



Frequently asked questions NWO Talent Programme

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Conditions concerning the applicant, PhD graduation date and appointment

1 | Do age limits apply to Veni, Vidi and Vici applicants?

No. There are no age limits. However, for each of the three grants within the NWO Talent Scheme, specific limits have been set on the number of years since the PhD graduation:

- The Veni round 2020 is open to researchers who obtained their PhD a maximum of three years before 1 January 2020 (PhD graduation date after 1 January 2017 and before January 2020). Researchers who have not yet obtained their PhD can also submit an application if, together with their electronic submission of a complete Veni application, they can also submit an official statement from the entire PhD committee that the dissertation manuscript has been approved and that they will complete their PhD trajectory within a maximum of four months after the submission deadline.
- The Vidi round 2020 is open for researchers who obtained their PhD no more than eight years before 1 October 2020 (PhD graduation date after 1 October 2012 and before 1 October 2020).
- The Vici round 2020 is open for researchers who obtained their PhD no more than 15 years before 1 March 2020 (PhD graduation date after 1 March 2005 and before 1 March 2020).

2 | Are researchers without a PhD allowed to apply for a Veni grant?

Researchers who have not yet obtained their PhD can also submit an application if, together with their electronic submission of a complete Veni application, they can also submit an official statement from the entire PhD committee that the dissertation manuscript has been approved and that they will complete their PhD trajectory within a maximum of four months after the submission deadline.

3 | Can the submission limits set be exceeded?

In the case of care responsibilities, pregnancy, illness or training to become a clinical specialist, it is possible to receive an extension to the number of years after the PhD graduation. An applicant who wishes to request an extension *must always contact the Talent Programme coordinator (talent@nwo.nl) before the application is submitted*. A request for an extension will only be considered if it is accompanied by the required formal documents.

NB 1. If an extension is applied for based on care leave, long-term sick leave or exceptional leave, then this leave should be demonstrated by means of an overview of the leave registration from the HRM department of the employer concerned.

NB 2: The Effective Research Time calculation requested in the application form for the number of months of research and other activities is entirely independent of whether or not an extension is requested and the reasons for which it is granted.

NB 3: Even in the case of an extension of the submission limit, the standard deadlines for submitting an application, stated in the relevant call, still apply in full.

An extension does not influence the **maximum number of times you can submit an application (twice for Veni, twice for Vidi, and three times for Vici)**.

The maximum extension of the submission limit is five years.



An extension can be granted on the following grounds:

a | Pregnancy and childcare responsibilities

Parents can obtain an extension if they have childcare responsibilities. For an extension request for parents, a scan of the completed and signed form [parent declaration](#) must be sent with the application (talent@nwo.nl) in which the applicant states that the child/the children are part of their household.

<https://www.nwo.nl/en/documents/nwo/innovational-research-incentives-scheme/innovational-research-incentives-scheme---parent-declaration>

Extension parents:

- Biological mothers receive an 18-month extension per child. This extension is a compensation for the time that the pregnancy, birth and care of the child involve and includes any parental leave and/or reduction in the size of the formal working hours.
- Other parents (fathers and non-biological mothers) with a child that is part of their household receive a 6-month extension per child. This extension is a compensation for the time that the pregnancy, birth and care of the child involve and includes any parental leave and/or reduction in the formal working hours.

b | Care leave

An appeal based on care responsibilities only applies to candidates for whom there is or was a demonstrable registered period of care leave.

- In the case of care leave for first-degree blood or other relatives (other than own children), a formal reduction in the working hours is compensated. The formal reduction in working hours should be demonstrated by means of an overview of the leave registration from the HRM department of your employer.

c | Illness

In the case of long-term illness, the formal reduction in working hours is compensated (see scheme below). The formal reduction in working hours should be demonstrated by means of an overview of the leave registration from the HRM department of your employer.

d | Training to become a clinical specialist

Applicants who have completed a course to become a clinical specialist are also eligible for an extension of the period. The complete list of clinical training courses that fall under the extension regulation is available on the [website](#). The total accumulated time after the PhD devoted to a training course to become a clinical specialist may be summed and added to the period set for the Veni, Vidi and Vici grants. To be eligible for this extension, the applicant should submit the training plan and evidence of specialist registration (BIG or KNMG). If the training and scientific research were realised at the same time, then only the training time counts towards the extension.



4 | Which requirements must the applicant's appointment satisfy?

Both candidates with and without a tenured contract can submit applications within the Talent Scheme. There is also no limitation with respect to the job level. However, candidates who want to submit a Veni or Vidi proposal must have an [embedding guarantee](#) from the institution where the candidate wants to carry out the research.

5 | Can researchers who hold two PhDs submit an application?

Yes. Specific conditions apply to researchers who have completed two PhDs. For more information about these conditions, please contact the Talent Scheme secretariat via vi@nwo.nl.

6 | Can an application be submitted from outside the Netherlands?

Yes. The NWO Talent Programme is open for researchers of all nationalities who work in the Netherlands or abroad. However, the proposed research must take place at one of the Dutch institutions stated in the call for proposals, and the researchers must also be appointed there. Furthermore, for Veni and Vidi funding, NWO requires the candidates to provide an [embedding guarantee](#) from the institution where the candidate wants to carry out the research. Applicants who are not yet employed by a Dutch research institution can choose the institution where they intend to carry out the research when they submit the application. In the application, the applicant's *current* correspondence details must be entered. When creating an ISAAC account, all applicants must choose a Dutch research institution.

7 | Can an applicant take a Talent Scheme project awarded funding abroad?

Yes, as long as the research project has been running for at least one year and will run for at least one more year. The remainder of the current scheme funding can be taken abroad in the context of the Money follows Researcher (MfR) scheme, the conditions for which are available [here](#). Researchers who are eligible for the MfR scheme can submit a request to NWO via talent@nwo.nl. <https://www.nwo.nl/onderzoek-en-resultaten/programmas/Money+follows+researcher>

Submission process

8 | Should an application always be submitted via the ISAAC system?

Yes, unless the application is intended for Medical Sciences (ZonMw). For the other three domains, Science, Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), and Applied and Engineering Sciences (AES), applications must be submitted via ISAAC. On the NWO Talent Programme website (<https://www.nwo.nl/en/funding/our-funding-instruments/nwo/innovational-research-incentives-scheme/index.html>), you must first select a Veni, Vidi or Vici grant. About two months before the deadline, the funding round will be opened, and links to ISAAC will be made available on the Veni, Vidi



and Vici pages. The completed application form must be converted into the required PDF format before the application can be submitted (see also Question 11).

The only exception to the compulsory submission via ISAAC is submission to ZonMw (Medical Sciences). ZonMw uses a similar submission system, MijnZonMw, which is accessible via the website of ZonMw (mijn.zonmw.nl).

9 | Can an application be dealt with differently due to personal circumstances?

Yes. For every funding round, a provisional timetable is stated in the call for proposals. This states when input from applicants is required (rebuttal, interview).

If circumstances occur that might give rise to problems regarding these input moments, then please contact the secretary of the funding round concerned in good time.

Applicants who are hindered from participating in the standard assessment procedure due to parental leave can make use of the NWO Compensation Scheme [parental leave](#). This can be requested by sending an email to the relevant programme secretary. Please send an email to talent@nwo.nl if you have questions about this scheme. <https://www.nwo.nl/en/news-and-events/news/2019/02/nwo-lays-down-customised-solutions-for-parental-leave-in-official-compensation-scheme.html>

Application format

10 | Can file formats other than PDF be uploaded?

No. The submission system only accepts documents in PDF format, as only then can it be guaranteed that the files received by NWO are identical to the files sent by the applicants. *The PDF files may not contain any encryption nor any tabs*. If you experience technical problems with converting your files to PDF format, then please contact your ICT support department or the ISAAC helpdesk. This helpdesk can be reached between 11:00 and 17:00 (Dutch time, CE(S)T) via Isaac.helpdesk@nwo.nl and by phone at +31 20 346 7179. In the case of technical problems when submitting to ZonMw, please contact the helpdesk of the ZonMw submission system. For applications in MijnZonMw: servicedesk@zonmw.nl, or by phone: +31 70 349 5178.

11 | Which elements count towards the maximum number of words in the various sections of the application form?

In principle, the maximum number of words covers *all* text in the section. If there are exceptions, then these will be explicitly stated. In general, all literature references in the text and all words in tables, graphs and figures, including their captions, count towards the total number of words. If a literature list is requested in a separate section and no word total is stated for that section, then the content of this list does not need to be included in the total number of words.

12 | Is the knowledge utilisation section compulsory?

Yes. All NWO Talent Programme applications are assessed on the quality of the candidate, the quality of



the project proposal, and the section knowledge utilisation. The section knowledge utilisation counts for 20% of the overall assessment. If in the applicants' view, the proposed research is not suitable for knowledge utilisation, then the applicant should explain why this is not applicable. The selection committee will assess the argumentation given for this.

13 | Does sending publications or letters of recommendations with the application have added value?

No. Publications and letters of recommendation will not be passed on to the committee nor the external referees.

What can be applied for

14 | Can a Veni applicant include additional scientific personnel in the budget?

No. In a Veni application, the applicant can only enter their own salary costs.
NB: The appointment of additional scientific personnel is, however, possible for Vidi and Vici grants.

15 | Can a laureate carry out the research part-time?

Yes. It is possible to carry out research part-time. For the Veni grant, the project duration of the research realised part-time is proportional to the exact amount of time devoted and may be extended by a maximum of one year (from three years to four years). A one-year extension is therefore possible in the case of a part-time ratio of at most 0.75 fte. In the case of Vidi and Vici grants, the project duration is not extended, but it is possible to appoint additional scientific personnel.

16 | Can the entire salary of the applicant be included in the budget, or do other tasks such as teaching need to be taken into account?

Yes, the applicant may devote maximum 25% of the Veni/Vidi/Vici- appointment to secondary tasks (education/governance/management) which contributes to the scientific career of the researcher. However, if the applicant devotes more than 25% of the Talent Scheme appointment to secondary tasks, then only the salary costs for the part devoted to research can be charged to the grant budget.

17 | What is the guideline for the salary costs of an additional PhD or postdoc?

The gross salary is based on the actual salary grade and level the researcher is appointed at. For subsequent years, it is possible to allow for the expected periodic increases and other salary



increases insofar as these are expected based on the prevailing Collective Labour Agreement of Dutch Universities (CAO-NU).

18 | Can the maximum grant budget be exceeded?

Yes. It is possible to exceed the maximum grant amount. However, the maximum contribution from NWO (Veni: € 250,000, Vidi: € 800,000, Vici: € 1,500,000) is fixed. In the case of a higher project budget, there needs to be co-funding from the own institution and/or third party (see also Question 21).

Where to submit to

19 | Can different grants within the NWO Talent Programme be applied for simultaneously?

No. Candidates may not simultaneously participate in the application process for different grants within the NWO Talent Programme. This means, for example, that a candidate who in principle is eligible for submitting both a Veni and a Vidi grant may not, after submitting a Vidi grant application in 2020, also submit a Veni grant application in 2020, because the outcome of the Vidi funding round is not announced before the deadline for the Veni funding round.

Required additional documentation

20 | When is a co-funding statement required?

If the institution or a third party makes an in-kind or cash contribution to the project, then the applicant should always include a co-funding statement from this party when the application is submitted. This also applies if the total budget, including the contribution concerned, does *not* exceed the maximum contribution from NWO (and in effect, a smaller contribution from NWO is applied for). A co-funding statement is also required if an institution pays (a part of) the salary of the applicant and/or other researchers who work on the Talent Scheme project (only insofar as this concerns the hours devoted to the VI project in question). A co-funding statement is an authorised letter in which the party concerned guarantees that they will pay the amount stated in the application. The size of the contribution must be stated explicitly in the letter. An example document for this letter can be downloaded via ISAAC or from the website <https://www.nwo.nl/en/funding/our-funding-instruments/nwo/innovational-research-incentives-scheme/index.html>, <http://www.nwo.nl/vi> Co-funding statements can also be uploaded as separate PDF attachments via ISAAC. These letters are not passed on to the referees and committee members nor will they be included in the assessment.

21 | When and how must the embedding guarantee be submitted?

NWO requires an [embedding guarantee](#) from Veni and Vidi candidates. **The embedding guarantee must be signed by the dean.** The document must be uploaded as a separate attachment to the application in ISAAC.



- a. The deadline for submitting a full proposal for the **Vidi round 2020 is 6 October 2020**.
- b. The deadline for submitting a full proposal for the next **Veni funding round is 9 January 2020**.
- c. *Please note:* only the domains Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), Applied and Engineering Sciences (AES) and Medical Sciences (ZonMw) work with a compulsory pre-proposal. The deadline for submitting a Veni pre-proposal to SSH, AES and ZonMw was 3 September 2019.

The forms required for the embedding guarantee for the Vidi and Veni call of NWO are available on the NWO Talent Programme page (<https://www.nwo.nl/en/funding/our-funding-instruments/nwo/innovational-research-incentives-scheme/index.html>). <http://www.nwo.nl/vi>

Terminology

22 | What are the granting conditions?

The awarding of the grant takes place under certain conditions, such as an appointment at the institution where the research will be carried out. Laureates will receive the exact granting conditions with the granting letter.

23 | What are domains?

NWO has four scientific domains: Science, Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), Applied and Engineering Sciences (AES) and Medical Sciences (ZonMw). Applicants must state which domain should assess the application. If upon receiving the application a domain suspects that the application could better be assessed by a different domain, then the secretary of the funding round will contact the applicant. The transfer of an application to another domain is only possible if the conditions for submission to both domains are identical.

24 | What are non-referees?

Non-referees are persons that the applicants do *not* want to assess the application because they could have an unfavourable view towards the research by default. It is, of course, crucial that these persons are not stated anywhere in the application. The names and addresses of any such persons should *only* be stated in the ISAAC tab intended for this purpose. You may state a maximum of three non-referees. Even if the ISAAC system provides room for more names, you may only enter a maximum of three names. Please consult the explanatory notes accompanying the application for the funding round concerned.