



NWO Talent Programme

Vidi 2026

Call for proposals

Science
Social Sciences and Humanities
Applied and Engineering Sciences
Health Research and Medical Sciences (ZonMw)

2026



Table of contents

1	Overview and introduction	2
1.1	Brief Summary	2
1.2	Introduction	2
1.3	Changes compared to the previous Call for proposals	3
2	Aim and background	4
2.1	Aim of the Programme and the round	4
2.2	Background	5
3	Preparation and submission	6
3.1	Timeline	6
3.2	Who can apply	7
3.3	What can be applied for	9
3.4	Preparing and submitting a pre-proposal in the online application system	10
3.5	Preparing and submitting a proposal in the online application system	11
3.6	Requirements for consideration	15
4	Assessment	17
4.1	Criteria	17
4.2	Procedure	19
4.3	Guidelines and frameworks for assessment	23
5	After the grant award	25
5.1	Start of the project	25
5.2	Monitoring and project management	26
5.3	Guidelines and frameworks for project implementation	28
5.4	Completion	29
5.5	Research results – Open Science	29
5.6	Evaluation	30
6	Contact details	31
7	Annexes	32
7.1	Explanation of budget modules	32
7.2	Indexation	35

1 Overview and introduction

This chapter gives a brief summary of and introduction to the funding round. 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: NWO Talent Programme – Vidi 2026

Aim: The Vidi grant is intended to fund scientifically innovative research, enabling researchers to establish or expand a research group.

Budget: The maximum grant available per project is € 850,000.

This Call for Proposals is expected to fund up to 77 applications. The available budget and the expected number of funded applications per domain are:

- Science € 25,500,000, approx. 30 applications;
- SSH € 17,850,000, approx. 21 applications
- AES € 9,350,000, approx. 11 applications;
- ZonMw € 12,750,000, approx. 15 applications.

Co-funding requirement: None

Institutional contribution: Permitted, see Section 3.5.2.

Submission deadline(s):

The deadline for submitting pre-proposals is 3 November 2026, 14:00:00 CET.

The deadline for submitting full proposals is 6 April 2027, 14:00:00 CEST.

Procedure: Applicants must first submit a pre-proposal consisting of a CV and a concise research idea. Applicants receiving a positive decision at the pre-proposal stage may proceed to the second phase. In this phase, applicants submit a fully developed research proposal together with plans and opportunities for scientific and/or societal impact.

1.2 Introduction

This Call for Proposals describes the application procedure for the ‘NWO Talent Programme Vidi 2026’ funding round and consists of seven chapters. This Call for proposals falls under the responsibility of the Dutch Research Council (NWO).

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

NWO processes personal data it receives in the context of this round in accordance with the [NWO Privacy Statement](#).

1.3 Changes compared to the previous Call for proposals

Section 3.2 has been clarified to specify that the applicant must hold a paid position at the organisation hosting the research project for the full duration of the project.

NWO has revised its list of discipline codes. The updated list of selectable discipline codes can be consulted [here](#). Following this revision, the Science domain has updated the names of its disciplinary panels.

Within the domain Science, no interviews will be conducted. For the domains SSH, AES and ZonMw, the interviews will remain part of the procedure.

2 Aim and background

This chapter explains the objectives and background of the programme and the funding round.

2.1 Aim of the Programme and the round

The aim of the NWO Talent Programme is to create creative space for adventurous, talented, pioneering researchers, in which they can conduct research of their choice, develop their own line of research and further develop their talent.

The Vidi target group consists of researchers at the point of transition to leadership. A Vidi grant can contribute to the researcher's further development in this regard. Researchers eligible for a Vidi grant have academic qualities that clearly exceed what is customary and demonstrate developing leadership and mentoring qualities.

The Vidi grant is intended to fund scientifically innovative research, enabling researchers to establish or expand a research group. Researchers who are clearly at a more advanced stage in their careers no longer fall within the target group for a Vidi grant, for instance because they already have extensive experience of leading a research group. This will be taken into account when assessing the quality of the researcher. Fit with the target group is one of the aspects assessed under the assessment criteria (see Section 4.1).

Researchers employed by a foreign research organisation at the time of submission may also apply. The proposed project must be carried out at a Dutch research organisation recognised by NWO (see Section 3.2 for further information).

Promoting female researchers

NWO aims to actively encourage and support female researchers in progressing in academia until a lasting, balanced gender distribution has been achieved in the relevant discipline. NWO is not alone in this. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), Universities of the Netherlands (UNL), and the individual Dutch universities also take measures to support women's progression in academia.

For this reason, where two or more applications are of equal quality at the pre-proposal stage or in interview selection, preference is given to a female applicant (see Section 4.3.6 for further information). We therefore expressly encourage female researchers to submit an application.

NWO is conducting a pilot within the Vidi round intended to result in more awards for women. If, during the assessment process, several applications receive comparable assessments of at least 'very good', preference will be given to the female applicant in the final ranking. See Section 4.3.7 for the precise details.

Please note: to be eligible, female applicants must select 'Female' under 'Gender' in the 'Basic information' section of the online application system (ISAAC or Mijn ZonMw).

2.2 Background

The NWO Talent Programme consists of three funding schemes corresponding to different stages of an academic career (Veni, Vidi and Vici). Veni grants are for researchers who recently obtained their PhD, Vidi grants for researchers with several years of postdoctoral experience, and Vici grants for researchers who have demonstrated the ability to develop their own research line.

Each funding scheme has one funding round per year and its own Call for Proposals.

In the Talent Programme, the submission routes for applications are linked to their scientific domain: Science, Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), Applied and Engineering Sciences (AES) or Health Research and Medical Sciences (ZonMw). Applicants should select the domain most appropriate to their proposal. Further information on the various submission routes can be found in Section 3.5.1.

2.2.1 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, the [Impact Outlook](#) approach is applied. Here, researchers can choose which type of impact they want to specifically focus on, while proportional consideration is also given to what can be done for the remaining impact.

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](#).

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. 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 applicant. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration by NWO.

Pre-proposals (all domains)

3 November 2026 Before 14:00:00 CET	Deadline for pre-proposals
November – December 2026	The assessment committee reviews pre-proposals
January 2027	Applicants receive the committee’s preliminary advice on whether or not to write a full proposal based on the submitted pre-proposal
End January 2027	Opportunity to request correction of a factual inaccuracy in a negative provisional recommendation
End February 2027	Decision by the Domain Board

Full applications – Science and Science

6 April 2027 Before 14:00:00 CEST	Deadline for full proposals
April – June 2027	Proposals are reviewed by external referees
June 2027	Rebuttal (optional)
July – August 2027	Pre-assessment by the assessment committee
August – September 2027	Assessment committee meeting
End October 2027	Decision by the Domain Board

Full applications – SSH and AES

6 April 2027 Before 14:00:00 CEST	Deadline for full proposals
April – June 2027	Proposals are reviewed by external referees

June 2027	Rebuttal (optional)
June – August 2027	Pre-assessment by the assessment committee
July/ September 2027	Interviews
September 2027	Assessment committee meeting
End October 2027	Decision by the Domain Board
Full applications - ZonMw	
6 April 2027	Deadline for full proposals
Before 14:00:00 CEST	
April – May 2027	Proposals are reviewed by external referees
May – June 2027	Rebuttal (optional)
June – July 2027	Pre-assessment by the assessment committee
July 2027	Interview selection meeting
September 2027	Interviews
September 2027	Assessment committee meeting
End October 2027	Decision by the Domain Board

3.2 Who can apply

Researchers who have completed a PhD, whether based in the Netherlands or abroad, are allowed to submit an application. Researchers are eligible to apply if they obtained their PhD during the eight years preceding the reference date for this funding round, 1 October 2026. In certain circumstances, this eligibility period may be extended (see Section 3.2.1).

As a general rule, eligibility is determined by the date from which the applicant became allowed to use the title of Doctor. Where more than six months elapse between the PhD defence and the moment at which the applicant is allowed to carry the title of Doctor, the date of the defence will apply. For researchers who have completed two doctoral degrees, eligibility is based on the date of the second PhD.

Applicants must hold a paid position at the research organisation hosting the project for the full duration of the project, whether full-time or part-time. Applicants with part-time appointments must be able to demonstrate that the project can be delivered effectively and that all staff funded through the project will receive appropriate supervision. NWO requires applicants to provide an Embedding Guarantee (see Section 3.4).

The project must be hosted by one of the following organisations:

- universities, 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](#);
- Netherlands Cancer Institute;
- Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen;
- Naturalis Biodiversity Centre;
- Advanced Research Centre for NanoLithography (ARCNL);
- Princess Máxima Centre.

3.2.1 Extension clause (Extended eligibility period)

This round is only open to researchers who received their PhD between October 1, 2028 and October 1, 2026. Education, parenthood, care leave or illness can all affect the actual time available for research. In such cases, NWO offers researchers the option to request an extension of the final submission deadline.

Grounds for extension:

- long-term leave due to illness, parenthood or pregnancy or to act as a carer;
- parental responsibility for one or more children;
- part-time appointment in combination with care duties;
- the applicant is undergoing training in one or more clinical specialties.

Total extension period:

- sum of individual applicable extension periods;
- up to a maximum of five years for Veni, Vidi and Vici grants.

The [extension clause](#) on the NWO website contains more information and the form required to invoke this clause. Always contact NWO first before submitting an extension request. See Chapter 6 for contact details.

3.2.2 Additional requirements for applicants

Additional requirements:

- a. applications must be submitted by individual researchers. Joint applications by two researchers or research groups are not permitted.
- b. applicants may:
 - submit no more than one pre-proposal in the same funding round;
 - not submit applications for more than one funding scheme within the NWO Talent Programme in the same calendar year;
 - submit a Vidi proposal only twice. A pre-proposal or full proposal that is withdrawn during the assessment procedure will count towards this maximum number of submissions, unless it is withdrawn under NWO's Parental Leave Allowance Scheme or Force Majeure Allowance Scheme (see Section 4.3.5).
 - A researcher may submit an application for the next funding instrument within the NWO Talent Programme no earlier than 24 months before the planned end date of an ongoing NWO Talent Programme grant.

- c. Researchers who have previously been awarded funding under a particular NWO Talent Programme scheme are not eligible to apply again for the same scheme.

3.3 What can be applied for

The total available budget under this Call for Proposals is € 65,450,000.

Applicants may request up to € 850,000 per project.

The maximum project duration is five years. If the proposed project has a duration of less than four years, the maximum grant amount will be reduced proportionately.

The applicant can include costs for personnel, materials, investments, and knowledge utilisation. The available budget modules are given below. Request only the amounts of funding necessary to complete the project. Rates and explanations of these budget modules are given in Annex 7.1.

Please note: double funding is not permitted. Where a project or part thereof receives funding from another funding body, the application will not be funded.

3.3.1 Personnel

It is possible to apply for funding of the salary costs of personnel contributing to the project. The amounts depend on the type of appointment and the organisation employing the personnel in question.

[Personnel at a university in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, university medical centre or research organisation](#)

You may include salary costs for a Vidi applicant for that part of the appointment devoted to tasks relating to the project.

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 position: PhD candidate, Engineering Doctorate, postdoctoral researcher, physician-researcher, and non-academic personnel.

Funding for an Engineering Doctorate (EngD) position may only be requested if funding is also requested for a PhD candidate or postdoctoral researcher.

[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 subsection 3.2.

There is no maximum number of students who may work on a project.

3.3.2 Materials

Funding may be requested for all project-specific material costs. These costs may account for 50% of the NWO grant amount. No more than 25% of the material costs budget requested from NWO may be used to pay for work done by third parties.

3.3.3 Investments

Funding may be requested for investments in equipment, infrastructure and other research resources that will retain economic value after use or can be re-used. Salary costs for personnel to set up equipment, infrastructure or other research resources may be included as part of the investment. The Personnel rates and conditions apply and these costs must be included as Investments. Investments are only possible at research organisations listed in subsection 3.2.

A maximum of €500,000 may be requested for investments.

3.3.4 Knowledge utilisation

Funding may be requested for activities that promote the use of knowledge generated by the research¹, increasing the research's societal impact.

It is possible to allocate up to 5% of the grant amount to this module. Use of this module is not mandatory.

3.4 Preparing and submitting a pre-proposal in the online application system

NWO makes use of the [ISAAC](#) application system. Applications to the Science, SSH and AES domains must therefore be submitted through this online application system. ZonMw uses [Mijn ZonMw](#), which means that applications to ZonMw must be submitted through this online application system. Throughout this Call for Proposals, both platforms are referred to collectively as the 'online application system'.

Applicants are advised to begin preparing their pre-proposal in the online application system well in advance, as they are required to enter information online when submitting their pre-proposal or full application. It is recommended to start preparing the pre-proposal or application at least one day before the relevant deadline specified in this Call for Proposals. Pre-proposals or applications submitted after the relevant deadline will not be considered. Please note: this round includes different submission desks.

Please make sure to use the right submission desk to submit your pre-proposal. See Section 3.5.1 for more information on the submission desks.

To draw up your pre-proposal, follow these steps:

- create an account or update your existing account details if necessary;
- ensure that all requested personal details are complete and up to date, including email address, telephone number, mobile number and gender (see Section 2.1, Encouraging Female Researchers);
- download the pre-proposal form and required templates for annexes;
- save the completed pre-proposal form as a PDF file and submit it in the online application system. Submit any annexes separately;

¹ All activities included in this budget module must fit the European Commission's definition of 'knowledge transfer activities' in the State aid framework for research and development and innovation (OJ 2022, C 414).

- in the online application system, fill in all the requested information, including the research fields [NWO research fields | NWO](#);
- optionally identify up to three non-referees. NWO will not invite these individuals to review the proposal as external referees. Please note: non-referees may only be identified during the submission process and remain applicable throughout the assessment process;
- if you need to register an organisation that isn't yet included in the online application system database, this is possible until five working days before the deadline by email to relatiebeheer@nwo.nl;
- the pre-proposal is in English.

The following mandatory annex (PDF) must be uploaded in the online application system with the pre-proposal:

- Embedding Guarantee (PDF)

The Embedding Guarantee must be prepared using the template provided by NWO. Following discussions with the prospective host institution, applicants must complete the form and obtain the signature of the dean. Where the organisation does not have a dean, the form must be signed by another authorized signatory.

Optional annex for pre-proposals:

- Non-referees (only for ZonMw applicants. For other domains, applicants should use the online application system)
- Literature list for referees

Please provide a list of no more than ten relevant scientific publications closely related to your research idea. NWO will use this list, together with your research idea, keywords and stated discipline(s), to identify potential referees for your application. Your list of references will not be submitted to the assessment committee.

Always use the templates provided by NWO for all annexes. Annexes other than those listed above are not permitted. All attachments must be submitted as PDF files (without security).

Documentation including pre-proposal and 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.

For questions about Mijn ZonMw, please consult the manual. If you cannot find an answer to your question, you can also reach out to the ZonMw service desk, available Monday to Friday between 8.00 to 17.00 on +31 70 349 51 78 or at servicedesk@zonmw.nl.

3.5 Preparing and submitting a proposal in the online application system

Submitted pre-proposals that receive a positive decision must be converted into full proposals by pressing the 'Convert to full proposal' button in ISAAC. Researchers applying with ZonMw will be notified that they have a pending task in Mijn ZonMw. Applicants are advised to begin preparing the full proposal in the online application system well in advance.

The preparation process consists of the following steps:

- use the online application system to download the proposal form and required formats for annexes;
- save the completed proposal form as a PDF file and submit it in the online application system. Submit any annexes separately;
- in the online application system, 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 online application system 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 the online application system:

- budget (Excel file (ISAAC), PDF (Mijn ZonMw));
- embedding guarantee (PDF), if the intended host institution has changed since the submission of the pre-proposal;
- if applicable: statement exceeding maximum funding (PDF);
- if applicable: declaration co-funding (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 in ISAAC, must be submitted as unprotected PDF files. The budget must be submitted as an Excel file in ISAAC and as PDF file in Mijn ZonMw.

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

3.5.1 Submission desks

Under this Call for Proposals, applicants are required to select a submission route from the following options:

- Science;
- Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), Cultural Sciences and Linguistics panel;
- Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), Economics and Business Administration;
- Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), Philosophy, Historical Sciences, and Religion panel;
- Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), Behaviour and Education panel;
- Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), Law and Public Administration panel;
- Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), Social Sciences panel;
- Applied and Engineering Sciences (AES);
- Health Research and Medical Sciences (ZonMw).

The Science domain has a single submission desk, but pre-proposals are reviewed by discipline-specific panels. Applicants can indicate their preferred panel on the pre-proposal form. Further information about the panels in the Science domain can be found on the NWO website: [Overview of Domain Science research areas for Domain Science Vidi | NWO](#).

For the SSH domain, each of the six disciplinary panels has its own distinct submission desk in the online application system. Further information about these panels can be found on the NWO website: [Panel Overview in the Social Sciences and Humanities Domain | NWO](#).

In the SSH domain, the same panels are used throughout the assessment procedure. In the Science domain, the panels assess the pre-proposals before being merged into broader clusters for the assessment of the full proposals.

The AES and ZonMW domains each have one submission desk.

Applicants are advised to think carefully about the most suitable submission desk before submitting their pre-proposal. The chosen submission desk is final and cannot be changed further on in the process. When in doubt, for example in the case of applications of a fully or partially interdisciplinary nature, researchers are advised to reach out to one of the funding programme's contacts in good time before the deadline. They will provide more information about the differences between the various desks, but it is the applicant's responsibility to select the most appropriate submission desk. See Section 6 for contact details.

3.5.2 Additional project contributions

Both the research organisation where the project is to be carried out and third parties can make contributions to the project, financially or otherwise. For contributions by third parties, see the following subsection on co-funding. Contributions made by the research organisation itself do not affect the costs partly or fully funded by NWO and do not qualify as co-funding. These are additional expenses incurred by the research organisation in the context of the project.

In case of financial contributions by the research organisation, a 'Declaration exceeding maximum funding' is mandatory. The research organisation may decide to pay all or part of a researcher's salary, for example, where this amount is not included in the costs already funded by NWO.

Statement exceeding maximum funding

If the proposal's budget exceeds the maximum NWO grant that can be requested (€ 850,000), the research organisation where the project is to be carried out must provide assurances that it will cover the excess amount if the proposal is funded on submission of the proposal. In that case, the applicant must upload a 'Statement exceeding maximum funding' form as an annex to the proposal on submission. A template for this is available on the NWO funding page.

3.5.3 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;
- Co-funding in cash 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.

For this Call for proposals, co-funding is not mandatory. However, co-funders may be included in the proposal. NWO distinguishes between co-funding in cash (received by the applicant), which covers the budget for the project activities described in the proposal, and co-funding in kind, which may consist of personnel and/or material resources contributed by the participating organisations.

Co-funding is subject to the following principles:

- NWO is the proposal's main funder. Proposals for projects where co-funding exceeds 49% 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;
- Co-funding in cash 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 co-funding in cash or in kind²:

- grant support provided by NWO;
- co-funding cannot be contributed by parties eligible to submit their own proposal to NWO as part of this Call for proposals;
- costs of overhead, supervision, consultancy services and/or participation in the user committee.

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 the online application system.

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 subsection 5.1.4).

Accountability of co-funding in cash 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. Co-funding in cash 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.

² The NWO Co-funding Scheme, Article 6 describes which types of co-funding are not permitted.

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 co-funding in cash 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, in 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.

For applications submitted to the AES domain, co-funding declarations committing cash and/or in kind support are shared with referees and assessment committee member.

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 for pre-proposals:

- the mandatory pre-proposal has been submitted before the deadline;
- the applicant meets the conditions stated in Section 3.2;
- the pre-proposal complies with the DORA guidelines described in Section 4.3.4;
- the pre-proposal has been prepared using the forms provided in the online application system and on the NWO and ZonMW websites' funding pages (web page) for this round;
- the pre-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 pre-proposal has been submitted through the applicant's own account;
- the pre-proposal is in English;
- the pre-proposal meets the page count and word limit requirements.

Conditions full proposal

- the proposal has been submitted before the deadline;
- the applicant meets the conditions stated in Section 3.2;
- where co-funding is involved, the co-funders meet the conditions stated in Section 3.5.3;
- the proposal complies with the DORA guidelines described in Section 4.3.4;
- the proposal has been prepared using the forms provided in the online application system and on the NWO and ZonMW websites' funding pages (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 through the applicant's own 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;
- where co-funding is involved, the co-funding, after any request for additions or changes, has been correctly and fully committed through declarations of co-funding;
- the proposed project complies with the project duration requirements set out in Section 3.3.

The pre-proposal and proposal forms may include additional requirements, explanations, procedures and questions necessary for the form's correct completion.

Consideration of the proposal and administrative corrections

After submitting 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 application process, NWO will communicate with the applicant.

4 Assessment

This chapter describes the assessment procedure for applications.

4.1 Criteria

The assessment procedure is based on substantive assessment criteria and commences once a proposal has been taken into consideration.

Pre-proposals are substantively assessed against the following criterion:

Quality of the researcher (100%)

Quality of the researcher

- whether the researcher fits the target group³: are they at the stage of transitioning to leadership, i.e. are they ready to establish their own research group or expand a recent research group, and to what degree will the Vidi grant help the researcher develop as a leader?
- the extent to which the researcher's qualities clearly exceed what is customary within the international peer group, as evidenced in the CV by the quality and impact of the key output and by other academic achievements;⁴
- the extent to which the researcher's work is clearly positioned with respect to scientific and (where possible) societal themes or questions;
- the quality of the (inter)national network, collaborative abilities and visibility of the researcher;
- the extent to which the researcher in the CV demonstrates the capability of generating innovative ideas;
- the degree to which the researcher's approach to leadership and mentorship and their plans to contribute to the development of others, as described in the academic profile, are appropriate;
- whether the researcher's key output and academic profile clearly align with the research idea, or whether the researcher presents a convincing vision of how this alignment will be achieved.

The criterion is assigned a score. Scores are determined based on the NWO score table using a scale of 1 to 9, where '1' is excellent and '9' unsatisfactory.

All pre-proposals are given total score for the 'Quality of the candidate' criterion and then ranked based on this score. For rounds with five or more proposals, the assessment committee members' scores are standardised for ranking. NWO performs this standardisation based on the median and average deviation.

Full proposals are assessed against the following criteria:

1. Quality and innovative character of the research proposal (75%)
2. Scientific and/or societal impact (25%)

³ See Section 2.1 for further information on the target group.

⁴ Examples of 'other academic achievements' are contributions to the development of scientific theories and methods, indications of independence, contributions to Open Science and 'academic citizenship'.

1. Quality and innovative character of the research proposal

- The extent to which the proposed research has the potential to make an important contribution to the advancement of science;⁵
- the extent to which the proposed research contains (elements of) scientific innovation in terms of theory, methods and/or topic;
- the extent to which the proposed research goes beyond a gradual evolution of the applicant's current research;
- whether the proposed research strikes an equitable balance between being challenging and feasible;⁶
- whether the proposal aligns with the researcher's expertise, or whether the researcher presents a convincing vision of how this alignment will be achieved;
- the extent to which the proposed approach is appropriate;
- the clarity of the proposal, including question(s) posed and the objectives.

2. Scientific and/or societal impact

Applicants may focus on scientific impact, societal impact, or a combination of both.

NWO assesses scientific impact as follows:

- whether the proposal conveys an ambitious vision and appropriate strategy regarding the dissemination and/or implementation of the research results in one's own discipline, related disciplines and the broader scientific field.

NWO assesses societal impact as follows:

- the extent to which the project has added value for societal impact (definition:⁷);
- the extent to which the project has potential for societal impact in the short and long term;
- whether the proposal conveys an ambitious vision and appropriate strategy regarding the way(s) in which the proposed research may lead to societal impact.

In addition to the above and irrespective of the choice of impact, the assessment committee, as part of this criterion, will also weigh;

- the extent to which the motivation for the focus on scientific impact and/or societal impact is convincing;
- if the focus is primarily on scientific impact: how proportional attention is given during the course of the project to increasing (unforeseen) opportunities for societal impact;
- if the focus is primarily on societal impact: how proportional attention is given during the course of the project to increasing (unforeseen) opportunities for scientific impact.
- whether sufficient attention is given to the key risks of undesirable societal impact and the proposed measures to prevent or mitigate this and increase the chance of desired impact.

It is possible to receive a good score for this criterion if the focus of the proposal is on scientific impact, if the focus is on societal impact, and if the focus is spread across both types of impact. The score for

⁵ NWO uses a broad definition of the term science, which includes technology, clinical research and scholarship.

⁶ Aspects that can be included in the assessment of feasibility include the logical and technological framework, planning and timeframe, and resources, such as allocation of human resources, data, tools, technology, expertise, experience, network and institutional support. NWO is open to the selection of high risk -high gain projects.

⁷ Societal impact refers to the societal (cultural, economic, industrial, ecological, or social) changes that result, in whole or in part, from knowledge and expertise generated through research. These changes contribute to the well-being of people, the planet, and society, both now and for future generations.

this criterion is given independently from the chosen focus; one type of impact is not superior to the other.

Specific to the AES Domain

In evaluating this criterion, the assessment committee also takes into account the composition of the user committee and the degree of involvement of the participating users, with a view to maximizing both anticipated and unanticipated opportunities for impact for the (non-)primarily selected type of impact (see Section 5.2.2).

A score is given for both criteria. Scores are based on the NWO score table using a scale of 1 to 9, where '1' is excellent and '9' unsatisfactory.

All proposals are given a weighted average total score for the 'Quality and innovative character of the research proposal' and 'Scientific and/or societal impact' criteria and then ranked based on this score. For rounds with five or more proposals, the assessment committee members' scores are normalised for ranking. NWO performs this normalisation based on the median and average deviation.

To be considered eligible for funding, a proposal must have a final score of at least 'very good'. For more information on the qualifications, see [Applying for funding, how does it work? | NWO](#).

4.2 Procedure

The assessment procedure consists of the following stages (see the timetable in Section 3.1).

Pre-proposals

- Assessment of the pre-proposal
- Preliminary advice by the assessment committee
- Opportunity to request correction of a factual inaccuracy in the event of a negative preliminary advice
- Decision on the pre-proposal

Full proposals

Applications submitted to Science

- Peer review by referees
- Rebuttal (optional)
- Pre-assessment by the assessment committee
- Assessment committee meeting
- Decision-making

Applications submitted to SSH and AES

- Peer review by referees
- Rebuttal (optional)
- Pre-assessment by the assessment committee
- Interviews
- Assessment committee meeting
- Decision-making

Applications submitted to ZonMw

- Peer review by referees
- Rebuttal (optional)
- Pre-assessment by the assessment committee
- Interview selection
- Interviews
- Assessment committee meeting
- Decision-making

An external independent assessment committee will be appointed by the domain boards. Members are drawn from science with knowledge of the field. It is the assessment committee's task to assess the proposals received against the assessment criteria. Each proposal is assessed on its own merits.

When preparing a pre-proposal or full proposal, applicants should bear in mind that their proposal is assessed by a multidisciplinary committee. Pre-proposals and full proposals should therefore be accessible to committee members from other disciplines within the chosen submission desk (see Section 3.5.1).

Applicants intending to submit to Science or SSH can find further information on the pre-defined assessment panels on the relevant domain webpages (<https://www.nwo.nl/en/calls/nwo-talent-programme>, via "Prepare" you can proceed to the round of interest and there you will find the information under "Explore" > "Assessment").

4.2.1 Assessment of the pre-proposal

The assessment committee assesses the pre-proposals against the criterion described in subsection 4.1. For each pre-proposal, the assessment committee issues a positive or negative advice on whether the pre-proposal should be elaborated into a proposal.

This advice includes an explanation including the assessment committee's observations on the quality of the pre-proposals. The assessment committee's advice is based on the principle that no more than approximately three times the number of proposals expected to be awarded should receive a positive decision on the pre-proposal. Where the procedure includes an interview selection stage, the committee will normally recommend no more than four times the anticipated number of grants to be awarded.

Applicants receive the assessment committee's preliminary advice. Applicants with negative preliminary advice are also informed of the assessment committee's explanation. If an applicant believes that the explanation contains factual errors, they have three working days to request a correction using the provided format. This option is not intended for the provision of new, supplementary information about the proposal or to ask questions to the assessment committee. The assessment committee decides whether any changes to the preliminary advice are indicated in light of these requests. After that, a final ranking is determined.

The assessment of the pre-proposal results in a decision by the decision-making body on whether or not to further elaborate the pre-proposal.

4.2.2 Science domain: clusters

Within the Science domain, the pre-defined disciplinary panels serve only to assess the pre-proposals. For the later assessment stages, applications are grouped into clusters.

Applications are assigned to a maximum of four clusters, each with a different disciplinary signature based on the research areas identified by the applicant and the panel selected at the pre-proposal stage. A cluster committee is established for each cluster. Together, the four cluster committees constitute the assessment committee for the Science domain. When composing the cluster committees, NWO seeks, as far as possible, to reflect the research areas identified by applicants.

4.2.3 Peer review referees and non-referees

After the pre-proposal has been elaborated into a proposal, that proposal is assessed. Before the assessment committee reviews a proposal, NWO will request input from at least two external referees. These are independent advisers who are experts on the proposal's subject matter. They will assess the proposal based on the assessment criteria from the Call for proposals (see subsection 4.1). The referees will not assess the data management section, although they can still provide advice.

Registration of non-referees

An applicant can name up to three individuals they do not wish to referee their proposal. Applicants can register these so-called non-referees in the online application system when they submit their pre-proposal. NWO will not approach non-referees.

4.2.4 Rebuttal

Applicants receive the anonymised referee reports and may submit a rebuttal in response. Rebuttals must be submitted via the online application system within five working days of receiving the referee reports. Rebuttals received after this deadline will not be considered. Upon receiving the referee reports, an applicant may opt to withdraw their proposal via the online application system, in which case they should notify NWO of this decision by email as soon as possible. See Chapter 6 for contact details.

4.2.5 Pre-advice by the assessment committee

The proposal, together with the referee reports and the applicant's rebuttal, 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 subsection 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. The 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.

4.2.6 Interview selection

This stage applies only to applications submitted through the ZonMw submission desk.

For the purpose of interview selection, the proposals, the referee reports, the rebuttals and the pre-advice reports 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. Applicants who do not receive an invitation for an interview are not considered eligible for a grant.

4.2.7 Interview

This step in the procedure is only applicable to proposals submitted to the domains SSH, AES and ZonMw.

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 applicant 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 referee reports and/or pre-advice, although the assessment committee will not necessarily adopt these in full. The assessment committee will consider the arguments put forward by the referees and/or pre-advisers, weighing them against each other, and determine whether the rebuttal constitutes a proper response to the points of criticism raised in the referee reports and/or pre-advice. Unlike the referees, the assessment committee also has insight into the quality of the various other proposals and rebuttals submitted. Consequently, the committee may differ from the referees in its assessment. The assessment committee assigns every proposal a final score, rounded to two decimal places.

Following its deliberations, the assessment committee prepares a written advisory report for the decision-making body concerning the quality and ranking of the proposals. This advice is based on the assessment criteria. A proposal must achieve an overall rating of at least 'very good' to be eligible for the grant. For more information on the qualifications, see [Applying for funding, how does it work? | NWO](#).

4.2.9 Decision-making

The procedures followed and the assessment committee's advice are assessed by the domain board. It determines the final ratings and decides 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. 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 referees and 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 and referees 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 Compensation schemes

[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](#).

[Compensation scheme for parental leave](#)

For applicants who are on leave during the assessment period due to the arrival of a child (parental leave), if the funding scheme does not permit co-applicants NWO offers the opportunity to make use of the [Parental leave compensation scheme | NWO](#).

To make use of these schemes, the applicant must submit a written, substantiated request to NWO via the programme contact for this round (see Chapter 6). The applicant must include all pertinent information to enable NWO to come to a decision, including proof of the applicant's being prevented from providing input due to parental leave and/or force majeure.

4.3.6 Ex aequo

This section on ex aequo situations applies only to the pre-proposal and interview selection stages. For the final ranking of applications, following the interview phase, only the 'Measure to support female researchers' described in Section 4.3.7 applies.

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 considered. This method identifies proposals that are tied within a 0.10 range. In the event of a tied ranking at the limit of the grant cap or selection threshold, in order to promote the representation of women in science, the proposal by a female applicant will receive precedence. If this does not resolve the ex aequo, the proposal with the highest score (rounded to two decimal places) on the criterion 'Quality and innovative character of the research proposal' will be given precedence. If this does not resolve the ex aequo, the proposal that has been rated best by most committee members based on the final score will be ranked highest. 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 domain board.

4.3.7 Vidi measure to support female researchers

As described in Section 2.1, NWO is conducting a pilot to provide additional support to female researchers. It operates as follows.

For the ranking after the interview phase, the weighted scores of proposals are rounded to the nearest multiple of 0.5. Within each group of proposals rounded to the same multiple of 0.5, female applicants are ranked first, after which proposals are ordered by their unrounded weighted score.

Proposals are then awarded in descending order of ranking until the funding ceiling has been reached. If proposals share the same final position after sorting, rounded to two decimal places, the proposal with the best score on the criterion 'Quality and innovative character of the research proposal' will be ranked highest. If this does not resolve the tie, the proposal that has been rated best by most committee members, based on the final score, will be ranked highest. If this also fails to resolve the matter, the decision will be referred to the decision-making body.

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 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.

The project leader for the project receives an award letter on behalf of the domain board. This letter also notes any specifically required forms and guidelines. The start form, data management plan, final budget and, where applicable, 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 using ISAAC can authorise others to carry out administrative tasks relating to their project. For more information about the authorisation scheme for project leaders, go to: [Authorisation scheme for project managers | NWO](#). Project leaders of projects funded by ZonMw cannot authorise others to carry out administrative actions.

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 subsection 3.6) 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. For ZonMw projects, the data management plan must be sent to the programme e-mail address before the start of the project (project leaders will be informed about this). 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 Final budget

The grant must be spent in accordance with the final budget submitted by the project leader. The purpose of the final budget is to support subsequent financial reporting and accountability.

The budget submitted with the proposal will have already identified the cost items necessary to carry out the research. Because the budget forms part of the assessment and therefore contributes to the final ranking of the proposal, the final budget must remain consistent with the budget items included in the original proposal.

5.1.4 Consortium agreement

The following section applies to projects requiring a consortium agreement:

The consortium agreement sets out arrangements concerning intellectual property and publication, knowledge transfer, confidentiality, co-financing payments, and progress and final reporting.

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 can be done in several ways.

5.2.1 Progress report

NWO periodically requests an update on the progress of a project. The project leader will receive an email in good time requesting the preparation and submission of a progress report, including the submission deadline. A [progress-report template](#) is available online. If a different progress-report template applies to the project, the project leader will be informed accordingly. As the Impact Outlook approach applies to this round, the project leader will be asked to report on societal impact in line with this approach.

5.2.2 User committee (AES applications only)

Following the award of funding, a committee will be established in accordance with Article 3.3.2 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024 to support the supervision and monitoring of the project. Further information about this committee is provided in the grant award decision.

The purpose of the committee is to promote the effective transfer of knowledge generated by the research to relevant users. Further information is provided in the grant award decision.

Additional definitions and explanations:

- User committee: a committee as referred to in Article 3.3.2 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024, consisting of at least four users, including no fewer than two non-academic users. The committee typically meets every six months. Members include users, the project leader, any staff appointed to the project, and an NWO Programme Officer.
- Users: members of the user committee. Users are natural or legal persons other than the applicant who can advise the project leader on the direction of the project with a view to maximising the application of the results and both anticipated and unforeseen opportunities for impact. Users may also play an important role in connecting relevant stakeholders and strengthening networks and ecosystems, for example by making facilities available or facilitating new collaborations.

A distinction is made between academic and non-academic users:

- i. Academic users: Users who can contribute to increasing opportunities for impact within the applicant's own discipline, related disciplines or the wider research landscape. Examples include, but are not limited to, individuals affiliated with national or international universities, university medical centres and research institutes.
- ii. Non-academic users: users who can contribute to increasing opportunities for practical application of the results or for societal impact, including cultural, economic, industrial, ecological or social change. Examples include, but are not limited to, individuals affiliated with companies, TO2 institutes, clinics, patient organisations, civil society organisations, public bodies and government institutions.

The following principles apply to user committees:

- Applicants may not also be users;
- Every co-funder is also a user;
- Users may be based either in the Netherlands or abroad;
- Users must be actively involved in the project;
- Utilisation of the research output is a standing agenda item at user committee meetings. This includes collaboration with users, knowledge protection and the commercialisation of knowledge.

5.2.3 Research output

NWO wants to be kept abreast of all 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 or Mijn ZonMW system to submit such output.

5.2.4 Project changes

In the event of any changes occurring during 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 implementation

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

5.3.1 Compliance with the National Knowledge Security Guidelines

As with the assessment (see Chapter 4), 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 application 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](#).

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.

5.4.1 Independent auditor's report for financial statements

To obtain the necessary assurances on the grant's proper expenditure, NWO requires an independent report from an external auditor to arrive at its decision in the following cases:

- the beneficiary of a project grant is not subject to the Education Audit Protocol of the Ministries of Education, Culture and Science and of Economic Affairs (OCW/EZ) and the grant exceeds €125,000;
- a project funded by NWO involves a different provider of public funding than the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) and this provider requires an auditor's report. In such cases, applicability of the Education Audit Protocol is not pertinent.

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.

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 about the project must be made available in an Open Access format in accordance with NWO's Open Access Policy Framework. See the NWO website for a list of options to provide open access to various types of publications such as scientific articles, books or book chapters and dissertations. More information on the use of licences is also available on the NWO website. Any costs for Open Access publication should be included as part of the proposal's budget.

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 details

Questions about the funding of proposals

For more information, please go to [How to apply for funding | NWO](#).

Questions about the content of this round

For questions about the [Talent Programme](#) or our [extension scheme](#), send us an email at talent@nwo.nl.

For substantive questions relating to this funding round, please contact:

NWO Talent Programme
Science Domain
Postbus 93460
2509 AC The Hague
enw-vidi@nwo.nl

NWO Talent Programme
SSH Domain
Postbus 93461
2509 AC The Hague
sgw-vidi@nwo.nl

NWO Talent Programme
AES Domain
Postbus 3021
3502 GA Utrecht
ttw-vidi@nwo.nl

NWO Talent Programme
ZonMw
Postbus 93245
2509 AE The Hague
vidi@zonmw.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.

Technical questions about the Mijn ZonMw electronic application system

For technical questions concerning the use of Mijn ZonMw, please contact the ZonMw Service Desk. Applicants are advised to consult the [user guide](#) before contacting the helpdesk. The ZonMw Service Desk can be reached Monday to Friday, between 08:00 and 17:00, on +31 (0)70 349 5178 or by email at servicedesk@zonmw.nl.

7 Annexes

7.1 Explanation of budget modules

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

Personnel

Veni, Vidi or Vici applicant

Salary costs for a Veni, Vidi or Vici applicant are based on the applicant's actual gross salary and the allowances a, b and c listed in Article 2.1 of the Approval of Funding for Scientific Research, excluding indexation. It is only possible to include salary costs for that part of the appointment devoted to tasks relating to the project.

Allowances are based on the Approval's standard percentages, according to the UNL and UMCNL salary tables on the decision date for:

- holiday pay;
- year-end bonus;
- compensatory allowances/VALK (employer's surcharge);
- allowances, including transition payments.

Anticipated periodic adjustments and other salary increases in subsequent years may be taken into account insofar as these can be predicted based on the applicable collective labour agreement.

No personal bench fee is provided to Veni, Vidi or Vici applicants.

For other types of personnel, see the applicable rates listed for the personnel in question.

Additional personnel

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 candidate

A PhD candidate is appointed for 48 months at 1.0 FTE. An equivalent of 48 full-time months, such as an appointment for 60 months at 0.8 FTE, is also possible. Funding cannot be requested for a PhD candidate who has already started work on the project to be funded before the grant is awarded.

Use the rates for PhD candidates in the UNL and UMCNL salary tables. A one-off individual bench fee of €5,000 is available for each PhD candidate to support their academic career

Engineering Doctorate

An Engineering Doctorate (EngD) is appointed for no more than 24 months at 1.0 FTE. The EngD is employed by the applicant research organisation and may carry out work on the research at an industrial partner for a fixed period. Funding for an EngD appointment may be requested only if

funding is also requested for a PhD candidate or postdoctoral researcher. Funding cannot be requested for an EngD who has already started work on the project to be funded before the grant is awarded.

Use the rates for PhD candidates in the UNL and UMCNL salary tables. A one-off individual bench fee of €5,000 is available for each EngD to support their academic career.

Postdoctoral researcher

A postdoctoral researcher is appointed for a specified period and FTE.

Use the rates for a senior academic staff member in the UNL salary tables and the rates for a postdoctoral researcher at a UMC in the UMCNL salary tables. Funding cannot be requested for a postdoctoral researcher who has already started work on the project to be funded before the grant is awarded.

Only a postdoctoral position involving an appointment of at least 12 months at 0.5 FTE qualifies for the one-off individual bench fee of €5,000 to support the researcher's academic career.

Physician researcher

Funding may be requested for the appointment of a junior doctor or medical resident as a physician-researcher to carry out scientific medical research at a UMC. A physician-researcher is appointed for a minimum of 36 and a maximum of 48 months at 1.0 FTE. An equivalent of 36 or 48 full-time months, such as an appointment for 48 or 60 months at 0.8 FTE, is also possible.

Funding cannot be requested for a physician-researcher who has already started work on the project to be funded before the grant is awarded.

Use the rates for a physician-researcher in the UMCNL salary tables. A one-off individual bench fee of €5,000 is available for each physician-researcher to support their academic 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.

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 bench fee is available for non-scientific personnel.

7.1.1 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 subsection 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 user committee.

7.1.2 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.

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.

7.1.3 Knowledge utilisation

The budget applied for must be adequately specified in the proposal. Use the provisions for Personnel and Materials to determine the correct rates.

It is possible to allocate up to 5% of the grant amount for this module. Use of this module is not mandatory. Examples of possible costs include, but are not limited to, the design of teaching materials, a feasibility study to explore possible applications, costs for the submission of patent applications or engaging a business developer.

7.2 Indexation

Applicable rates are based on the date of the decision. If indicated, NWO may conduct an official one-time indexation of salary costs when awarding a grant. This indexation is based on the date on which the rates go into force. If rates are announced later than the date of entry into force, the announcement date is used. As a rule, rates enter into force on 1 July for the Universities of the Netherlands (UNL), on 1 August for the University Medical Centres of The Netherlands (UMCNL) and on 1 January for the Manual tariffs Dutch Government (HOT).

The official indexation does not affect the grant cap or the maximum amount per proposal. The grant cap and maximum amount will remain unchanged during the assessment procedure. The grant amount is indexed at the time of the award.

If co-funding is required or permitted, the official indexation will not affect the requirements regarding supporting contributions and co-funding, nor any IP rights arising from the co-funding.

Uitgave: augustus 2026

Dutch Research Council

Visiting addresses:

Location The Hague

Laan van Nieuw Oost-Indië 300

2593 CE The Hague

Netherlands

Location Utrecht

Winthontlaan 2

3526 KV Utrecht

Netherlands

Cover image: Friends for Brands / fotograaf René Castelijm

Dutch Research Council | NWO

