



**Humanities**  
**Social Sciences**  
**WOTRO Science for Global Development**

## **Conflict and Security - Fast Track**

**Call for proposals subsidy round 2010**

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# 1 Introduction

**Conflicts occur on a daily basis and form an integral part of all social systems – conflicts occur within families, in neighbourhood communities between rival groups of youths, within and between employment organisations and their representatives, between various ethnic groups in societies and between countries or coalitions of countries.**

## Conflict

The global media offers us examples of conflict every day: conflicts in the Middle East and in Sudan; conflicts in the oil sector in Russia and Nigeria; conflicts between groups of senior citizens and the government and conflicts between local groups and ethnic minority youths. Even though not everyone is directly involved in these conflicts, they do influence our daily lives. We are, for example, confronted with sharp fluctuations in oil prices and we face changes in wages or employment conditions. An international conflict (for example Israel-Palestine) can play a role in a local conflict (for example Dutch-Moroccan youths in Amsterdam). Similarly, the decisions, policies and actions of our governments and of the international community may affect the position, discourse or resources of stakeholders in particular conflicts, be it through the UN, the EU, international alliances, Intergovernmental Organisations, INGOs, academic networks, religious organisations, the media or civil society.

## Potential Policy Relevance

Due to the frequent occurrence and structural nature of conflicts, policymakers have increasingly become aware that conflicts need to be analysed at various levels. In the years 2005-2006 the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations developed the strategic themes of 'the unknown citizen' and 'the unknown Islam', within the scope of which research studies were conducted into the religious and ethnic tensions in society, radicalisation and terrorism. The problem of radicalisation and polarisation has been a continuing concern to democracies across the globe. Similarly, conflict and security are - in various ways, and in multiple dimensions - related to poverty and development, and are therefore a concern to development and foreign policy. This includes policy in the area of security and stability (e.g. security sector reforms); peace-making (e.g. through negotiation and mediation); peace-building (through dialogue, reconciliation and the political process) and post-conflict reconstruction, for example in Afghanistan, the Great Lakes Region (Congo, Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda), Sudan and the Balkans. Additional research can be a strong incentive for policymakers to understand the complexity and reduce uncertainties surrounding their policy and interventions in any conflict situation.

## Fast Track Research

Following the 2008 subsidy round for long-term research programmes, NWO is now launching a subsidy round for short-term research. In addition to the programme lines in the 2008 call for long-term research programmes, two extra programme lines have been added: one about gender and conflict and one about natural resources and conflicts. The meaning of gender in conflict has become a topic of academic and policy interest. Men and women have different roles in conflict and peace processes, are affected in different ways by conflict, and notions about manhood and womanhood as part of the ideological underpinnings of conflict are likely to change as a result of conflict.

Although conflicts are rarely purely 'resource driven', the scarcity, degradation or abundance of natural resources may lead to conflicts, threatening the lives of

millions of people depending on these resources for their daily living. Conflicts may take many forms, from a struggle between opposing principles to violence or armed conflict. Conflicts may be detrimental, but conflicts can also be the key driver for positive change. A better understanding of the dynamics of the conflict and natural resources nexus in the context of a rapidly changing world is essential for conflict resolution, as well as for identifying opportunities where conflicts may lead to innovation and cooperation.

## 2 Aim

### **Burning Conflict**

The subsidy round for short-term research, Fast Track Research, aims to enhance research into emerging and existing conflict or conflict transformation. Moreover, there has to be some sense of urgency and topicality. Researchers may apply for funding to be able to do research into conflict at short notice, to be able to gather research data and material while the conflict is active or rapidly de-escalating. The focus is on Fast Track Research into active, escalating or de-escalating conflict. Escalation may be the case either in terms of intensity, time or spreading of the conflict.

### **Policy, Applied, Exploratory, Pilot and Background Studies**

Fast Track Research may consist of urgent policy oriented research, applied research or exploratory research. Within Europe, conflict may be investigated between a leading Labour Union, the Social Economic Council and the government regarding the age of pensioning and the resulting conflict between different labour unions; the ban on headscarves in Flemish schools; the discussion of the politicisation of the judiciary system; the conflict between the police and ethnic youth in European cities; the framing of societal conflict in rising political parties or the local vandalism following a stricter drugs policy in the Netherlands. At an international level social inequality, such as the unequal distribution of resources or a corrupt political system, may give rise to strong emotions of conflict and legitimise violence; there are potential conflicts regarding freedom of speech and political tolerance; potential conflicts between protesters against climate change and the established order and the conflict between Israel and Palestine on the use of scarce water resources from the Jordan river or the aquifers. Many more examples can be mentioned at international level, such as exploratory research on transboundary military networks. Studies into existing conflict in which new ways for effective de-escalation are found may also be submitted. In this case the new aspect is not the potential or latent character of the conflict, but its sudden possible solution or extinction, such as the potential for changing dynamics in the relations between antagonists in both Banda Aceh and Sri Lanka immediately following the Tsunami. It is up to the applicant to define the relevance, urgency and generalisability of the latent, rising or escalating conflict or recent developments in the transformation of the conflicts to be studied.

Pilot, review and background studies may also be applied for. Pilot studies may focus on the first contours of a conflict and the possible levels that are involved in a latent, emerging or escalating conflict. At international level, examples of such research are risk-assessments, for example studies on the conflict risks associated with the referendum in South Sudan on separation from Sudan; research on conflict re-escalation following the signing of Peace Agreements (e.g. in the Balkans) or the in-depth analysis of civil-military interventions during third-party interventions, for example in Afghanistan or Iraq, where changing configurations of relations can contribute to intended and unintended effects, such as the insurgent escalation or the diffusion of armed conflict. Background studies may serve the same purpose, or may explore the historical roots of the current latent or rising conflict. Applicants should ensure that the societal functionality of questions is addressed and dissemination strategies are included. In any case, a sense of urgency or topicality is required.

### **Seven Research Lines**

There are a total of seven research programmes for which funding can be applied. Within the scope of each of the programme lines specific questions are addressed that are highly relevant to science as well as society. Within this call, applications must relate to one of the programme lines for which this call is opened. **The**

**programme lines are published in separate documents, which can be found at the website: <http://www.nwo.nl/conflict>.** Applications for Fast Track Research are not limited by the examples mentioned below. For each programme line some (non-exhaustive) examples are given of possible research questions.

The Conflict and Security programme lines:

### **1) Ethnic conflict in local communities and societies**

Some examples are:

- When do ethnic and other identities become incompatible and irreconcilable, both in a social and a psychological sense?
- How exactly are ethnic identities used to mobilise support for, or opposition to, different forms of social and political action?
- Are unifying or superordinate identities and the sharing of power effective ways to de-ethnicise social conflicts?

### **2) Conflict around work and organisations**

Some examples are:

- How is the creative and destructive potential of conflict between and within organisations related to increased diversity?
- How can professionals in the public sector deal with increasing conflicts with civilians (e.g. administrators, ambulance workers)?
- What kinds of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour actually take place on the work floor, in dealings with clients and amongst top management ('boardroom fighting') and what are the consequences for performance and welfare?

### **3) Framing conflict in culture, politics and science**

Some examples are:

- Is it more difficult to 'deframe' a conflict situation that was perceived in terms of differences in values and beliefs than one that was perceived in terms of differences in interests?
- To what extent are conflicts, in the widest sense, increasingly framed as a breach of legal obligations or human rights, and what are the potentials and pitfalls of these particular frames?
- In addition, to what extent does the move from retributive to restorative justice contribute to conflict transformation?
- How are conflicts mediated or remediated and how does this affect the parties involved?

### **4) Natural resources and conflicts**

Some examples are:

- How do contested implementations of the climate change agenda (clean energy projects, REDD fuel intra- and inter-societal conflict and how can actual or potential violent confrontations result in initiatives to de-escalate these conflicts?
- How do recent/current attempts to change the governance of natural resources exclude minority groups, and how do minority groups (and their supporters) negotiate innovative and non-violent solutions to these potentially threatening developments?
- What role do actor power and conflict play in either destabilising or promoting fair and ecological production and trade, and what solutions for more productive cooperation are being offered?

### **5) Conflict escalation, justice and intervention**

Some examples are:

- What is the relation between national versus international interpretations of the rule of law and the 'exportability' of democracy and the rule of law to areas in conflict?

- What is the best phase in which to intervene during a conflict?
- What is the effectiveness of legal instruments in managing differences between population groups and conflicting values in international law, in particular with respect to international rights?

### **6) Conflict and religion**

Some examples are:

- What is so vexing about certain religious practices regarding modes of dress and bodily techniques, and the presence of religious buildings from a secular perspective, whereas they appear as inalienable elements of religious and personal identity from the perspective of believers?
- How to balance ‘freedom of religion’ and ‘freedom of expression’ in religiously plural, multicultural societies?
- What impact does religious radicalism have on the development of religious identities and the relations between people from different religious or non-religious groups?

### **7) Gender and conflict**

Some examples are:

- How do gender, violence and conflict intertwine and affect the everyday lives and livelihoods of men and women living in conflict or violent conditions?
- How can women’s informal and formal conflict-reducing capabilities in peacetime be put to use during and after wars? Is indeed inclination towards peace gendered and, if so, to what extent?
- What are the dynamics of human trafficking and what is the relation with peacekeeping operations?

For more information on the background of these questions, and for other questions, please read the programme line brochures available on the Conflict & Security website: <http://www.nwo.nl/conflict>.

## 3 Guidelines for applicants

### 3.1 Who can apply

Applications can be submitted by senior researchers and professors from Dutch universities or institutes recognised by NWO, or by an international centre for scientific education in the Netherlands recognised by WOTRO.<sup>1</sup> Applicants who are not affiliated to an organisation recognised by NWO can submit an application in partnership with a main applicant from a Dutch university. Replacement subsidies may be applied for by researchers themselves. Postdocs have to be applied for by a senior researcher affiliated to a University or NWO recognised institute. Applicants are not allowed to submit more than one proposal.

### 3.2 What can be applied for

Applications are invited for Fast Track Research projects that either consist of a postdoctoral position *or* a replacement/support grant for the main applicant. It is not possible to apply for both a replacement subsidy and a postdoc position. It is not allowed to submit more than one proposal per applicant. A total budget of M€ 1.175 is available for this subsidy round, of which M€ 0.25 are earmarked for the *Gender and Conflict* programme line.

#### *Applications concerning developing countries<sup>2</sup>*

For applications involving research carried out in low and middle income countries, the applicant should involve a partner institute in the country in question. Developing Country (DC) researchers and DC partner institutions have to be involved in the formulation of the research questions and the development of the proposal as well as in carrying out the research.

#### **Budget**

NWO supplies a maximum grant of € 165,000 in total for a maximum period of two years for a postdoc researcher or € 35,000 for a replacement subsidy for a maximum of one year. Please note that should the total budget required for the proposed research activities exceed the maximum grant, the applicant should find additional funding sources, such as the host institution or related research programmes.

#### **Reimbursable costs**

Reimbursable costs include either:

- Personnel costs for one postdoc researcher:
  - Salary for a postdoctoral position. The duration of the appointment for a postdoc is a maximum of two years. On a fulltime basis the amount for postdoc researchers is € 134,342<sup>3</sup> for two years.

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<sup>1</sup> IHS, ISS, ITC, MSM, UNESCO-IHE.

<sup>2</sup> Developing countries are low and middle income countries that apply to receive official development assistance (ODA), as defined by the OECD (see [www.oecd.org/dac/stats/dacelist](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/dacelist)). In the current call these countries are referred to as developing countries, abbreviated to DC.

<sup>3</sup> Subject to the agreements between the VSNU and NWO and to be made public on the NWO website ([http://www.nwo.nl/nwohome.nsf/pages/SPES\\_5VEDDR](http://www.nwo.nl/nwohome.nsf/pages/SPES_5VEDDR)).

- Postdoc researchers from developing countries can receive regular funding as described above, or they can receive a net monthly living allowance. This should cover all personal expenses, including accommodation, medical costs, insurance and travel to and from work. The regulations of the institute of the main applicant should be the guiding principle in determining the sum for the living allowance. A general indication is: postdoctoral researchers: € 1,400 (in DC) / € 2,000 (in NL).
- Bench fee: a bench fee of € 5,000 for a two year period is provided for conference attendance and poster presentation.
- Living allowance (for research in Developing Countries).

or:

- One replacement grant (the Netherlands) or one support grant (developing country) for a senior researcher. The maximum funding for a replacement subsidy is a period of 1 year for 0.5 FTEs to a maximum of € 35,000. This subsidy is for replacement by a scientific employee (pay scale 11.0).

plus material costs:

- the purchase of special equipment and non-durable items required for the research, with the exception of computers;
- conducting interviews, surveys and laboratory experiments;
- purchasing data files;
- travel which is necessary within the framework of the research;
- knowledge transfer, collaboration with stakeholders and networking activities.

For research to be awarded in the 2010 competition, the following maximum amounts for budget headings apply to the NWO contribution to the Conflict and Security programme:

- material costs: maximum € 30,000;
- collaboration with stakeholders / knowledge transfer / networking activities: a maximum of 10% of the total budget for postdoc proposals or € 10,000 for a replacement subsidy.

Supporting / supplementary experts and undergraduate students who are not affiliated to one of the involved institutes /organisations in the programme: a maximum of € 10,000. These costs can be part of the research and/or collaboration / dissemination budget.

#### **Non-reimbursable costs**

Non-reimbursable costs are:

- The costs of computer use at university computing centres and the costs of laboratory time.
- Housing, overheads and depreciation costs.
- The costs of equipment, non-durable items or administrative or technical assistance, which should be part of the usual facilities at a university or research institute, unless the supported research requires the use of facilities that clearly exceeds normal use.
- Costs of accommodation, with the exception of the expenses incurred due to short trips made by supervisors or researchers directly related to the research (less than 3 months).

### **3.3 When can applications be submitted**

Submission of applications should be done no later than **6 April 2010, noon (12:00 hrs)**. The programme secretarial office will screen all the applications for compliance with the formal criteria. For an overview of the procedure, please see Section 4.1.

### 3.4 Drawing up an application

Applicants are advised to write their applications for a broad academic audience: proposals should be clear and comprehensible for colleagues from different scientific backgrounds. All applications are evaluated according to a fixed set of criteria: Scientific Quality, Added Value and Relevance. For a detailed overview of the criteria used to evaluate the proposals, please see Section 4.2.

### 3.5 Specific conditions

Applications must fulfil the general objectives and definition of the Conflict and Security programme as described in the *Conflict and Security Brochure (Final Version; please see the website: [www.nwo.nl/conflict](http://www.nwo.nl/conflict))*, the General Terms and Conditions of NWO Grants<sup>4</sup> and *all* of the following specific conditions in order to be admitted to the competition.

#### **International orientation**

Research should reflect an international scientific orientation, aiming at impact beyond national boundaries.

#### **Knowledge transfer, collaboration with stakeholders and networking activities**

Knowledge transfer is an important part of the Conflict & Security theme. Funding may be requested for plans related to communication with stakeholders. Stakeholders can be any kind of actors who are not part of the traditional scientific community. To enhance the effective use and benefit to society, relevant stakeholders may be engaged in all phases of the project.

### 3.6 Submitting an application

The application should be made on the correct and fully completed application form and must fulfil all criteria with respect to format, length of text, and so on. Handwritten applications will be disregarded.

Applications should be submitted through Iris, the NWO electronic application system, using the account of the main applicant. The application form and guidelines can be downloaded from the NWO website ([www.nwo.nl/conflict](http://www.nwo.nl/conflict)). The programme secretarial office will screen all applications for compliance with the formal criteria as mentioned below and on the application form. Applicants will receive a written confirmation of receipt within two weeks after the deadline, stating whether the application has been accepted or refused.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.nwo.nl/nwohome.nsf/pages/SPES\\_5VEDDR](http://www.nwo.nl/nwohome.nsf/pages/SPES_5VEDDR)

## 4 Assessment procedure

### 4.1 Procedure

Applications will be evaluated and ranked by the international **Scientific Assessment Committee (SAC)**. The members of the **Societal Panel** will give recommendations about the societal and applied relevance of the proposals to the SAC. Practitioners and policymakers involved in Conflict and Security issues are represented in the Societal Panel. The SAC is composed of senior researchers from various disciplines. Committee members of the SAC will assess the applications. Applicants will then have the opportunity to respond to the issues raised in the assessment by the SAC members and the advice of the Societal Panel. The SAC evaluates and makes a final assessment of the full proposals on the basis of the proposal, the assessment by the SAC members, the advice offered by the societal panel and the response given by the applicants. Finally, the SAC will make a ranking of the fundable applications.

The Thematic Committee takes a final decision on funding, based on the ranking and recommendations received from the Scientific Assessment Committee. All applicants will be informed in writing about the outcome of the final selection procedure.

#### Approximate timetable

The application procedure begins in 2010 with the following timetable:

- January 2010: Call for proposals
- 6 April: Deadline for submission of applications
- April: Evaluation by Societal Panel
- April: Evaluation by members of the Scientific Assessment Committee
- May: Applicants will be given the opportunity to respond to the experts' comments
- June: Evaluation and selection of applications by the SAC
- July: Decision by thematic committee; announcement of decision

The awarded projects will start in the period September-December 2010

#### Appeals procedure

An applicant who objects to a decision made by the Conflict and Security Thematic Committee can lodge a complaint with the NWO Appeals Committee. Any written appeal against a decision taken by the Thematic Committee must be lodged within six weeks from the day on which notice of this decision was sent.

### 4.2 Criteria

All applications are evaluated according to a fixed set of criteria. The scientific excellence of the proposal is a prerequisite for awarding. In addition, the close agreement with the objectives of the Conflict and Security programme and the likelihood of providing a meaningful contribution to urgent and topical societal issues are important components in the review. Among the applications evaluated as excellent and very good for scientific quality, further ranking is based on an equal weighting of added value and relevance.

Applications will be assessed and ranked by the criteria mentioned below, and with particular regard to the criterion "close agreement with the objectives of the Conflict and Security programme". Applications must offer sufficient promise of academic quality.

The Societal Panel will assess the proposals for postdoctoral and replacement subsidies in terms of their societal and/or applied relevance. The SAC members will also assess the proposals, with a focus on the scientific quality. Applicants will then have the opportunity to respond to the issues raised by the SAC members and the Societal Panel.

In its decision-making process, the Scientific Assessment Committee will take into consideration the evaluations on relevance provided by the Societal Panel. This will lead to recommendations to the Thematic Committee concerning which applications should be funded.

The Thematic Committee will examine the correctness of the assessment procedure before confirming the assessment of the applications, based on what the Scientific Assessment Committee has put forward. Based on this, the Thematic Committee decides which proposals will be awarded. In this process, the Thematic Committee may take policy considerations into account.

### **Criteria and ranking for full applications**

The following criteria are taken into consideration in the appraisal of the full applications:

#### **1 Scientific quality**

- originality / innovative character of the problem definition;
- adequacy, effectiveness and clear outline of the functionality of the approach in light of the research questions posed and/or the perspectives sought after;
- feasibility, including the time schedule and publication plan;
- appropriateness and suitability of the methodology;
- scientific standing of the research team (publications, international visibility).

#### **2 Added value**

- urgency and topicality of the research;
- close agreement with the objectives of the Conflict and Security programme;
- the relationship between the description of the programme and the project;
- collaboration with national and international partners, including long-term perspectives and the quality of possible collaborative arrangements.

#### **3 Relevance**

- the potential to provide society with new insights and/or evidence-based conflict-management tools;
- the societal relevance of the identified problems in terms of, for example, originality, timeliness, innovativeness, urgency or impact ;
- the adequacy of the research set-up to provide new insights or answers to the societal problems and opportunities identified;
- the collaboration in terms of communicating, implementing results and formulating policy advice with relevant local, national and international societal partners.

## **4.3 Composition of committee**

### **Composition of the Thematic Committee**

The Conflict and Security Thematic Committee will steer the strategic development of the theme. It will take decisions, bear the responsibility for coordinating and monitoring the funded research programmes and manage the balanced realisation of the Conflict and Security theme. In addition, it will stimulate knowledge exchange between science, policy and society, and may initiate new lines of research.

The Thematic Committee has the following members:

Prof. A.J.M.W. (Louk) Hagendoorn em. (Chair; Utrecht University)

Dr. I. (Irna) van der Molen (University of Twente)

Prof. J.A. (Bertjan) Verbeek (Radboud University Nijmegen)

Prof. G.A. (Gerard) Wiegiers (University of Amsterdam)

#### **Composition of the Scientific Assessment Committee**

A separate Scientific Assessment Committee, which consists of senior researchers from various disciplinary backgrounds, evaluates the proposals. The committee can be extended on an ad hoc basis to be tailored as much as possible to the applications submitted. The composition of this committee will be announced on the website ([www.nwo.nl/conflict](http://www.nwo.nl/conflict)).

#### **Composition of the Societal Panel**

The Societal Panel advises the Scientific Assessment Committee on the applied relevance of the proposed project. This panel consists of high-ranking members of society and policymakers. In addition, it will advise the Thematic Committee on strategy issues, monitoring, knowledge dissemination and the mid-term and final evaluation.

The Societal Panel has the following members:

Aukje Nauta (Chair) – *Randstad HR Solutions*

Sofie van Bijsterveld – *Member of the Senate of the Dutch Parliament*

Lodewijk Gunther Moor – *The Dutch Society, Security and Police Foundation (SMVP)*

Ida Haisma – *Centrum voor Criminaliteitspreventie en Veiligheid (CCV)*

Peter Konijn – *Cordaid*

Rien van der Steenhoven – *Municipality of Rotterdam*

Rob Witte – *Institute for Multicultural Affairs Forum*

# 5 Other information

## 5.1 Contact

For more information please refer to the Conflict and Security programme document and the programme website ([www.nwo.nl/conflict](http://www.nwo.nl/conflict)), where the application guidelines are published.

The programme office consists of:

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Please contact the NWO office if you have any queries.