



Social Sciences

Open Competition

Subsidy Round 2010 (sub-round 2)

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1 Introduction

This brochure describes the procedure for applying for a subsidy, and its assessment and selection, for the Open Competition for the Division of Social Sciences (MaGW Open Competition) of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), subsidy round 2010.

The Board of the Division for Social Sciences of NWO is looking to stimulate significantly the quality of the MaGW Open Competition. The 2010 subsidy round consists of two sub-rounds. Per sub-round, a maximum of 235 applications can be processed, in order of arrival. Of these applications, following a strict pre-selection, about 60 applications will be admitted into the next phase of the assessment process. Per sub-round, no more than 24 proposals can be subsidised.

Submission and assessment are communicative vessels. Submitted proposals are assessed by fellow scientists. The higher the number of applications, the smaller the group of scientists who can assess these applications. Considering the availability of assessors, we seem to have reached the maximum load per year for the research field – fellow scientists who can assess the proposals with 470 assessable proposals.

There is a sum of EUR10.3m available for the entire subsidy round 2010. This will allow some 48 proposals to be subsidised.

The Division of Social Sciences MaGW reserves the right to adapt the conditions periodically. Before you submit your proposal via Iris, we advise you to verify on the website that you have the latest version of the brochure and the form and for you to carefully read the entire brochure before submitting your application.

2 Aim

The MaGW Open Competition is a subsidy programme that aims to promote innovative and high-quality scientific research in the field of social and behavioural sciences.

In de MaGW Open Competition, applications may be submitted across the entire MaGW scientific field. This field is demarcated by means of the 'MaGW disciplinecodelijst 2010' (discipline code list 2010). In addition to applications for PhD research, applications for post-doctorate research may also be submitted in 2010.

3 Guidelines for applicants

3.1 Who can apply

Proposals may be submitted by professors or researchers with a PhD who are associated with a Dutch university institution, or an institution of the NWO (Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research) or a KNAW institution (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences), where the proposed research will be performed. The main applicant and the co-applicant must be in the position to remain closely involved in the research to which the proposal relates throughout the period for which they are applying for the subsidy. The institution must make it possible for the applicants to ensure the research is monitored adequately throughout the duration of the research. This must be confirmed on the application. As a rule, for proposals for PhD research, the (co-)promoter acts as the main applicant. According to the NWO's subsidy regulations ('Regeling subsidieverlening NWO'), the applicants, both the main and the co-applicant, may not apply for subsidy for themselves.

Since 2007, it holds that a main applicant in the MaGW Open Competition may not concurrently submit another application or have another application in process with the Division of Social Sciences (including Vernieuwingsimpuls (Innovational Research Incentives Scheme), investeringen (Investment subsidies), thematische programma's (thematic programmes) for which the MaGW is acting secretary, and internationale programma's (international programmes)). This rule remains in force. This means that main applicants for whom an application is being processed in another MaGW subsidy round may only submit an application for the MaGW Open Competition upon completion of the subsidy round in question. Should main applicants submit an application for another MaGW subsidy round while one of their applications is being processed in the MaGW Open Competition, the processing of the application in the MaGW Open Competition will be terminated. As of the subsidy round 2009, one may only submit an application in the MaGW Open Competition as main applicant once every two years. Applications that have been treated by a committee in a previous subsidy round of the MaGW Open Competition are defined as being treated. For co-applicants, it holds that they may act as co-applicant once per sub-round. The 'two-year ruling' applies to main applicants and not to co-applicants.

3.2 What can be applied for

Applications may be submitted for research for PhDs (3 or 4 years full-time) or for post-doctorates (3 years fulltime). Applications may not be submitted for programmes (collaborative research projects) or substitution subsidies. Personnel costs will be granted in accordance with the VSNU contract regarding research positions, applies as of 1 July 2008.

For personnel costs, claims may not exceed the costs of a four-year full-time aio project (as of 1 July 2010 this amounts to EUR198,693) or a three-year fulltime post-doctorate project (as of 1 July 2010 this amounts to EUR195,706). The assistant research fellow or the post-doctorate researcher will be hired by the organisation at which the main applicant works (see also paragraph 3.1). At the start of the research a bench fee amounting to EUR5,000 will be made available to the main applicant on behalf of the researcher. This bench fee is intended for matters such as PhD costs and congress visits. For other material costs, no more than EUR4,500 will be granted, based on the submitted budget proposal.

In all cases it holds that overhead and infrastructural costs will not be subsidised. Please refer to the NWO subsidy allocations regulations (Regeling subsidieverlening NWO) for further details.

In so far as it is not set down in this brochure, the MaGW Open Competition 2010 is subject to the NWO subsidy allocation regulations (Regeling subsidieverlening NWO). You can download these regulations via www.nwo.nl.

3.3 When can applications be submitted

Two sub-rounds will be organised in the subsidy round 2010. To this end, Iris will be open for 49 hours each time. The documentation (brochure, application form and MaGW discipline code list) will be made available one month before the opening date via the online subsidy guide (www.nwo.nl/magwopencompetitie).

Sub-round 2 Opening: Tuesday 5 October 2010 at 11 a.m.
 Close: Thursday 7 October 2010 at 12 p.m.

When Iris is open for submissions, the number of applications submitted will be announced the following morning on the programme site of the MaGW Open Competition (www.nwo.nl/magwoc). The number of proposals submitted will be announced on the website within 24 hours of its closure.

For further information about the assessment procedure see chapter 4.

3.4 Drawing up an application

Applications must be drawn up in English. This makes it possible to draw on as large a group as possible of available and skilled reviewers. The intrinsic part of the application (excluding literature references (no more than 35), but including footnotes) may contain no more than 4,000 words. In addition, the application should include a summary of relevant and scientific publications of the applicant(s) (no more than 25 publications per applicant). Applications may not include appendices.

Applications may not be submitted for research that has already started. This must be confirmed on the form. If a project for example has resulted in publications, it will always be considered as started.

Only full applications may be submitted. Ensure that all the questions on the form have been answered. After submitting a proposal, it cannot be changed, nor can additions be made.

3.5 Specific conditions

Resubmission

Applications that were treated in previous rounds of the MaGW Open Competition may not be resubmitted. The transitional ruling that applied for the subsidy round 2009 is no longer valid.

After granting a subsidy

Proposals that have been rewarded a subsidy, must start within six months after the decision has been announced. If a project starts later, the Division of Social Sciences will withdraw the subsidy.

3.6 Submitting an application

Applications can only be submitted using the MaGW Open Competition 2010 application form. Applicants can download the form via the subsidy guide (www.nwo.nl/magwopencompetitie). You will find additional information about Iris on the NWO website. For technical questions, please contact the Iris helpdesk (see paragraph 5.2).

Iris account

Applications must be submitted via the main applicant's Iris account. We advise those applicants who do not yet have an Iris account to apply for one as soon as possible via www.iris.nwo.nl. Applicants who already have an Iris account but who are unable to personally submit the application at the time of submission may authorise someone to submit the application via his/her account. For more information on this topic please refer to the Iris helpdesk (see paragraph 5.2 for the contact details of the Iris helpdesk).

4 Assessment procedure

4.1 Procedure

Below you will find a description of the various steps in the assessment procedure. Applicants can follow the progress of the assessment procedure via their Iris account. No rights may be derived from this.

In the subsidy round 2010, no more than 470 applications can be processed, 235 per sub-round. Applications are always processed in the order in which they are received. Should more than 235 applications be submitted per sub-round, the surplus will not be processed. The applicants will be informed of this by e-mail. These applications count as non-submitted and may be resubmitted in the next part-round.

Timeline

In principle, from the moment of submission, the entire assessment procedure takes 36 weeks, as counted from 7 October 2010.

Acceptance of the procedure

As of the 2009 round, applicants must indicate on the application form explicitly that they are aware of the procedure as described in chapter 4 of this brochure.

Administrative-technical test

The Secretariat will test the applications submitted to see whether they meet the submission criteria (see paragraph 4.2: Criteria). The applicant will be contacted should there be a reason to do so. Applications that do not meet the submission criteria will not be processed. These submissions are considered to be not-submitted.

Start assessment procedure and qualifications

If the applications meet the formal criteria, they will be processed. Applicants will be informed of this. The following qualifications apply in the MaGW Open Competition. In the pre-selection, the qualifications 'selected' and 'not-selected' apply. In the standard assessment procedure, the qualifications 'eligible for funding' and 'not eligible for funding' apply. The qualification 'eligible for funding after revision' ceases to exist. Finally, based on prioritisation of the proposals that are eligible for funding, the Board of Social Sciences shall decide according to the qualifications 'granted' or 'not granted'.

Pre-selection

The Board of Social Sciences has decided to apply a pre-selection because the expected application pressure is high. Important considerations in this regard are that such a high application pressure will have a significant impact on the number of reviewers who must be consulted and who are available and that the probability of success for a large number of proposals will be very low.

For the pre-selection, four committees will be created per discipline group, one for each MaGW discipline group (see paragraph 4.3: Pre-selection committees). The applications will be allocated to the pre-selection committees according to the five-digit MaGW discipline code provided (for these codes see chapter 6). Pre-selection takes place within the setting of the given discipline group. Please refer to the MaGW discipline code list for these codes.

In the pre-selection, the committees assess comparatively the applications in the format they were submitted, without the use of external advisors, as to the probability of success in the standard assessment procedure. The context for this assessment is the assessment criteria and the pre-selection criteria. If necessary, the committees will ascribe a priority to the assessments they consider most likely to succeed. Applicants for applications that are less likely to succeed will be informed that the committee has advised the Board of Social Sciences not to select this application for the standard selection procedure. They may submit a brief, substantiated reaction to this (some 300 words). Following the reaction, the committee may review the proposed recommendation. The reaction intended above is not means to supplement shortcomings in the application. The Board of Social Sciences will make a decision based on the recommendations by the committee. The applicant will be informed about this. Applications that are not selected are considered to have been processed and cannot be resubmitted (see paragraph 3.1 Who can apply).

Per sub-round, the four pre-selection committees may select about 60 proposals for the next phase of the assessment process. The number of proposals to be selected per pre-selection committee depends on the number of applications that are submitted per discipline group.

The standard selection procedure: assessment by reviewers

Per proposal, two independent national and/or international reviewers will be asked to comment on the proposal based on the assessment criteria. These reviewers will be selected based on their professional expertise and may not be involved in the applications. When submitting via Iris, applicants can make suggestions for potential reviewers with whom they do not have a direct cooperative relationship. Making suggestions as to reviewers is not a guarantee that these reviewers will be approached to assess the application. In addition, main applicants may, while providing reasons, indicate which reviewers they do not consider suitable for assessing the proposal (also referred to as 'non-referees', indicate no more than three). To do so, the applicant must indicate on the form that he or she wishes to make use of this opportunity. The summary of these non-referees must be submitted by post or email to the Secretariat. The persons indicated will not be approached to assess the application. Should names of non-referees be submitted without providing any reasons, this will be considered an invalid submission and will not be taken into account when approaching reviewers.

Under the responsibility of the Board of Social Sciences, the MaGW secretariat will determine who will be approached as reviewers. The members of the pre-assessment committee may be approached for suggestions.

In those cases that, despite best efforts by the Secretariat, no second reviewer can be found to assess the application, a committee member will be asked to draft a number of questions for the applicant. These questions do not have the same status as a reviewer's comments, but are rather intended as points of discussion that the applicant should take into account in his or her retort. The answers by the applicant are expressly part of the assessment process.

Feedback to applicants

All reviewers' comments on the applications are provided anonymously to the main applicants. Should reviewers' comments focus overly on the applicant or executor as individuals or be otherwise non-businesslike, the MaGW Secretariat reserves the right, in consultation with the chairman of the assessment committee, to not or not fully disclose this commentary to the main applicants.

Main applicants have the opportunity to submit a reaction (no more than 1,000 words including literature references and footnotes; no more than 2 pages' A4) to the reviewers' comments. The intended reaction is not meant for resolving shortcomings to the original application. In that case, this would mean a new application. As a rule, the main applicant has fourteen days to formulate a retort. This may be deviated from in consultation with the main applicant in cases where the reviewers' comments are received (too) late by the MaGW Secretariat. Reactions that are too long or that are received later are non-admissible and will not be used in the assessment.

Applicants are advised to always react to the critique put forward by the reviewers, whatever the nature of the review may be.

Should the reviewers' comments be of a mainly negative nature, the applicant is urgently advised to withdraw the application. The probability of a positive assessment is, in general, reduced considerably by negative comments.

Assessment and recommendation on prioritisation in the assessment committee

With an eye to the further assessment of the applications, the Board of Social Sciences will, per sub-round, appoint two multidisciplinary assessment committees. A multidisciplinary assessment committee consists of twelve members (three members per MaGW discipline group, please refer to paragraph 4.3: Multidisciplinary assessment committees) and an independent technical chairman.

Each assessment committee will process about 30 proposals. The members of the assessment committee to be appointed will be chosen on the basis of their expertise and non-involvement in the applications that are to be assessed in the assessment committee in question. Each assessment committee may propose 12 applications for subsidy.

The assessment committee will provide an independent judgement on the quality of the applications based on the judgements of the reviewers and the applicant's rebuttal based on the assessment criteria. The assessment committee's judgement is decisive. Applications may be assessed as 'eligible for funding' or 'not eligible for funding'.

The qualification 'eligible for funding' means that the application, depending on the position in the prioritisation, is eligible to receive a subsidy. An application that is qualified as 'eligible for funding' that, considering the position in the prioritisation, was not subsidised, may not be resubmitted. The qualification 'not eligible for funding' means that the application is not suitable for receiving subsidy. An application qualified as 'not eligible for funding' may not be resubmitted.

Once the qualifications have been determined, the assessment committee will, where necessary, draft a ranking for the proposals deemed eligible for funding. This is a relative assessment. Based on the assessment criteria, whereby originality and potential contribution to science, the research setup and methods and social significance (when applicable, see paragraph 4.2 Criteria) are most important in the comparison, the assessment committee will draft a ranking according to priority. This will be discussed and finalised.

Decision-making

The assessment committee advises the Board of Social Sciences on its decision-making regarding the applications submitted to the assessment committee. Based on this recommendation, the Board of Social Sciences will, where necessary in part based on policy considerations and based on the available resources, make a decision as to allocation or non-allocation of subsidy.

The Board of Social Sciences may use the following policy considerations:

- the Board of Social Sciences wishes to promote or uphold a particular Dutch responsibility or tradition in the field of research;
- the Board of Social Sciences may express a preference for research that has a clear relationship with a specific Social Sciences area;
- the Board of Social Sciences wishes to stimulate the participation of female researchers in the research;
- the Board of Social Sciences is of the opinion that the proposal contributes to the continuation of necessary expertise;
- the Board of Social Sciences takes into account research that is embedded in an international research programme;
- the Board of Social Sciences has arguments that call for the distribution of subsidy or the concentration of subsidy;
- the Board of Social Sciences takes into account the proportion of postdoctoral and PhD research in the projects to be financed.

Should policy considerations play a role, this will be indicated in the decision.

The submission of formal complaints against decisions in the context of the MaGW Open Competition is, where applicable, subject to the applicable appeal and complaint procedures.

4.2 Criteria

Criteria for submitting applications

The MaGW Secretariat will test the applications according to the submission criteria mentioned below. Applications will be processed when they meet all criteria.

- the application form mentions a five-digit discipline code;
- the application has been drafted in English;
- the application was submitted via the main applicant's Iris account;
- the application has not been submitted previously in the MaGW Open Competition.

Should the application not meet the above mentioned four criteria – and in so far as it concerns the last criterion, that it has the impression that the application has been submitted previously – the Secretariat will contact the main applicant.

Should the application not be in line with one or more of the thirteen situations mentioned below, the application shall not be processed further.

- the application was submitted by a researcher with a PhD or a professor at a Dutch university, NWO or KNAW institution, at which the research shall be performed;
- the main applicant or the co-applicant is not the intended executor;
- the main applicant and/or the co-applicant has listed no more than 25 of his/her own publications;
- as main applicant, the main applicant has not submitted an application that was processed in the subsidy round 2009 or in the first sub-round of the subsidy round 2010 of the MaGW Open Competition (see paragraph 3.1 Who can apply?);
- the application has been submitted electronically via Iris;
- the application has been submitted using the correct form;
- the co-applicant is involved in no more than two applications in the 2009 round as co-applicant (see paragraph 3.1 'Who can apply?');
- the main applicant does not have an ongoing application in another MaGW subsidy round (including Innovational Research Incentives Scheme, Investment

- subsidies, Thematic Programmes for which the MaGW is acting secretary and International Programmes) (please refer to paragraph 3.1 'Who can apply?');
- the same main applicant does not submit an application in another MaGW subsidy round (including Innovational Research Incentives Scheme, Investment subsidies, Thematic Programmes for which the MaGW is acting secretary and International Programmes) while his or her application in the MaGW Open Competition 2009 is still being processed (please refer to paragraph 3.1 'Who can apply?');
- the application has the support of the institution;
- the application does not contain appendices;
- the application has not been processed previously in an MaGW Open Competition subsidy round (2009 or earlier);
- considering the order of receipt, the application is eligible for further processing;
- the application was submitted on 7 October 2010 before 12 p.m.

Criteria for the selection

Applications are assessed by the pre-selection committees, reviewers and assessment committees on the criteria below based on the information provided in the application. Per criterion, a number of possible relevant points of attention have been summarised. The first two criteria are the most important. The nature of the research determined to what extent the fifth criterion is relevant.

1. Originality and potential contribution to science

The research may relate to fundamental research, but also to research that is instrumental in society or in science. Applied research without further substantiation is excluded.

Does the proposed research make an original and important contribution to theory, methods, design or knowledge?

Is existing knowledge used sufficiently? Is there related or comparable research that is not mentioned in the proposal, but which the applicant (s) should be aware of? If so, indicate which research.

2. Research setup and methods

Have the problem definition and research questions been defined clearly and carefully, and are they sufficiently demarcated and adequately elaborated?

Is the research proposal clearly substantiated?

Are the proposed methods and proposed framework suitable for realising the problem definition and answering the research questions?

Is the working plan set up logically, is it well-phased and realistic?

Are the sources mentioned accessible and suitable for answering the research questions?

3. Scientific quality of the applicant and the research group

Does the applicant possess the necessary expertise and experience?

Are the staffing of the research group and the institutional environment adequate?

4. Planned output and dissemination

Have sound plans been made for knowledge dissemination?

Is the planned output realistic?

If applicable: have provisions been made to involve potential users in the project?

5. Social significance

If applicable: which social questions do the research results answer? Could the results offer a significant contribution to answering social questions?

If applicable: how is the intended result applicable outside the professional field in question?

Criteria for the pre-selection

In the pre-selection, the committees will assess comparatively the applications based on the five assessment criteria mentioned above, without using external advisors. This comparison may also make use of any supplemental information provided based on the administrative-technical test. In addition, the aspects mentioned below also have an impact on the selection:

- To what extent does missing information in the application impact the probability of success in the assessment;
- The application relates to research that has already commenced;
- To what extent is the application related to social sciences (please refer to the MaGW discipline code list);
- To what extent is the primary research question of an application for multi-disciplinary research relevant to social sciences (see the MaGW discipline code list).

4.3 Composition of committees

Composing the pre-selection committees and assessment committees is the responsibility of the Board of Social Sciences. The members of the pre-selection and assessment committees that are to be created are chosen based on their research experience, their experience in assessing applications and their non-involvement in the applications that are assessed in the committees in question. Since the pre-selection and assessment committees can only be composed once it is known who has submitted the applications, it is not possible to publish their composition here. All committees are chaired by the same technical chairman. Following the subsidy round, the names of the committee members will be published in alphabetical order on the website of the MaGW Open Competition (www.nwo.nl/magwoc).

Pre-selection committees

Four pre-selection committees will be created, one for each MaGW discipline group. These groups are: Economy and Business Administration, Behaviour and Education, Law and Governance, and Social Sciences. As of 2009, Public Administration and Political Science are included under Social Sciences. The number of members depends on the number of applications that have to be processed. The applications are allocated to one of these pre-selection committees based on the five-digit discipline code as mentioned on the application (see chapter 6). The pre-selection committees are chaired by a technical chairman.

Multi-disciplinary assessment committees

Per sub-round of the subsidy round 2010, two multi-disciplinary assessment committees will be created. Three people from each MaGW discipline group will be asked to be a member of the assessment committee. In order to ensure a balanced distribution of the disciplines across these groups, the Board of Social Sciences has decided that Political Science and Public Administration will be included in the discipline group Law and Governance in multi-disciplinary settings. An assessment committee consists of twelve members and includes the same technical chairman.

5 Other information

5.1 Additional information for main applicants

Subsidies are always applied for by one main applicant, with whom the correspondence takes place. The main applicant is expected to assume the scientific, organisational and financial responsibility for the research for which subsidy is being applied. This means, amongst other matters, that should the subsidy be awarded, the main applicant will provide progress reports, a scientific report, and financial substantiation at the end of the subsidy period. The execution of subsidised applications is subject to subsidy regulations. These are sent to the main applicant upon each allocation of a subsidy and can be found also on the website (www.nwo.nl). Not adhering to these regulations may have negative consequences for the continued support from the NWO for the application in question.

5.2 Contact

All organisational and administrative issues are handled by the MaGW Secretariat. A secretary is appointed per assessment committee that is to be created. The MaGW Open Competition is coordinated from the secretariat by mr J.S. (Joris) Voskuilen.

Contact information MaGW Secretariat:

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websites: subsidy guide: www.nwo.nl/magwopencompetitie
programme site: www.nwo.nl/magwoc

For technical questions regarding submission by Iris please contact the Iris helpdesk:

Tel: 0900-6964747 (Monday-Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
e-mail: iris@nwo.nl
website: www.iris.nwo.nl

Please note that the Iris helpdesk cannot be contacted by phone from most countries outside the Netherlands

6 Annexe: Discipline codes

The Division of Social Sciences is divided into four discipline groups, which are themselves divided into a number of (sub) disciplines. Applications submitted for the MaGW Open Competition must lie within the domain of one of these (sub) disciplines. Applicants must mention one of the five-digit codes below on the application. You can download the discipline code list via www.nwo.nl/magwopencompetitie

Discipline group Economy and Business Administration

Economy

- 11100 Microeconomics
- 11200 Macroeconomics
- 11300 Econometrics

Business administration

- 12100 Business administration

Discipline group Behaviour and Education

Psychology

- 21100 Clinical psychology
- 21200 Biological and medical psychology
- 21300 Developmental psychology
- 21400 Psychonomics and cognitive psychology
- 21500 Social and organizational psychology
- 21600 Psychometrics

Science of teaching

- 22100 Science of teaching

Pedagogics

- 23100 Pedagogics

Discipline group Law

Law

- 31100 Private law
- 31200 Constitutional and administrative law
- 31300 International and European law
- 31400 Criminal law and criminology

Discipline group Social Sciences

Sociology

- 41100 Sociology

Cultural Anthropology

- 42100 Cultural Anthropology

Communication science

- 43100 Communication science

Demography

- 44100 Demography

Public Administration & Political Science

- 45100 Public Administration
- 45200 Political Science

Geography / Planning

- 46100 Geography
- 46200 Planning

Environmental science

- 47100 Environmental science