 1 to 9, where '1' is excellent and '9' unsatisfactory. A proposal's data management section is not assessed and does not affect the decision on whether to award funding. However, the assessment committee may still provide advice on this section. The pre-advisors also identify which components need to be clarified, explained, or explored in more depth during the interview.

4.2.6 Interview selection

In principle, all consortia that submitted a proposal will be invited for an interview by the assessment committee. If the total number of admissible proposals exceeds three times the number of projects that can be funded within the available budget, the assessment committee can decide to invite only a selection of consortia to the interview.

The proposals are shared with the assessment committee. The assessment committee comes to a decision based on these documents, resulting in a ranking. The applicants with the highest ranked proposals are invited for an interview. This will concern a maximum of three times the expected number of proposals to be allocated. If, after the interview selection, it appears that two or more proposals cannot be distinguished from each other based on their weighted total score, this will be an ex-aequo situation (see section 4.3.7). Applicants who do not receive an invitation for an interview are not considered eligible for a grant.

4.2.7 Interview

The interview is an opportunity for the assessment committee to ask any questions it may have. These can include new questions not raised by the referees. The consortium can discuss these questions with the assessment committee during the interview. In this way, both sides are given an additional chance to be heard. The interview is an important part of the assessment process and can result in adjustment of a proposal's previous assessment and score.

4.2.8 Assessment committee meeting

The assessment committee makes its own assessment based on the available material. The final assessment is guided to an important degree by the pre-advice, although the assessment committee will not necessarily adopt these in full. The assessment committee will consider the arguments put forward by the pre-advisers, weighing them against each other, and determine whether the rebuttal constitutes a proper response to the points of criticism raised in the pre-advice. The assessment committee assigns every proposal a final score, rounded to two decimal places.

Following their deliberations, the assessment committee prepares a written advisory report for the board of Regieorgaan SIA concerning the quality and ranking of the proposals. This advice is based on the assessment criteria. A proposal must achieve a pass mark on criterion 1 and a score of 4.00 or higher on criteria 2, 3 and 4 to be eligible for funding.

If, after the discussion of the proposals, two or more of the proposals cannot be distinguished from each other based on their weighted total score, then this will result in an ex aequo situation (see section on ex aequo).

4.2.9 Decision-making

The procedures followed and the assessment committee's advice are assessed by the board of Regieorgaan SIA. It determines the final ratings and makes a decision on whether to award or reject each proposal. Following this decision, NWO informs the applicant of their proposal's award or rejection. The applicant also receives a letter (by email) with the decision.

4.3 Guidelines and frameworks for assessment

The following guidelines and frameworks apply during the assessment of a proposal.

4.3.1 Code for Dealing with Personal Interests

The [NWO Code for Dealing with Personal Interests](#) applies to all individuals and NWO employees involved in the assessment and/or decision-making process.

4.3.2 Generative AI

The use of generative AI to assess proposals is completely prohibited. This also applies to the use of GAI as a language aid or for translating assessments and/or application documents. More information about NWO's policy on the use of generative AI can be found on the website ([NWO policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence \(GAI\) | NWO](#)).

4.3.3 Diversity and inclusion

NWO strives to achieve an inclusive culture in which there is no place for conscious or unconscious barriers based on cultural, ethnic, or religious background, gender, sexual orientation, health or age ([Diversity and inclusion | NWO](#)). NWO offers assessment committee members guidance on how to ensure an inclusive written assessment and assessment committee meeting ([Inclusive assessment | NWO](#)).

4.3.4 Broad definition of scientific output (DORA)

When assessing the scientific track record of applicants, NWO applies a broad definition of scientific output.

NWO asks assessment committee not to rely on indicators such as the Journal Impact Factor or the h-index when assessing proposals. There should be no mention of such indicators in the proposal. It is, however, permitted to list other scientific products besides publications, such as datasets, patents, software and code.

NWO is a signatory to the 'San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment' ([DORA](#)), on which this policy is based. DORA is a worldwide initiative that aims to improve the ways in which research and researchers are assessed. DORA contains recommendations for research funders, research organisations, scientific journals and other parties.

4.3.5 Knowledge security

Together, the Dutch knowledge sector, including NWO, and various branches of government have created the National Knowledge Security Guidelines as guidance on how to weigh opportunities and security risks for anyone involved in international collaboration at research organisations. The approach to knowledge security in the Netherlands relies heavily on self-regulation by the knowledge sector.

NWO expects applicants to adhere to the research organisation's knowledge security policy. In case of signs that a proposal or awarded project may present risks to knowledge security, NWO can ask the applicant or project leader to provide insight into risk mitigation measures. Additionally, NWO may impose further conditions to protect knowledge security in the award letter.

The National Knowledge Security Guidelines are available on the central government website at: [Home | National Contact Point for Knowledge Security](#)

4.3.6 Compensation scheme

[Force majeure extension scheme](#)

Applicants who are prevented from providing necessary input within the allotted time during the assessment procedure have recourse to the [NWO force majeure extension scheme](#).

4.3.7 Ex aequo

NWO defines ex aequo as a situation in which it is not possible to distinguish between two or more proposals based on their weighted scores. An ex aequo situation is relevant when approaching the limits of the grant cap or selection threshold. The existence of an ex aequo situation is determined as follows. The starting point is the ranking by the assessment committee, with final scores rounded to two decimal places. The score for the lowest-ranked proposal within the limits of the grant cap or the selection threshold is used as a reference score. All proposals with scores within 0.05 of the reference score are taken into consideration. The result is a selection of proposals with scores within 0.10 of each other. In the event of a tied ranking at the limit of the grant cap or selection threshold, the proposal with the highest score on the 'Research plan' criterion will receive precedence. If this results in another tie, the proposal with the highest score for the 'Clarity of the proposal' criterion will be given precedence. If this still does not resolve the situation, the assessment committee will determine the ranking by a majority vote, which may be anonymous, in accordance with Article 2.2.6, fifth subsection of the NWO Grant Rules 2024. If this vote also fails to break the tie, or is deemed unacceptable, the ex aequo situation will be passed on to the board of Regieorgaan SIA.

5 After the grant award

This chapter lists the conditions and obligations that apply once the grant has been awarded. As such, it is mainly relevant to applicants with approved proposals.

5.1 Start of the project

Once a proposal has been awarded funding, the main applicant automatically becomes the project leader and point of contact for NWO. The project leaders' research organisation is designated as the main beneficiary and becomes the grant administrator. The project leader and grant administrator share joint responsibility for the execution of the entire project. Co-applicants also play an active role in the project's execution and are project co-leaders.

The project leader for the project receives an award letter on behalf of the board of Regieorgaan SIA. This letter also notes any specifically required forms and guidelines. The start form, data management plan and consortium agreement must be submitted before the project's start. Without these documents, work on the project cannot start. The grant will be paid out in instalments once all start-up requirements have been met.

5.1.1 Start form

A start form must be used to indicate the start of the project. The project leader receives this start form along with the award letter. Project leaders can authorise others to carry out administrative tasks relating to their project in the ISAAC system. For more information about the authorisation scheme for project leaders, go to: [Authorisation scheme for project managers | NWO](#).

5.1.2 Data management plan

Good research goes hand in hand with [responsible data management](#). Before the start of the project, the project leader must elaborate the data management section (see section 3.7) into a data management plan. If the referees or assessment committee offered any advice on data management, this may be included. In the plan, the project leader indicates whether use will be made of existing data or whether new data collection will be involved, and how this collection will then be made FAIR, i.e. Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable.

The data management plan should be checked by a data steward or similar officer at the organisation where the project is to be carried out. The data management plan must have been submitted to NWO via ISAAC before the project start date. NWO will assess the plan. The grant's award is conditional upon approval of the data management plan by NWO. The plan may be adapted in the course of the research.

5.1.3 Consortium agreement

The consortium agreement specifies the terms for intellectual property and publication, knowledge transfer, confidentiality, co-funding payments, progress reports and final reports. A NWO consortium agreement is available in [Dutch](#) and [English](#). The consortium agreement is concluded by all project partners and signed by authorised signatories for the relevant organisations. It must be submitted in ISAAC before work can be started on the project. The applicant is responsible for setting up the consortium agreement.

NWO endeavours, on the one hand, to ensure that research results from projects funded by NWO are made publicly available, and on the other hand, to promote further development of the results by enabling parties to profit thereby. This can make it desirable to transfer or license the use of intellectual property rights to one or more private parties involved in a project. The basic premise is that all research results may be published, with due consideration for agreements concerning publication procedures. The terms are defined in the consortium agreement

5.2 Monitoring and project management

The project leader must keep NWO informed of the project's progress throughout. This is achieved in several ways.

5.2.1 Progress report

NWO requests updates on the project's progress at regular intervals. The project leader will receive an email with a request to prepare and submit a progress report well beforehand, along with the relevant deadline. A [progress report template](#) is available online. If a different progress report template applies for the project, the project leader will be provided with the necessary information.

5.2.2 (Mandatory) Meetings

Programme meetings

Each year, the programme team of the CIIC incentive programme organises an event to which the consortium of successful applicants is invited. In order to send these invitations, it may be necessary to share the project leader's email address with the CIIC programme team.

Knowledge-sharing committee

The CIIC programme team at CLICKNL maintains contact with the projects resulting from this call for proposals via a knowledge-sharing committee. In this committee, the projects are represented by their project leaders. The project leaders provide the programme team with relevant information (including knowledge and project results) for the CIIC funding programme. In addition, knowledge and insights from the various projects are exchanged amongst the participants. In order to send these invitations, it may be necessary to share the project leader's email address with the CIIC programme team.

Completion of a project

Upon completion of a project, NWO requests final reports covering both content and finances.

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If the main applicant's organisation, as the beneficiary of the NWO grant, is not covered by the OCW audit protocol, it must, as the coordinator, submit an auditor's report for the entire project. The amount of the grant is then determined by NWO.

5.2.3 Research output

NWO wants to be kept abreast of all the output resulting from the research, both scientific and for a wider audience. The [NWO website](#) offers more information on various forms of output. Project leaders can use the ISAAC system to submit such output.

5.2.4 Project changes

In the event of any changes occurring in the course of the project compared to the approved proposal and budget, the project leader must submit the changes to NWO for approval in advance using a [request for change form](#). See also Article 3.4 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024.

5.3 Guidelines and frameworks for project execution

The following describes the guidelines and frameworks applicable to the project's execution.

5.3.1 Compliance with the National Knowledge Security Guidelines

As with the assessment (see subsection 4.3), the National Knowledge Security Guidelines apply after the grant award. NWO expects project leaders to adhere to the research organisation's knowledge security policy. The grant award letter may contain further conditions to protect knowledge security. The National Knowledge Security Guidelines are available on the central government website at: [National Contact Point for Knowledge Security](#).

5.3.2 Ethical statement or licence

It is the project leader's responsibility to determine whether execution of the proposed project requires an ethical statement or licence. The presence or absence of an ethical statement or licence at the time of proposal will not impact the proposal's assessment. If an ethical statement or licence does prove necessary for all or part of the research, the project leader must provide NWO with a copy of this statement or licence once the project has been approved and before starting work on the relevant project components. Naturally, the statement or licence must have been issued to be able to work on these components.

5.3.3 Scientific integrity

Research must be conducted in accordance with the standards set out in the 2018 [Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#). In the case of an actual or suspected violation of these standards, the project leader must immediately inform NWO and submit all relevant documents to NWO. Researchers can also report complaints to their research organisation's Scientific Integrity Committee or to the [NWO Scientific Integrity Desk](#).

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NWO places a high value on the scientific integrity of the research it funds and exerts itself to prevent and detect any integrity violations. Research irregularities can cause damage directly, for example to the environment or to patients, and prejudice public trust in scientific research as well as trust between individual researchers.

5.3.4 Principles of socially responsible licensing

A project may generate knowledge that is applicable in society. When entering into licensing or transfer agreements for research results developed in this funding round, due consideration must be given to the ten principles of socially responsible licensing provided on the [UMCNL](#) website.

5.3.5 Genetic resources and the Nagoya Protocol

Researchers must take whatever measures are necessary to ensure compliance with the Nagoya Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the utilisation of genetic resources and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources (Access and Benefit-Sharing; ABS). Researchers who make use of such resources, including in or from other countries, should familiarise themselves with the tenets of the Nagoya Protocol ([ABS Focal Point](#)).

5.3.6 Intellectual property

NWO's policy on intellectual property (IP) can be found in the NWO Grant Rules 2024.

Project leaders must execute a project funded by NWO during their period of employment with the beneficiary research organisation. If a project leader or researcher funded by NWO has multiple employers, the non-beneficiary employers must waive any IP rights arising from the project.

5.4 Completion

Project leaders must submit a substantive and a financial final report to NWO within three months of the project's completion. Failure to submit these reports or to submit them in time can lead to the grant being reduced or withdrawn altogether. The project leader will receive a request by email, along with the relevant deadline. Templates for a basic final report and a financial final report are available at: [Completing a project | NWO](#). If a different final report template applies for the project, the project leader will be provided with this information in due course.

After approval of the substantive and financial final reports, the final amount of the grant (and co-financing) will be determined.

5.4.1 Independent auditor's report on financial statements

To ensure that the grant has been spent correctly, NWO requires, in the event of a request for final settlement, an audit report carried out by an external auditor where the OCW/EZ Education Auditors' Protocol does not apply to the beneficiary of a project grant and the grant awarded exceeds €125,000.

The OCW/EZ Education Audit Protocol applies to legal entities funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in the following sectors: primary education, secondary education, secondary vocational education and training (MBO) and higher education.

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The grant administrator is responsible for arranging an auditor's report within the appropriate time frame. This responsibility remains fully applicable even if the grant administrator has spent part of the grant on another party. Arrangements with the external auditor should be made in good time.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, contact NWO well in advance (see Chapter 6), preferably at the start of the project.

5.5 Research results – Open Science

Open Science is the movement aimed at more open and collaborative research practices in which publications, data, software and other types of academic output are shared at the earliest possible stage and made available for reuse.

Scientific publications relating to the project must be made available Open Access upon publication, in accordance with the Open Access Policy. The NWO website sets out the specific conditions for making various types of publications – such as scientific articles, books, book chapters and theses – available via Open Access. The NWO website also provides information on which open licences may be applied to each type of publication. Any costs associated with open access publishing must be included in the application budget. Costs for publications in so-called 'hybrid open access journals' are not eligible for reimbursement by NWO. For open access books, applications may be made to the separate NWO Open Access Books Fund.

NWO-funded research can lead to publications or other relevant research output. If so, the grant administrator must note NWO's funding in the acknowledgements.

5.6 Evaluation

NWO may approach applicants or project leaders to ask them to complete an evaluation of the procedure and/or research programme.

6 Contact

Questions about the funding of proposals

For more information, see [Applying for funding, how does it work? | NWO](#).

Questions about the content of this round

For substantive questions about this round, contact:

Merel van der Kuip, Programme Manager, m.vanderkuip@nwo.nl

Roselinde Wijnands, Programme Manager, roselinde.wijnands@regieorgaan-sia.nl

Technical questions about the ISAAC electronic application system

For questions about ISAAC, use the 'Help' button in ISAAC to consult the ISAAC manual. You can also contact the ISAAC helpdesk. The ISAAC helpdesk can be reached Monday to Friday between 10:00 and 17:00 CET/CEST at +31 (0) 70 34 40 600. You can also submit your questions by email to isaac.helpdesk@nwo.nl. You will receive a reply within two working days.

7 Annexes

7.1 Budget modules and tariffs for research organisations

It is possible to apply for the funding of the salary costs of personnel who make a substantial contribution to the research. Funding of these salary costs depends on the type of appointment and the organisation where the personnel will be appointed.

- For university appointments, the salary costs are funded in accordance with:
 - the UNL salary tables applicable at the moment the grant is awarded + 50% premium ([Salary-tables | NWO](#)) or;
 - the rates compliant to the Integral cost system (IKS) as filed at the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) for concerned main or co-applicants. See also annex 7.6.
- For university medical centres, the salary costs are funded in accordance with:
 - the UMCNL salary tables applicable at the moment the grant is awarded + 50% premium ([Salary-tables | NWO](#)) or;
 - the rates compliant to the Integral cost system (IKS) as filed at the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) for concerned main or co-applicants. See also annex 7.6.
- For personnel from universities of applied sciences and TO2 institutions, salary costs will be funded based on:
 - the collective labour agreement scale of the employee concerned in accordance with the rates valid at the time funding is awarded as stated in Table 2.1 ‘Gemiddelde directe loonkosten’ [average direct salary costs], column ‘Uurtarief productieve uren, excl. btw’ [hourly rate productive hours, excl. Dutch VAT] of the Manual Dutch Government Rates (Handleiding Overheidstarieven – HOT rates) + 50% premium ([Salary-tables | NWO](#)) or;
 - the rates compliant to the Integral cost system (IKS) as filed at the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) for concerned main or co-applicants. See also annex 7.6.
- For the Caribbean Netherlands, the Dutch government employs civil servants on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba under different conditions than in the European part of the Netherlands www.rijksdienstcn.com/werken-bij-rijksdienst-caribisch-nederland/arbeidsvoorwaarden.

ALL applicants (research organisations, companies, civil society organisations) MUST reserve.

The rates for all budget modules, with the exception of the integral cost system rates (annex 7.6), are incorporated in the budget template that accompanies the application form. For the budget modules “PhD student”, “EngD” and “Postdoc”, a one-off individual bench fee of €5,000 (not applicable when using IKS) is added on top of the salary costs to encourage the scientific career of the project employee funded by NWO. Except when using IKS rates. The IKS rates are already inclusive, so bench fees are included in these rates. Remunerations for PhD scholarship students (‘bursalen’) at a Dutch university are not eligible for funding from NWO.

7.2 Explanation of budget modules

7.2.1 Personeel

For applicable salary tables and rates, see [Salary tables | NWO](#).

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For personnel employed by a university in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, university medical centre or other research organisation as referred to in Article 1.1, first section, subsections c to h of the NWO Grant Rules 2024, salary costs may be included for the following positions.

PhD student

A PhD student is appointed for 1.0 FTE for a period of 48 months. An equivalent of 48 full-time months is also possible, e.g. an appointment for 0.8 FTE of 60 months. In exceptional cases, a shorter appointment may be requested. This must be properly justified. The assessment committee will assess the request. If a project has a duration of less than 48 months, the dean or director of the institute must commit in writing to funding the remainder of the PhD programme.

It is not possible to request funding for a PhD student who was already working on the proposed project before the grant award.

Use the rates for PhD students from the UNL and UMCNL salary tables. There is a one-off personal bench fee of €5,000 available for each PhD student, aimed at promoting their scientific career.

Engineering Doctorate

An Engineering Doctorate (EngD) is appointed for 1.0 FTE for a maximum of 24 months. The EngD is employed by the research organisation applying for funding and can carry out work at an industrial partner as part of the research for a specified time.

Applying for funding of an Engineering Doctorate (EngD) position is only possible if also applying for funding of a PhD student or postdoc. It is not possible to request funding for an EngD who was already working on the proposed project before the grant award.

Use the rates for PhD students from the UNL and UMCNL salary tables. There is a one-off personal bench fee of €5,000 available for each EngD student, aimed at promoting their scientific career.

Postdoc

A postdoc is appointed for a specific time and FTE.

Use the rates for senior scientific personnel from the UNL salary tables and the rates for postdocs at a university medical centre from the UMCNL salary tables.

It is not possible to request funding for a postdoc who was already working on the proposed project before the grant award.

There is a one-off personal bench fee of €5,000 available for postdoc positions with an appointment of at least 12 months and 0.5 FTE, aimed at promoting their scientific career.

Non-scientific personnel

Funding may be requested for non-scientific personnel required for the project's execution. Examples include programmers, technical assistants or analysts and project managers. Non-scientific personnel's deployment must be described in the proposal.

The duration of the position shall not exceed the duration of the NWO-funded project.

Depending on the job level, a choice is made from the UNL or UMCNL salary tables for NWP-mbo, NWP-hbo and NWP-academic. No one-off personal benchfee is available for NWP.

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Research leave for applicants

This budget module can be used to request funding to cover the costs of research leave for the main applicant and/or co-applicants. The applicant's employer can use the funds to cover the costs of relieving them from educational, supervisory, administrative or management tasks (not research tasks). The applicant may only use the time thus freed up to work on activities relating to the project. The proposal must describe which project-related activities the applicants will carry out in this additional time. Applicants may only apply for research leave. Salary costs are not eligible and no hours may be charged to modules such as project management and knowledge utilisation.

NWO will fund the research leave based on the salary tables for senior scientific personnel (UNL) and postdocs (UMCNL) applicable on the decision date

7.2.2 Personnel at universities of applied sciences, applied research institutes, public knowledge institutions educational institutions and other (research) organisations

Funding may be requested for personnel at universities of applied sciences, applied research institutes, other educational institutions and other (research) organisations. These rates are determined based on the Manual tariffs Dutch Government (HOT), Table 2, under 2.2 'Average total salary costs per salary scale', column 'Hourly rate for productive hours excluding VAT'. The salary scale for the position requested determines the HOT table rate.

Or use the IKS rates as filed with RVO. No personal bench fee is available for personnel of universities of applied sciences, TO2 institutes, other educational institutions and other (research) organisations.

For organisations that do not use the Dutch government's collective labour agreement or an equivalent, e.g. collective labour agreements for universities of applied sciences, secondary vocational education and training or local government, use the rate that most closely approximates the actual salary costs.

7.2.3 Scientific personnel at foreign research organisations

Funding may be requested for salary costs of personnel at a foreign research organisation contributing to the project. The foreign research organisation must comply with the definition of a research organisation as referred to in Article 1.1, subsections 4 and 5 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024 and with the cumulative conditions listed under 'Conditions for foreign research organisations'.

Compelling justification is required, demonstrating how the researcher at the foreign research organisation contributes specific expertise to the project that is not available at the required level in the Netherlands. The assessment committee will evaluate the justification as part of the 'Networking' criterion. No justification is required if NWO has concluded a bilateral 'Money Follows Cooperation' agreement with the national research council of the country where the foreign research organisation is located. The [NWO website](#) contains an overview of research councils that have such an agreement with NWO. NWO will not award funding to co-applicants in countries subject to national or international sanction legislation and rules.

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The main applicant receives the grant and is responsible for transferring grant funds to the co-applicant's foreign research organisation and for the financial reporting on the use of the foreign portion of the grant. The exchange rate risk is borne by the applicant. Gains or losses resulting from currency fluctuations are not eligible for funding.

The budget must reflect the actual costs. The maximum rate that may be budgeted for is the UNL rates adjusted for country correction coefficients. There is no individual bench fee available.

If more than €125,000 is requested per organisation within this budget module, the final financial statement must be accompanied by an audit report.

Conditions for foreign research organisations

The organisation must be:

- a foundation, association or an organisation or body established and governed by public law (in Dutch: *publiekrechtelijke rechtspersoon*), or at least its equivalent in the country of establishment of the foreign organisation (all other legal forms, including private and public limited companies – or at least its equivalent in the country of establishment of the foreign organisation – are excluded);
- be principally engaged in conducting fundamental research, industrial research or experimental development independently or in the broad dissemination of the results of its own research activities through education, publications or knowledge transfer;
- be able to declare that the organisation keeps separate accounts with regard to economic/non-economic activities and that companies with decisive influence on the organisation do not have preferential access to the organisation's research results.

Note: Prior to submission of a proposal, NWO will assess whether the foreign organisation complies with Article 1.1, subsections 4 and 5 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024 and is thus eligible to participate as a co-applicant based on the above conditions.

This assessment also helps to ensure NWO's compliance with regulations prohibiting state aid.

To enable the assessment to be carried out, the main applicant must submit the following documents for the foreign organisation (or organisations) by email to ngf-ciic@nwo.nl no later than twenty working days before the submission deadline (i.e. by 11 February 2027, 14:00:00 CET):

- a recent extract from the Chamber of Commerce or from an equivalent register in the foreign organisation's country of establishment;
- a deed of establishment and/or current articles of association;
- the most recently available annual accounts, including an audit report⁸;
- a Research Organisation Statement completed by the foreign organisation. This statement is available on the funding page of this Call for proposals.

Documents must be in English or Dutch. Other relevant documents may also be included. NWO may also request additional information if the above documents do not allow for adequate determination of the organisation's eligibility to act as co-applicant.

⁸ No audit report is necessary for organisations not legally required to have their annual accounts audited. However, such organisations must be able to provide proof of exemption from this legal requirement.

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If the intended co-applicant's organisation has already been assessed and found to comply with these conditions as part of a different NWO programme, please contact NWO at the above email address as soon as possible to determine whether further assessment is necessary.

If the main applicant fails to submit the documents required for this assessment on time, NWO will not accept the organisation as a co-applicant.

7.2.4 Materials

Funding may be requested for all project-specific costs pertaining to such items as consumables, purchasing of services, materials, small instruments, access to facilities in the Netherlands or abroad, software and research resources with no economic value after use. This module also covers national and international travel and accommodation costs for everyone working on the project, including visiting researchers from abroad, costs for the organisation of (international) workshops and symposiums, data management costs, publications and costs in the context of citizen science. A maximum of 50% of the material budget requested from NWO may be applied to work by third parties such as laboratory analyses, data collection, etc.

Students may contribute to the research. If the students are contributing as part of their curriculum, the standard internship allowance rate of the research university or university of applied sciences applies. If they are contributing as paid student assistants alongside their studies, the applicable rate is determined according to the Manual tariffs Dutch Government (HOT), Table 2, under 2.2 'Average total salary costs per salary scale', column 'Hourly rate for productive hours excluding VAT', scale 1

For national and international travel, only the costs of second class or economy fares will be covered. For publications, see the provisions on Open Science in section 5.5. Costs for an audit report may only be included for research organisations not subject to the OCW Education Audit Protocol and for up to €5,000 per audit report.

Costs cannot be included for:

- organisational infrastructure and overhead, including a fully operational workplace, accommodation, office automation, human resource management, commuting expenses, training, facilities services, HR consulting, health and safety, documentary information services and working-from-home allowance;
- use and maintenance of internally developed scientific infrastructure;
- regular teaching and educational activities;
- members of the supervisory committee.

Note: If funding is being requested for the above-mentioned project-specific costs at foreign organisations, these organisations must be assessed in accordance with annex 7.2.3, Scientific personnel at foreign research organisations.

7.2.5 Investments

Funding may be requested for all project-specific resources for the purpose of research and costs relating to the establishment or further development of scientific infrastructure that will retain economic value after use or can be re-used. The beneficiary will own the research resources after the project's completion. If the beneficiary achieves profits through the beneficial ownership of the research resources, these profits must be invested in the beneficiary's primary activities as referred to in Article 3.1.4, subsection 2 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024. This concerns purchases of equipment that will remain valuable for the conduct of research and investments in the establishment or (further) development of scientific infrastructure. Salary costs for such investments can be included as personnel costs under the post investments

If equipment is not used for the research project for its full-service life, only the depreciation costs corresponding to the research project's duration, calculated in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, will be eligible

Costs for investments must be adequately specified and motivated in the proposal.

Eligible for funding:

- costs for investments in scientific equipment;
- costs for investments in datasets;
- salary costs for employees with essential technical expertise necessary for the development or construction of an investment.

Not eligible for funding:

- costs for infrastructural facilities that can be considered part of the standard infrastructure, such as a fully operational workplace, accommodation, office automation, human resource management, commuting expenses, training, facilities services, HR consulting, health and safety, documentary information services and working-from-home allowance;
- data collections and any associated software and bibliographies that are already available in other ways;
- other personnel costs, including personnel costs required to operate a facility and to use it for research;
- costs for the maintenance and use of the equipment in a project. Costs for the use of equipment in a project can be included via the material budget.

7.2.6 Knowledge utilisation

The budget requested should be adequately specified in the proposal. To determine the rates, use the provisions of the budget modules Personnel (7.1.1) and Material (7.1.2).

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The purpose of this budget module is to promote the knowledge utilisation generated from the research⁹, related to the intended impact goals for the Growth Fund Programme CIIC (see section 2.2.1).

It is possible to add an amount for knowledge utilisation. These costs are a maximum of 10% of the grant amount.

Examples of possible costs, but not limited to, are a viability study of application possibilities or testing a possible application in practice, skills development, costs for filing a patent application, outreach & knowledge transfer, networking, using a business developer.

The budget requested for knowledge utilisation should be adequately specified in the application

Please note: If funding is requested for the above project-specific costs from foreign organisations, these organisations should be assessed before submission in the manner described in annex 7.2.3 Scientific personnel at a research organisation abroad.

7.2.7 Project management

The Project Management module offers the opportunity to request a project management post up to a maximum of 5% of the grant amount. This item can only relate to activities that are purely supportive of the project for which the grant is being requested. The main applicant must adequately justify this post.

Project management is understood to mean, among other things, the optimal design of the organisational structure of the consortium, support of the consortium and the main applicant, monitoring the coherence, progress and unity of the project, and coordination between the subprojects within the project. These tasks may also be performed by external organisations to the extent not available at the research organisation of the main and/or co-applicant(s). Research organisations should consider government procurement rules when bidding to select a third party and follow a European tendering procedure where appropriate. The work of the main applicant and co-applicants themselves in the context of the project (management) may not be funded from this budget module.

The budget to be requested for project management can consist of material or implementation costs and personnel costs. For personnel costs, a maximum rate of €121 per hour can be claimed. The hourly rate of personnel to be appointed must be based on a cost-covering rate and is calculated based on of the standard productive number of hours used by the organisation. The cost-covering rate includes:

- (average) gross salary corresponding to the position of the employee who will contribute to the project (based on the collective labour agreement grade of the employee concerned);
- holiday allowance and 13th month (if applicable in the relevant collective labour agreement) in proportion to the fte deployed;
- social security charges;
- pension costs;
- overhead.

⁹ In deze budgetmodule wordt aangesloten bij de definitie voor “kennisoverdracht” die de Europese Commissie hanteert in de Communautaire kaderregeling inzake staatssteun voor onderzoek, ontwikkeling en innovatie (PbEU 2014, C 198).

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Project management tasks may be carried out by external parties, but the part of (commercial) hourly rates that exceeds the rates stated is not eligible for funding and therefore cannot be included in the budget.

7.3 The integral cost system (IKS) and the fixed hourly rate

Specifically and solely for Calls for proposals that NWO organises in the context of the National Growth Fund, main and co-applicants can make use of the integral cost system (IKS) as used by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) for the funding of personnel costs.

In the application budget, these rates can only be applied by research organisations, enterprises and civil society organisations for which the ICS rates were deposited and approved by RVO.

If an applicant wishes to use the ICS rates, this choice automatically means giving NWO permission to request its ICS rates from RVO for the formal test of submission conditions by NWO. The choice also implies that one must share the ICS rates with the consortium partners of the proposal when a joint budget is drawn up.

As part of assessing on formal conditions for submission, NWO will compare the ICS rates in the application budget with the rates deposited and approved with RVO. NWO applies the most recently filed rates at the time of submission of the application. If a deviation is found in the ICS rates of the application budget and the ICS rates at RVO, NWO will contact the main applicant, who has the responsibility to bring the application (including budget) into line with the conditions (see also section 4.2 with section 'to consider the request').

The positions entered in the proposal budget must agree with the positions stated in the ICS table as deposited at RVO. The corresponding hourly rates must further be entered in the application budget without indexation. There is no possibility of indexing rates during the duration of the project. If ICS rates have been used, bench fee do not apply because these integral costs are already included in the ICS rate.

For the final financial accountability, the applicant must include the personnel costs incurred for all years separately.

Fixed hourly rate

(Source: the fixed hourly rate system (rvo.nl) (only available in Dutch). The fixed hourly rate system is a standard method to calculate the grant size for costs eligible for funding. Research organisations cannot use this rate.

The fixed hourly rate is a reimbursement for the salary costs/labour costs and the indirect or overhead costs of your organisation, for example accommodation costs, costs of office equipment, and costs for journeys within the Netherlands for work meetings. In this Call for proposals, the hourly rate is €60.

If you make use of this system, then in your administration you must clearly state the number of hours worked by your project employees and the costs of equipment, materials and third parties (invoices). Justification for the actual salary costs of employees who work on the project is not necessary.

7.4 Reservation for UNL, UMCNL and HOT salary costs

If after submission of the proposal and before the proposal is awarded the UNL- UMCNL- or HOT rates increase, the applicant should reserve funds in the proposal budget to finance a one-off increase in the personnel rates. NWO shall prescribe a percentage in the budget format based on an estimate of historical, long-term figures. The applicant can derive no rights from the prescribed percentage with respect to the actual increase in rates.

If the amount reserved proves to be insufficient to fund the increase in the personnel rates, the applicant will compensate for the increase from other budget categories. Substantial changing to the content of the application is not permitted.

If it transpires that not all of the reserved funds are required, then NWO will adjust the application budget downwards and only the costs associated with the actual increase in rates will be awarded.

7.5 Relationship between the call for proposals and other components of NGF-CIIC

Further information on the governance of the CIIC funding programme and the relationship between this call for proposals and the other action lines and activities forming part of this NGF project is available at www.ciiic.nl.

7.6 CIIC Innovation Agenda

NWO advises applicants to familiarise themselves with the CIIC Innovation Agenda and, where possible, to incorporate it into the implementation of the project. The Innovation Agenda is available via the grant page for this scheme.

7.7 Guideline and Self-Assessment Tool on Public Values for Immersive Experiences

NWO advises applicants to familiarise themselves with the Public Values Guideline and Self-Assessment for Immersive Experiences (IX) and to incorporate these into the implementation of the project where possible. This Public Values Guideline and Self-Assessment is available via the grant page for this scheme. More detailed background information on Public Values can be found on the CIIC website.

7.8 Cultural Codes

NWO advises applicants to familiarise themselves with the Governance Code for Culture, the Fair Practice Code and the Diversity & Inclusion Code, and to incorporate these into the implementation of the project wherever possible.

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Dutch Research Council

Visiting address:

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Dutch Research Council | NWO

