Frequently asked questions NWA Idea Generator

Table of contents

1.1 General questions ........................................... 2
1.2 Submitting research proposals ............................. 2
1.3 Assessment of research proposals ......................... 5
1.4 Knowledge sharing .......................................... 6
1.5 Submitting in ISAAC ....................................... 6
1.1 General questions

What is the purpose of NWO’s Dutch National Research Agenda research programme ‘Idea Generator’ (NWA-IDG)?
The Idea Generator supports creative, out-of-the-box thinkers to submit creative, exciting and innovative research ideas that are relevant for the NWA-program. In the Idea Generator, small projects can be funded to further develop a new idea by doing research. Applicants of all disciplines and backgrounds are welcome. Proposals that focus on practical, applied or fundamental research are welcome. Researchers should apply individually, however working together with at least one societal stakeholder.

Why should I submit a proposal to the NWA-IDG and not elsewhere?
The NWA intends to connect research and society. Next to the NWA-ORC and NWA thematic calls, the NWA-IDG focuses on small projects with potential for societal impact. Other NWO granting programmes have a different focus, such as talent development (the Talent Scheme) or curiosity-driven research (the Open Competition).

What kind of research may be carried out in light of this call?
The Idea Generator does not have specific requirements regarding the type of research. Fundamental, practical and applied research is allowed. There are different possibilities, such as internships/knowledge labs/living labs/fieldlabs.

Why are especially women invited to submit proposals?
Because the representation and advancement of women in academia unfortunately strongly lag behind those of men. NWO and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) are working together with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) and Dutch universities to rectify this situation; striving for a percentage of female applicants that is at least equal to the percentage of female researchers in the target group.

What is the available budget?
The available budget for the Idea Generator 2019 second round is €2 million.

1.2 Submitting research proposals

Which disciplines may submit a proposal?
The call is meant for researchers of all disciplines. If the research topic matches one out of 25 NWA routes and at least one out of 140 NWA questions the proposal may be submitted.

What requirements do the research proposals have to meet?
The call for proposals for the NWA Idea Generator contains the necessary conditions for research proposals in the NWA-IDG programme. They are summarised below.

A proposal should match one out of 25 routes and at least one of the NWA questions. The maximum amount that can be requested is €50.000 and projects may last 1 year at maximum. Each project has one applicant, as co-applicants are not allowed. The applicant must have a (temporary or steady) position at a university or other organisation (see the list of allowed organisations in the call). At least one societal stakeholder should collaborate. The proposal should also meet NWO’s requirements regarding scientific integrity, ethical aspects, open access, data management and the Nagoya protocol.
How will a proposal be assessed?
Applicants will assess one another based on assessment aspects. The three assessment aspects are:

(I) Societal question, impact and stakeholders
(II) A creative and innovative idea
(III) Project plan

Why must I select which NWA-route is relevant for my proposal?
Because groups of applicants will rate one another’s proposals anonymously within five separate clusters of proposals. In this way a proposal can be divided into the right cluster. The table below demonstrates the division of routes amongst clusters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>A Routes</th>
<th>B Materials – Made in Holland</th>
<th>C Measuring and detecting: anything, anytime, anywhere</th>
<th>D The origin of life – on earth and in the universe</th>
<th>E The quantum / nano-revolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building blocks of matter and fundamentals of space and time</td>
<td>Health care research, sickness prevention and treatment</td>
<td>Child and adolescent development, upbringing and education</td>
<td>Creating value through responsible access to and use of big data</td>
<td>The blue route: water as a pathway to innovation and sustainable growth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials – Made in Holland</td>
<td>NeuroLabNL: the ultimate living lab for brain, cognition and behavioural research</td>
<td>Art: research and innovation in the 21st century</td>
<td>Smart industry</td>
<td>Circular economy and resource efficiency: sustainable circular impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measuring and detecting: anything, anytime, anywhere</td>
<td>Personalised medicine: the individual at the centre</td>
<td>Living history</td>
<td>Smart, liveable cities</td>
<td>Energy transition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The origin of life – on earth and in the universe</td>
<td>Regenerative medicine: game changer moving to broad areas of application</td>
<td>Towards resilient societies</td>
<td>Logistics and transport in an energetic, innovative, and sustainable society</td>
<td>Quality of the living environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quantum / nano-revolution</td>
<td>Sport and exercise</td>
<td>Between conflict and cooperation</td>
<td>Sustainable production of safe and healthy food</td>
<td>Sustainable development goals for inclusive global development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>€ 400.000</th>
<th>€ 400.000</th>
<th>€ 400.000</th>
<th>€ 300.000</th>
<th>€ 500.000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget Group 1</td>
<td>Group A1: € 200.000</td>
<td>Group B1: € 200.000</td>
<td>Group C1: € 200.000</td>
<td>Group D1: € 150.000</td>
<td>Group E1: € 250.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When can proposals be submitted?
The deadline for submitting the proposals is February 27th, 2020, 14:00 hours CE(S)T.

Who can submit?
A proposal should be submitted by a main applicant. This is a researcher who works at either a Dutch university, university medical centre, KNAW or NWO institute, university of applied sciences or TO2 institute.
Researchers from the Netherlands Cancer Institute, the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen, the DUBBLE Beamline at the ESRF in Grenoble, NCB Naturalis, ARCNL and the Princess Maxima Center can also submit proposals as main applicants.

A certain job level or PhD degree are not required. The main applicant must have a (temporary or steady) position in one of the listed organisations during project execution. The organisation should know about the proposal and should agree that after granting, the main applicant will execute the project as their employee. NWA does not have further requirements regarding the amount of hours the applicant will work.

Co-applicants are not allowed.

If I submit an application in the 2019 funding round, can I submit again in the coming years?
If you have submitted in the first round of 2019 as a main applicant or co-applicant, you are not allowed to submit again in this round.

How many proposals may I submit?
A researcher may submit one proposal at maximum in this round. A researcher who has already submitted a proposal that has been processed during the first round of 2019 is not allowed to submit a proposal during this round. If a new round will start in 2020, applicants from this round (2019-2) will be allowed to submit again.

What is meant by societal stakeholder(s)?
Societal stakeholders can represent public or private organisations (for example, companies, NGO’s, governmental organisations, etc.). In the application form, section 3 asks to address which societal stakeholders are identified for this idea and how they have contributed to the idea. A description of the collaboration with societal stakeholders is also required. They will not receive funding, but have to sign the application form.

Can companies also submit a proposal and receive a grant?
No. Companies can only support proposals as a societal stakeholder.

What costs can be claimed?
Any type of costs (personal, material, travel, etc.) can be requested. The proposed spending of the €50.000 must be described in the budget table and should be clarified. The proposed spending of the budget should support the proposed idea and execution. The committee will evaluate this under the criterion ‘Project Plan’.

Should the proposal be written in Dutch or in English?
The proposal should be written in English.

What amount can I apply for?
The maximum grant amount is €50.000.

What is the maximum duration of a project?
The maximum project duration is 1 year.

What does an applicant have to do, apart from finding a societal stakeholder and submitting the proposal on time?
At different moments during the assessment procedure applicants will be required to perform tasks. By submitting a proposal, an applicant agrees to anonymously assess several other proposals in this round. If the deadlines of these tasks are not met, the proposal of the assessor will be removed from the procedure. The tasks are:
1.3 **Assessment of research proposals**

**Why has this assessment procedure of peer review been chosen?**
NWO wants to keep the assessment procedure of the Idea Generator short and efficient to allow projects to start as soon as possible. Because the grants concern modest amounts, the usual NWO assessment procedure would demand too much work and time. Assessment by the applicants also generates involvement in and understanding of the assessment procedure. The applicants will bundle their useful expertise within clusters of NWA routes. In this way NWO can optimally use their expertise for the assessment procedure. NWO is seeking innovative assessment methods and already has experience with this method: the procedure has been piloted in the call for proposals ‘NWO Open Competition Domain Science – XS’. The first experiences were positive.

**What are the assessment criteria?**
In order to make a ranking the assessor will not look at criteria, but at the three assessment aspects mentioned below. The assessor assesses an application based on the aspects. Based on this they will make a ranking. The proposals will be anonymous so that the assessments will be solely based on the research ideas.

The assessment aspects are:

(I) Societal question, impact and stakeholders
(II) A creative and innovative idea
(III) Project plan

These main aspects are further divided in partial aspects that are described in the call for proposals.

**How will practical research be assessed?**
Practical research will be assessed in the same way as other research proposals.

**What is the composition of the assessment committees?**
There are no assessment committees. For this round applicants will assess one another anonymously.

**How will anonymous assessment by other applicants be carried out?**
Every proposal will be divided amongst five clusters. Applicants within the clusters will be divided in two groups. Proposals need to be readable and understandable for readers outside the own area of expertise because they will be assessed within broad clusters.

Each assessor ranks the applications received. The rankings may not be tied. The assessor writes a short report per application. A report consists of the ranking of the application set and their written clarifications. If the assessor does not meet the submission deadline, their own application will be removed from the procedure and will not be processed further.
Based on the received rankings, the NWA bureau will make a total ranking per group. Two rankings will result for each cluster; one for group 1 and one for group 2. There is no possibility for applicants to submit a rebuttal.

The NWA programme committee advises the Board of NWO on the proposed rankings. Based on this advice and the available funds, the Board will make a decision on granting or rejecting a proposal. After the Board has finished the decision-making process, the applicants will be informed.

Do the ‘boegbeelden’ or ‘trekkers’ of the 25 NWA-routes have a role in the assessment of the proposals?
No, they do not have a role in the assessment process. However, they can suggest experts on the topics of the routes to take seat on the assessment committee. NWO assesses whether there are personal conflicts of interest.

How will the budget be divided?
The budget will be spread evenly across five different clusters. Each cluster consists of several NWA routes (see table on page 3).

1.4 Knowledge sharing

What activities are being developed to share the acquired knowledge with society?
Society in the broad sense and its citizens will be involved, whenever possible, in the development and implementation of the research programmes. In addition, there will be frequent communication about the results (breakthroughs and interesting interim results) of the research taking place within the Dutch National Research Agenda programme. The Dutch National Research Agenda will also develop partnerships for science-wide and national public activities that will focus on answering questions about the Dutch National Research Agenda.

1.5 Submitting in ISAAC

Organisations tab: what is the ‘organisation responsible for the application’?
This means the organisation of the main applicant.

Organisations tab: what are the ‘organisations of execution’?
This means the organisation of the main applicant.

What may not be mentioned in the application?
Applications will be assessed anonymously. Therefore, only fill out your name in ISAAC, but not on the application form. Then only NWO will know whose application it is. This information however will not be sent to the assessors. Please take notice that the rest of the application is also anonymous, so do not insert your name or a clear reference to your research group.

Sending along proofs of support from stakeholders (such as support letters) along with the application is not allowed.

When can I submit in ISAAC at the latest?
When submitting your proposal in ISAAC you also need to enter data online. Therefore, start submitting your proposal at least one day before the deadline of this call for proposals. Proposals that are submitted after the deadline will not be processed.