SSH Open Competition L
Round 2023

Call for proposals

Social Sciences And Humanities
1 Introduction

In this Call for proposals information is provided about the application procedure for the SSH Open Competition L 2023 (hereinafter: SSH OC L) funding round. This Call for proposals falls under the responsibility of the Dutch Research Council (NWO).

In this Call for proposals you will find information about the aim of this programme (Chapter 2), the conditions for the grant application (Chapter 3) and how your proposal will be assessed (Chapter 4). This is the information you need to submit a grant application. Chapter 5 states the obligations for grant recipients in the event you are awarded funding, Chapter 6 contains the contact details and Chapter 7 the annexes.

1.1 Background

The Open Competition of the SSH Domain is subdivided into three separate funding instruments. These funding instruments respectively provide grant opportunities for promising ideas, smaller and larger grants. In this call for proposals you will find information about submitting research proposals in the SSH OC L. This funding instrument is open to research proposals with a research question and/or problem definition within the social sciences and humanities. Within this field the instrument has no further thematic limitations and in principle the applicant is free to choose the desired form of funding. The instrument is aimed at excellent disciplinary, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research. This certainly also includes fundamental scientific research.

1.2 Available budget

The available budget for this Call for proposals is € 38.783.616. The budget will be divided between six disciplinary panels in proportion to the number of admissible pre-proposals.

1.3 Submission deadline(s)

The deadline for submitting pre-proposals is September 5, 2023, before 14:00:00 hours CEST. The deadline for submitting full proposals is February 13, 2024, before 14:00:00 hours CET.

When you submit your application in ISAAC, you will also need to enter some details online. Therefore please start submitting your application at least one day before the deadline of this Call for proposals. Applications that are submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.
2 Aim

This chapter describes the aim of the programme and the societal impact.

2.1 Aim of the programme

The SSH OC L funding instrument for thematically free research focuses on research projects with a primary social and/or humanities research question. Proposals with an interdisciplinary or cross-domain character can also be submitted to this instrument, provided they contain a clear social and/or humanities component.

2.2 Societal impact

New knowledge and insights from scientific research can make an important contribution to solutions for societal issues of today and tomorrow. Examples are the energy transition, health and care, or climate change. Through interaction and alignment between researchers and potential knowledge users, the chance of knowledge utilisation increases and with it the chance of societal impact. Through its policy on impact, NWO promotes the potential contribution from research to societal issues by encouraging productive interactions with societal stakeholders, both during the development and implementation of research. It does so in a manner appropriate to the aim of the funding instrument.

2.2.1 Tailor-made impact

Depending on the aim of the funding instrument, NWO will select the approach that has the greatest chance of achieving societal impact. The primary aim of the funding instrument determines the method NWO deploys to facilitate knowledge utilisation in various phases of the project (proposal, realisation, project completion) and the effort required from the applicant(s) and partner(s).

In this programme, the Impact Outlook approach is applied. Here, researchers can choose which type of impact they want to put their own focus on, and proportional consideration is given to what can be done for the remaining impact.

NWO offers an e-learning module that can help interested parties via NWO Impact - Online workshops. For more information on the policy on impact see the website: Knowledge utilisation | NWO.
3 Conditions for applicants

This chapter contains the conditions that are applicable to your grant application. Firstly it describes who can apply for funding (Section 3.1) and what you can request funding for (Section 3.2). Subsequently, you will find the conditions for preparing and submitting the application (Sections 3.3 and 3.4) and the specific funding conditions (Section 3.5).

3.1 Who can apply

Pre-proposals and full proposals are submitted by one and the same main applicant. Co-applicants are permitted but only compulsory in case the budget module Money follows Cooperation is requested.

Full, associate and assistant professors and other researchers with a comparable position* may act as main or co-applicant if they have a tenured position (and therefore a paid position for an indefinite period) or a tenure track agreement at one of the following organisations:

- universities located in the Kingdom of the Netherlands;
- university medical centres;
- institutes affiliated to the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) or NWO;
- Netherlands Cancer Institute;
- the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen;
- Naturalis Biodiversity Center;
- Advanced Research Centre for NanoLithography (ARCNL);
- Princess Máxima Center.

*A comparable position refers to a researcher that has a demonstrable and comparable number of years of experience in carrying out scientific research and supervising other researchers as a full, associate or assistant professor.

Persons with a zero-hour employment agreement or with a contract for a limited period of time (other than a tenure track appointment) may not submit a proposal.

It could be the case that the main or co-applicant’s tenure track agreement ends before the intended completion date of the project for which funding is applied for, or that before that date, this applicant’s tenured contract ends due to this applicant reaching retirement age. In that case, this applicant needs to include a statement from their employer in which the organisation concerned guarantees that the project and all project members for whom funding has been requested will receive adequate supervision for the full duration of the project.

Main or co-applicants with a part-time contract should guarantee adequate supervision of the project and all project members for whom funding is requested.

Extra conditions:

- Main and co-applicants must have defended their PhD at least 15 years prior to the deadline for submission of pre-proposals;
- Main and co-applicants may only submit an application in one of the SSH Open Competition rounds once per calendar year;
- Main and co-applicants are not allowed to submit an application in consecutive rounds in the SSH Open Competition1;

---

1 The SSH Open Competition here refers to the SSH OC M and the SSH OC L, not the SSH OC XS. Example: applicant submitted in the SSH OC M in 2022, applicant wants to submit in the SSH OC L in 2023. This is not allowed. Example: applicant submitted in the SSH OC M in 2022, applicant wants to submit in the SSH OC M in 2024. This is allowed. Example: applicant submits in the SSH OC L in 2023, applicant wants to submit in the SSH OC L in 2025. This is allowed. Example: applicant submits in the SSH OC L in 2023, wants to submit in the SSH OC M in 2024. This is not allowed.
Main applicants may not transfer their application to a new or existing applicant during the entire procedure of this call once an application is submitted;

Applicants may submit a new application no more than one year before the planned end date of their last-ending and currently running NWO project(s), for which they are the main applicant/project leader (this condition only applies to NWO projects that have been awarded funding after September 25, 2018).

3.1.1 Main and co-applicants

The main applicant submits the proposal via the NWO web application ISAAC. During the assessment process, NWO will communicate with the main applicant. After a proposal has been awarded funding, the main applicant will become the project leader and point of contact for NWO. The knowledge institution of the main applicant is the main beneficiary and will become the official secretary.

Co-applicants have an active role in realising the project. The (sub)project leaders and beneficiary/beneficiaries are jointly responsible for realising the entire project.

3.2 What can be applied for

For an application in this Call for proposals, a minimum of € 400,000 and a maximum of € 800,000 can be applied for. The minimum duration of the proposed project is one year and the maximum duration is six years. The budget modules (including the maximum amount) available for this Call for proposals are listed in the table below. Apply only for funding that is vital to realise the project. A more detailed explanation of the budget modules can be found in the annex to this Call for proposals (7.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget module</th>
<th>Maximum amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD student</td>
<td>2 positions, according to UNL rates²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Doctorate degree (EngD)</td>
<td>2 positions, in combination with PhD student(s) and or postdoc(s), according to UNL rates²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoc</td>
<td>2 positions, according to UNL rates²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-scientific staff (NSS) at universities</td>
<td>€100,000, non-scientific staff at (NSS) universities; in combination with PhD student(s) and or postdoc(s)²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Scientific personnel (OSS) at universities</td>
<td>€100,000, in combination with PhD student and/or postdoc²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research leave</td>
<td>A maximum of 10% of the budget requested from NWO according to UNL rates or NFU rates²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material costs</td>
<td>€15,000 per year per FTE scientific position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments (up to €150,000)</td>
<td>Maximum €150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments (€150,000 to €500,000)</td>
<td>Greater than or equal to €150,000 (for data collections, a minimum of €25,000 applies) and less than or equal to €500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge utilisation</td>
<td>€25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalisation</td>
<td>€25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money follows Cooperation</td>
<td>Less than 50% of the total budget applied for</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² For personnel outside the Netherlands, the local rates are reimbursed. These rates are capped at a maximum equal to the UNL rates corrected by the NWO Country correction coefficients (CCC) table, see Money Follows Cooperation | NWO.
3.3 Preparing an application

The steps involved in writing your application are:
- download the application form from the NWO web application ISAAC or from the NWO web page (on the grant page of the funding instrument concerned);
- complete the application form;
- save the application form in ISAAC as a PDF file and upload it with any compulsory annexes;
- fill in the requested information online in ISAAC.

Compulsory annexe(s):

Preproposal phase:
- Statement appointment and project supervision (if applicable).

Full proposal phase:
- Budget form;
- Statement co-funding (if applicable).

In case NWO has made a template available, the annexes should be drawn up according to the NWO template. Annexes must be uploaded in ISAAC separately from the application. All of the annexes, except for the budget, must be submitted as PDF files (without encryption). The budget must be submitted in ISAAC as an Excel file. Any annexes other than those above-mentioned are not permitted.

You must write your application in English. Communication with NWO will be in English for the entire duration of the round.

An application can only be submitted via the web application ISAAC. Applications that are not submitted via ISAAC will not be taken into consideration. As the main applicant, you are required to submit the application via your own personal ISAAC account.

It is important to start with your application in ISAAC on time:
- if you do not yet have an ISAAC account, then you should create this on time to prevent any possible registration problems;
- any new organisations must also be added to ISAAC by NWO;
- you also need to submit other details online.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration by NWO. For technical questions, please contact the ISAAC helpdesk, see contact (Chapter 6).

The applicant must inform the organisation where she/he works about the submission of the application, and the organisation must accept the granting conditions of this Call for proposals.

3.3.1 Advice about field choice/substantive suitability

For this Call, your application must fit within the SSH domain. The assessment committee within this instrument consists of six disciplinary panels:

- Cultural sciences and linguistics;
- Economics and business administration;
- Philosophy, historical sciences and religion;
- Psychology, pedagogics and educational sciences;
- Law and public administration;
Chapter 3: Conditions for applicants / SSH Open Competition L

The disciplinary panels have a broad composition. Your application should therefore be written in a way that is accessible and convincing to fellow researchers who are not necessarily experts in your specific discipline or field. Please decide well in advance if your application fits within one of the abovementioned panels. After submission, your choice is final and it will no longer be possible to have the application assessed within another domain or panel. If you have doubts about which domain/panel would be most appropriate, for example, because your application has a (partly) domain/panel-overarching character, then you should get in touch with one of the contact persons from the programme well before the deadline. They can advise you about which domain/panel can best deal with your application. Please note that the final choice is yours.

For advice, please contact NWO via sgwoc@nwo.nl (see further contact details in chapter 6).

3.4 Conditions for submission

3.4.1 Formal conditions for submission

NWO will assess your application against the conditions listed below. Your application will only be admitted to the assessment procedure if it meets these conditions. After submitting your application, NWO requests you to be available to implement any possible administrative corrections so that you can (still) meet the conditions for submission. These conditions are:

- the main applicant and co-applicant(s) meet the conditions stated in Section 3.1;
- the application complies with the DORA guidelines as described in Section 4.1;
- the application form is, after a possible request to make additions or changes, complete and filled out according to the instructions;
- the application is submitted via the main applicant’s ISAAC account;
- the application is received before the deadline;
- the application is written in English;
- the application budget is drawn up in accordance with the conditions for this Call for proposals (budget form only to be submitted in the full proposal phase);
- the proposed project has a duration of at least one year and at most six years;
- all of the required annexes are, after a possible request to make additions or changes, complete and filled out according to the instructions.

3.5 Conditions on granting

The NWO Grant Rules 2017 and the Agreement on the Payment of Costs for Scientific Research are applicable to all applications.

3.5.1 Compliance with the National Knowledge Security Guidelines

World-class science can benefit from international cooperation. The National Knowledge Security Guidelines (hereafter: the Guidelines) helps knowledge institutions to ensure that international cooperation can take place securely. Knowledge security concerns the undesirable transfer of sensitive knowledge and technology that compromises national security; the covert influence of state actors on education and research, which jeopardises academic freedom and social safety; and ethical issues that may arise in cooperation with countries that do not respect fundamental rights.

---

3 In this panel, applications within the fields of communication sciences, cultural anthropology, demography, environmental sciences, geography, industrial design, planning and sociology may be submitted. Other social sciences are divided between the other panels.
Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their project complies and will continue to comply with the Guidelines. By submitting an application, the applicant commits to the recommendations stipulated in these Guidelines. In the event of a suspected breach of the Guidelines in an application submitted to NWO for project funding, or in a project funded by NWO, NWO may ask the applicant to provide a risk assessment demonstrating that the recommendations in the Guidelines have been taken into consideration. If the applicant fails to comply with NWO’s request, or if the risk assessment is in apparent breach of the Guidelines, this may affect NWO’s grant award or decision-making process. NWO may also include further conditions in the award letter if appropriate.

The National Knowledge Security Guidelines can be found on the central government website at: Home | National Contact Point for Knowledge Security (loketkennisveiligheid.nl).

3.5.2 Data management

The results of scientific research must be replicable, verifiable and falsifiable. In the digital age, this means that, in addition to publications, research data must also be publicly accessible insofar as this is possible. NWO expects that research data resulting from NWO-funded projects will be made publicly available, as much as possible, for reuse by other researchers. “As open as possible, as closed as necessary” is the applicable principle in this respect. Researchers are at least expected to make the data and/or non-numerical results that underlie the conclusions of work published within the project publicly available at the same time as the work’s publication. Any costs incurred for this can be included in the project budget. Researchers should explain how data emerging from the project will be dealt with based on the data management section in the proposal and the data management plan that is drawn up after funding is awarded.

Data management Section

The data management section is part of the proposal. Researchers are asked before the start of the research to consider how the data collected will be ordered and categorised so that this can be made publicly available. Measures will often already need to be taken, during the creation of data and analysis of the data, to make its later storage and dissemination possible. If it is not possible to make all data from the project publicly available, for example due to reasons of privacy, ethics or valorisation, then the applicant is obliged to list the reasons for this in the data management section.

The data management section in the proposal is not evaluated and will therefore not be weighed in the decision whether to award funding. However, both the referees and the committee can issue advice with respect to the data management section.

3.5.3 Scientific integrity

In accordance with the NWO Grant Rules 2017, the project that NWO funds must be carried out in accordance with the nationally and internationally accepted standards for scientific conduct as stated in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2018). By submitting the proposal, the applicant commits to this code. In the case of a (possible) violation of these standards during a project funded by NWO, the applicant should immediately inform NWO of this and should submit all relevant documents to NWO. More information about the code of conduct and the policy regarding research integrity can be found on the website: Scientific integrity | NWO.

3.5.4 Ethical statement or licence

The applicant is responsible for determining whether an ethical statement or licence is needed for the realisation of the proposed project. The applicant should ensure that this is obtained from the relevant institution or ethics committee on time. If the project is awarded funding, then the grant is issued under the condition that the necessary ethical statement or licence is obtained before the latest start date for the project. The project cannot start until NWO has received a copy of the ethical statement or licence.
3.5.5 Nagoya Protocol

The Nagoya Protocol ensures an honest and reasonable distribution of benefits emerging from the use of genetic resources (Access and Benefit Sharing; ABS). Researchers who make use of genetic sources from the Netherlands or abroad for their research should familiarise themselves with the Nagoya Protocol (ABS Focal Point - ABS Focal Point). NWO assumes that researchers will take all necessary actions with respect to the Nagoya Protocol.

3.5.6 Co-funding

Co-funding is possible but not mandatory for applications in this call for proposals. In case of co-funding, the funding requested from NWO must always amount to at least 50% of the total project budget.

In the event of a contribution by the research institution and/or a third party, together with the application, a statement of co-funding, signed by an authorised representative of the co-funding party, must be submitted. It is important that this party explicitly specifies and promises the size of their contribution in this form. The co-funding is collected through the organisation of the applicant/project leader. Co-funding statements are unconditional and do not contain any resolutive provisions. A mandatory format for the co-financing statement can be found on the financing page of this instrument. Co-funding statements are not forwarded to, or reviewed by, committee members.

The following are permitted as in-kind co-funding:

The use of personnel and material contributions is permitted on the condition that these are capitalised and are fully part of the project. Services and know-how may not already exist or be available to the applicant. In-kind contributions are only accepted under the condition that the part contributed by the co-funder is an integral part of the work plan and can be made visible as an identifiable effort.

Determining the value of in-kind co-funding:

- The use of personnel is valued on the basis of hours x rate, whereby the hourly rate is based on the actual salary costs (incl. a premium for social benefits and employer costs). Furthermore, 1400 hours is taken as the standard number of productive hours per year for the calculation of the hourly rate. This hourly rate may be no more than 125 euros per hour;
- The value for material in-kind contributions is determined on the basis of the cost price of consumables. The value of investments/equipment is determined based on standard depreciation costs bearing in mind the intensity of use and any existing depreciations according to applicable reporting principles;
- For in-kind contributions in the form of services or know-how (knowledge, software, access to databases or cell lines) the economic value must be established and only the actual costs that can be directly attributed to the project may be counted as co-funding. This is always without a profit margin.

Co-funders should justify the structure and size of the in-kind contributions provided (including hourly rates) in the declaration co-funding. NWO can request substantiation and documented evidence of the rates used and can also request their adjustment.

The following may not be contributed as co-funding (both in cash and in kind):

- funding awarded by NWO;
- discounts on commercial rates, e.g. on materials, equipment and services;
- costs related to overheads, supervision and consultancy;
- costs of services that are conditional. The co-funding provided may not be subject to any conditions. The provision of the co-funding does not depend on whether a certain stage in the research plan is achieved (e.g. go/no-go moment);
- costs that are not reimbursed according to the call for proposals.

---

4 Funding awarded by NWO is understood to be funding obtained through a proposal submitted to NWO that is granted funding. In this regard it does not matter from which programme this funding was obtained or who the recipient of the funding is.
— costs of equipment if one of the (main) objectives of the proposal is the improvement or creation of added value for this equipment.

**Accounting for co-funding**

The main applicant reports to NWO about the co-funding that he or she has received from a co-funder. The main applicant provides accountability in accordance with the NWO Grant Rules 2017 on an annual basis. If a co-funder fails to partly or entirely fulfil its obligations to the main applicant and/or NWO, then this can have consequences for the grant settlement (see Article 3.4.5 of the NWO Grant Rules 2017).
4 Assessment procedure

This chapter first describes the assessment according to the DORA principles (Section 4.1) and the course of the assessment procedure (Section 4.2). Second, it states the criteria that the assessment committee will use to assess your application (Section 4.3).

The NWO Code for Dealing with Personal Interests applies to all persons and NWO employees involved in the assessment and/or decision-taking process (Code for Dealing with Personal Interests | NWO).

NWO strives to achieve an inclusive culture in which there is no place for conscious or unconscious barriers due to cultural, ethnic or religious background, gender, sexual orientation, health or age (Diversity and inclusion | NWO). NWO encourages referees and members of an assessment committee to be actively aware of implicit associations and to try to minimise these. NWO will provide them with information about concrete ways of improving the assessment of an application.

4.1 The San Francisco Declaration (DORA)

NWO is a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). DORA is a worldwide initiative that aims to improve the way research and researchers are assessed. DORA contains recommendations for research funders, research institutions, scientific journals and other parties.

DORA aims to reduce the uncritical use of bibliometric indicators and obviate unconscious bias in the assessment of research and researchers. DORA’s overarching philosophy is that research should be evaluated on its own merits rather than on the basis of surrogate measures, such as the journal in which the research is published.

When assessing the scientific track record of applicants, NWO makes use of a broad definition of scientific output.

NWO requests committee members and referees not to rely on indicators such as the Journal Impact Factor or the h-index when assessing applications. Applicants are not allowed to mention these in their applications. You are, however, allowed to list other scientific products besides publications, such as datasets, patents, software and code, et cetera.

For more information on how NWO is implementing the principles of DORA, see DORA | NWO.

4.2 Procedure

The application procedure consists of the following steps:
- submission of the pre-proposal;
- admissibility of the pre-proposal;
- assessment of the pre-proposal;
- decision-making;
- submission of the proposal;
- admissibility of the proposal;
- peer review by referees;
- rebuttal;
- preliminary advice assessment committee;
- assessment committee meeting;
- decision-making.
An external, independent assessment committee will be installed for this Call for proposals, consisting of representatives from science with knowledge of the field. The committee will consist of six disciplinary panels: Cultural sciences and Linguistics; Economics and Business Administration; Philosophy, Historical sciences and Religion; Psychology, Pedagogics and Educational sciences; Law and Public administration; and Social Sciences. The disciplinary panels have a broad composition. The task of the assessment committee is to assess the applications and the relevant documents submitted, in conjunction with each other and on each application’s own merit, on the basis of the selection criteria given in this Call for proposals.

4.2.1 Submission of the pre-proposal

The submission of a pre-proposal is compulsory for this Call for proposals. The pre-proposal is a concise proposal. For the pre-proposal submission, a standard form is available on the funding page of this Call for proposals on the NWO website. The pre-proposal form completed by you must have been received before the deadline via ISAAC (see paragraph 1.3). After submitting the pre-proposal, the main applicant will receive a confirmation of receipt.

4.2.2 Admissibility of the pre-proposal

As soon as possible after you have submitted your pre-proposal, you will hear from NWO whether or not it will be taken into consideration. NWO will determine this based on several administrative-technical criteria (see the formal conditions for submission, Section 3.4). NWO can only take your pre-proposal into consideration if it meets these conditions. Please bear in mind that within two weeks after the submission deadline, NWO may approach you with any possible administrative corrections that need to be made so that your pre-proposal can (still) meet the conditions for submission. You will be given one opportunity to make the corrections, and you will be given five working days to do this.

4.2.3 Assessment of the pre-proposal

Per panel, the committee will assess and rank the pre-proposals based on the criteria stated in Section 4.3.1. If the provisional assessment by the committee of a pre-proposal results in a negative advice, the applicants concerned will be informed in November 2023, after which they will have the opportunity to respond to this advice. The committee will include any reactions submitted in its final recommendation to the Social Sciences and Humanities Domain Board. Please note that referees will not be consulted in this phase.

Based on the advice of the selection committee, the Domain Board will decide which pre-proposals will be invited to submit a full proposal. The total number of proposals allowed into the assessment phase with referees will be (about) twice the number that can ultimately be awarded funding.

4.2.4 Decision-making

The assessment results in a decision whether or not to further elaborate the pre-proposal. Applicants will receive the final result of the pre-proposal phase in the second half of December 2023. The full proposal should be an elaboration of the assessed pre-proposal; significant deviations in the research design are therefore not permitted.

---

5 In this panel, applications within the fields of communication sciences, cultural anthropology, demography, environmental sciences, geography, industrial design, planning and sociology may be submitted. Other social sciences are divided between the other panels.
4.2.5 Submission of a proposal

For the submission of the proposal, a standard application and budget form is available on the funding page of this Call for proposals on the NWO website. When you write your proposal, you must adhere to the questions stated on these forms and the procedure given in the explanatory notes. You must also adhere to the conditions for the maximum number of words and pages. Your complete application and budget form must have been received before the deadline via ISAAC (see paragraph 1.3). After this deadline, you can no longer submit a proposal. After submitting the proposal, the main applicant will receive a confirmation of receipt.

4.2.6 Admissibility of the proposal

As soon as possible after you have submitted your proposal, you will hear from NWO whether or not your proposal will be taken into consideration. NWO will determine this based on several administrative-technical criteria (see the formal conditions for submission, Section 3.4). NWO can only take your proposal into consideration if it meets these conditions. Please bear in mind that within two weeks after the submission deadline, NWO may approach you with any possible administrative corrections that need to be made so that your proposal can (still) meet the conditions for submission. You will be given one opportunity to make the corrections, and you will be given five working days to do this.

4.2.7 Peer review by referees

Before the assessment committee considers your proposal, NWO will request input from at least two external referees. These are independent advisers who are expert in the subject of the proposal. They will assess the proposal based on the assessment criteria stated in the Call for proposals (Section 4.3).

A maximum of three non-referees can be registered. Applicants can register these non-referees in ISAAC when submitting the pre-proposal. NWO will not approach these non-referees to assess the proposal as external referees.

4.2.8 Rebuttal

The main applicant subsequently receives the anonymised referee reports. You then have the opportunity to formulate a rebuttal. You will be given five working days to submit your rebuttal via ISAAC. If you decide to withdraw the proposal, then you should do this as quickly as possible by sending an email stating this to the office and withdrawing the proposal in ISAAC. If NWO receives your rebuttal after the deadline, then it will not be included in the rest of the procedure.

4.2.9 Preliminary advice assessment committee

After this, your proposal, the referees’ reports and your rebuttal will be submitted for comments to several members of the assessment committee (the pre-advisers). The pre-advisers will provide a written substantive and reasoned response to the proposal. They will formulate these comments based on the substantive assessment criteria (see Section 4.3.1) and will give the proposal a numerical score per assessment criterion. For this, the NWO score table will be used (on a scale of 1 to 9, where “1” is excellent and “9” unsatisfactory).

4.2.10 Meeting of the assessment committee

The committee will make its own assessment based on the available material. The referees’ reports and pre-advises will to a large extent ‘guide’ the final assessment but will not be blindly accepted by the committee without question. The committee will consider and compare the arguments of the referees and pre-advisers (also among each other) and examine whether the rebuttal contains a well-formulated response to the critical comments from the referees' reports. Furthermore, the committee, unlike the referees, assesses the quality of all proposals and rebuttals submitted. Therefore, the committee may differ from the referees in their assessment.
Following the discussion, the committee draws up a written recommendation addressed to the Social Sciences and Humanities Domain Board about the quality and ranking of the proposals. This recommendation is based on the assessment criteria. The proposal must receive an overall qualification of at least “very good” to be eligible for funding. The proposal must also receive at least the qualification “good” for each of the individual assessment criteria. For more information about the qualifications, see Applying for funding, how does it work? | NWO.

If, after the discussion of the full proposals, two or more of the full proposals cannot be distinguished from each other based on their weighted total score, then there is an ex aequo situation (see the paragraph about ex aequo).

4.2.11 Ex aequo

NWO understands ex aequo to be a situation in which two or more proposals based on their weighted score cannot be distinguished from each other. An ex aequo situation is relevant with respect to the borders of the available budget or the selection borders. The existence of an ex aequo situation is determined as follows. The starting point is the ranking drawn up by the assessment committee, with the final scores rounded down to two decimal points. The reference score is the score of the lowest-ranked proposal within the borders of the available budget or the selection borders. All proposals with a score that is within 0.05 or less of the reference score will be considered. In this way, the proposals that are equal within a score of 0.1 will be selected. If an ex aequo situation occurs at the borders of available budget or the selection borders, then, in order to stimulate the number of females in science, the proposal from a female main applicant will end as the highest. If the ex aequo situation is not resolved with this, then the proposal with the highest score for the criterion ‘Research idea’ in the pre-proposal phase and the criterion ‘Research idea, design and impact’ in the full proposal phase will end highest. If the proposals subsequently still remain in a tie, the assessment committee, with the help of an (anonymous) majority vote, will determine the ranking (in accordance with Article 2.2.7, third paragraph, sub a, part iv of the NWO Grant Rules 2017). If this vote provides no resolution either, or it is not desirable to vote, the ex aequo situation will be sent on to the decision-making body.

4.2.12 Decision-making

Finally, the Social Sciences and Humanities Domain Board will assess the procedure followed and the advice from the assessment committee. It will subsequently determine the final qualifications and take a decision about awarding or rejecting the proposals.

4.2.13 Timetable

Below, you will find the timetable for this Call for proposals. During the current procedure, NWO might find it necessary to make further changes to the timetable for this Call for proposals. You will be informed about this in time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-proposals</th>
<th>Deadline pre-proposals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 5, 2023</td>
<td>before 14.00.00 CEST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2023</td>
<td>Committee assesses pre-proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2023</td>
<td>Applicants with a negative preliminary advice have the right to reply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of December 2023</td>
<td>Applicants receive decision about whether or not to elaborate the pre-proposal into a full proposal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposals</th>
<th>Deadline full proposals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 13, 2024</td>
<td>before 14.00.00 CET</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 Criteria

4.3.1 Substantive assessment criteria

The pre-proposals are substantially assessed on the basis of the following two criteria:

1. Research idea (60%)
   - Clarity of the research proposal;
   - Quality, urgency and innovative character of the theme, approach and methodology.

2. Appropriateness of the research team (40%)
   - Quality of the researchers;
   - Suitability of the research team for the proposed research.

Criterion 1 accounts for 60% of the overall assessment and criterion 2 for 40%.

Full proposals are substantially assessed on the basis of the following two criteria:

1. Research idea, design and impact (80%)
   - Clarity of the research proposal;
   - Scientific and/or societal impact;
   - Scientifically innovative and/or groundbreaking elements of the research proposal/the investment;
   - Quality and suitability of the proposed methodology;
   - Quality and feasibility of the research design and work plan.

2. Team, embedding and budget (20%)
   - Quality of the researchers;
   - Suitability of the research team for the proposed research;
   - Scientific embedding of the research;
   - Division of tasks and roles within the research team.

Criterion 1 accounts for 80% of the overall assessment and criterion 2 for 20%.

Explanation scientific and societal impact

Applicants can choose to focus in their research project on scientific impact, societal impact, or a spread across both forms of impact.

Scientific impact includes, among others:
- potential and relevance of research results for one’s own discipline and related discipline(s);
- potential and relevance of the research results for the wider scientific field.

Societal impact includes, among others:
- the added value of the project for societal impact;
- potential for societal impact in the short and long term;
- a vision of the way(s) in which the proposed research could lead to societal impact.
In addition to the above, the assessment committee, as part of this aspect of criterion 1, will also weigh:

- the motivation for the focus on scientific impact and/or societal impact;
- If the focus is primarily on scientific impact: how proportional attention is given during the course of the project to increasing (unforeseen) opportunities for social impact;
- If the focus is primarily on societal impact: how proportional attention is given during the course of the project to increasing (unforeseen) opportunities for scientific impact.

It is possible to achieve a good evaluation for this criterion if the focus of the proposal lies on scientific impact, societal impact, or a spread across both forms of impact. The assessment of this aspect is independent of the chosen focus; one form of impact is not better or worse than the other.
5 Obligations for grant recipients

This chapter details the various obligations that - in addition to the conditions stated in Section 3.5 - apply after funds have been awarded.

5.1.1 Data management

After a proposal has been awarded funding, the researcher should elaborate the data management section into a data management plan. For this, applicants can make use of the advice from the referees and committee. The applicant describes in the plan whether use will be made of existing data, whether new data will be collected or generated, and how the data will be made FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable. Before submission, the data management plan should be checked by a data steward or similar officer of the organisation where the project will be realised. The plan should be submitted to NWO via ISAAC within 4 months after the proposal has been awarded funding. NWO will check the plan as quickly as possible. Approval of the data management plan by NWO is a condition for disbursement of the funding. The plan can be adjusted during the research. More information about the data management protocol of NWO can be found at: Research data management | NWO.

5.1.2 Intellectual property

With respect to intellectual property (IP), the NWO IP policy applies. This can be found in Chapter 4 of the NWO Grant Rules 2017.

Applicants must carry out a project funded by NWO during the time that they work for the knowledge institution. If an applicant or a researcher funded by NWO is appointed by more than one employer, then the other employer should relinquish any possible IP rights that emerge from the project of the applicant.

5.1.3 Socially responsible licensing

The knowledge that emerges from the project could be suitable for use in society. When agreements about licensing and/or the transfer of research results developed under this Call for proposals are made, due consideration should be given to the ten principles for socially responsible licensing, as stated in the NFU factsheet "19.4511_Ten_principles_for_Socially_Responsible_Licensing_v19-12-2019.pdf (nfu.nl)".

5.1.4 Open Access

As a signatory to the Berlin Declaration (2003) and a member of cOAlition S (2018), NWO is committed to making the results of the research it funds openly accessible via the internet (Open Access). By doing this, NWO gives substance to the ambitions of the Dutch government to make all publicly funded research available in Open Access form. Scientific publications arising from projects awarded on the basis of this Call for proposals must therefore be made available in Open Access form in accordance with the Open Access Policy.

Scientific articles

Scientific articles must be made available in Open Access form immediately at the time of publication (without embargo) via one of the following routes:

- publication in a fully Open Access journal or platform registered in the DOAJ;
- publication in a subscription journal and the immediate deposition of at least the author accepted manuscript of the article in an Open Access repository registered in Open DOAR;
- publication in a journal for which a transformative Open Access agreement exists between UNL and a publisher. For further information, see Open Access.
Books
Different requirements apply to scholarly books, book chapters and edited collections. See the Open Access Policy Framework at Open Science | NWO.

CC BY licence
To ensure the widest possible dissemination of publications, at least a Creative Commons (CC BY) licence must be applied. Alternatively – in case of substantial interest – the author may request to publish under a CC BY-ND licence. For books, book chapters and collected volumes, all CC BY licence options are allowed.

Costs
Costs for publication in fully Open Access journals can be budgeted in the application using the budget module for “material costs”. Costs for publications in hybrid journals are not eligible for reimbursement by NWO. For Open Access books, a separate NWO Open Access Books Fund is available.

For more detailed information about NWO’s Open Access policy, see Open Science | NWO.
6 Contact and other information

6.1 Contact

6.1.1 Specific questions

For specific questions about this Call for proposals, please contact:
Maudy Lohaus, phone +31 70 349 4215, round secretary, sgwoc@nwo.nl.
Eelco van Dongen, phone +31 70 349 4005, round secretary, sgwoc@nwo.nl.

6.1.2 Technical questions about the web application ISAAC

For technical questions about the use of ISAAC, please contact the ISAAC helpdesk. Please read the manual first before consulting the helpdesk. The ISAAC helpdesk can be contacted from Monday to Friday between 10:00 and 17:00 hours on +31 70 34 40 600. However, you can also submit your question by email to isaac.helpdesk@nwo.nl. You will then receive an answer within two working days.

6.2 Other information

NWO processes data from applicants received in the context of this Call in accordance with the NWO Privacy Statement, Privacy Statement | NWO.

NWO might approach applicants for an evaluation of the procedure and/or research programme.
7 Annexe(s):

7.1 Explanation of budget modules

It is possible to apply for the funding of the salary costs of personnel who make a substantial contribution to the research. Funding of these salary costs depends on the type of appointment and the organisation where the personnel are/ will be appointed.

- For university appointments, the salary costs are funded in accordance with the UNL salary tables applicable at the moment the grant is awarded (Salary tables | NWO).
- For university medical centres, the salary costs are funded in accordance with the NFU salary tables applicable at the moment the grant is awarded (Salary tables | NWO).
- For personnel from universities of applied sciences, educational institutions and other organisations, salary costs will be funded based on the collective labour agreement pay scale of the employee concerned in accordance with the applicable rate at the time of awarding the grant as taken from Table 2.2, column ‘Hourly rate productive hours, excl. Dutch VAT’ from the Handleiding Overheidstarieven [HOT- Manual Dutch Government Rates] (Salary tables | NWO).
- For the Caribbean Netherlands, the Dutch government employs civil servants on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba under different conditions than in the European part of the Netherlands Employment terms and conditions | Working at the Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland | Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland (rijksdienstcn.com).

NWO will apply a mandatory one-off indexing of the salary costs with respect to:

- UNL rates: for proposals submitted before 1 July and that are awarded funding after 1 July;
- NFU rates: for proposals submitted before 1 August that are awarded funding after 1 August;
- HOT rates: for proposals submitted before 1 January that are awarded funding after 1 January.

The mandatory one-off indexing has no influence on the level of the grant ceiling or on the maximum amount of the grant awarded per proposal. The level of the grant ceiling and the maximum amount of the grant awarded will remain unchanged during the assessment procedure. The mandatory one-off indexing will be applied after the decision-taking about awarding or rejecting proposals has been completed.

If co-funding is required or permitted then the one-off mandatory indexing will have no consequences for the co-funding requirement or the IP rights that can emerge from the co-funding.

The rates for all budget modules are incorporated in the budget template that accompanies the application form. For the budget modules “PhD student”, “EngD” and “Postdoc”, a one-off individual bench fee of €5,000 is added on top of the salary costs to encourage the scientific career of the project employee funded by NWO. Remunerations for PhD scholarship students (‘bursalen’) at a Dutch university are not eligible for funding from NWO. The available budget modules are explained below.

PhD student (including MD-PhD student)

A PhD student is appointed for 1.0 FTE for a duration of 48 months. The equivalent of 48 full-time months, for example an appointment of 60 months for 0.8 FTE, is also possible. If a different duration of appointment is considered necessary for the realisation of the proposed research, then the standard time can be deviated from as long as this is properly justified. However, the duration of appointment must always be at least 48 months.

---

6 1 July, 1 August and 1 January are the dates on which the relevant rates are generally adjusted, in the case of indexation the date of actual annual adjustment will be taken into account.
Engeneering Doctorate degree (EngD)

Funding for the appointment of a EngD can only be applied for if funding for a PhD student or postdoc is also applied for.

The appointment for a EngD position is a maximum of 1.0 FTE for 24 months. The EngD trainee is employed by the institution applying for funding and can realise activities that are part of the research at an industrial partner for a specified time. If the research proposal is awarded funding, then an agreement must be concluded with the industrial partner(s) concerned. The underlying “Technological Designer Programme” must be described in the proposal.

Postdoc

The size and duration of the postdoc appointment is at least 6 full months and at most 48 full-time months. The size and duration of the appointment is at the applicant’s discretion, but the appointment is always for at least 0.5 FTE or for a duration of at least 12 months. The product of FTE x duration of appointment should always be a minimum of 6 full-time months.

The material budget is available to cover the costs of a more limited appointment of a postdoc.

Non-scientific staff (NSS) at universities

Funding for the appointment of NSS required to realise the research project can only be applied for if funding for a PhD student or postdoc is also applied for. A maximum of €100,000 can be requested for NSS. This includes personnel such as student assistants, programmers, technical assistants or analysts. Depending on the level of the position, the appropriate salary table for NSS at MBO, HBO or university level applies.

The size of the appointment is at least 6 full-time months and at most 48 full-time months. The size and duration of the appointment is at the applicant’s discretion, but the appointment is always for at least 0.5 FTE or for a duration of at least 12 months. The product of FTE x duration of appointment should always be a minimum of 6 full-time months.

The material budget is available to cover the costs of a more limited appointment of NSS.

Other Scientific personnel (OSS) at universities

Budget for OSS such as AIOS (doctor training to be a specialist), ANIOS (doctor not training to be a specialist), scientific programmers or employees with a master’s degree can only be applied for if funding for a PhD student or postdoc is also applied for. For this category, a maximum of €100,000 can be applied for.

The size of the appointment is at least 6 full-time months and at most 48 full-time months. The size and duration of the appointment is at the applicant’s discretion, but the appointment is always for at least 0.5 FTE or for a duration of at least 12 months. The product of FTE x duration of appointment should always be a minimum of 6 full-time months.

Research leave for applicants

With this budget module, funding can be requested for the costs of the research leave of the main and/or co-applicant(s). The employer of the applicant(s) can use this to cover the costs of relinquishing him or her from educational, supervisory, administrative or management tasks (not research tasks).

The time that is released through the research leave grant can only be used by the applicant(s) for activities in the context of the project. The proposal must describe which activities in the context of the project the applicant(s) will carry out in the time relinquished.

A replacement can be requested for a maximum of 10% of the budget requested from NWO. NWO finances the replacement on the basis of the salary tables applicable at the time the grant is awarded (www.nwo.nl/salaristabellen) for a senior academic staff member (scale 11.0). (Salary tables | NWO).
Explanation of budget module Material

For each FTE scientific position (PhD student, postdoc, EngD) applied for, a maximum of €15,000 material budget can be applied for per year of the appointment. Material budget for smaller appointments can be applied for on a proportionate basis and will be made available by NWO accordingly. Per 0.2 FTE scientific employee applied for at a university of applied sciences, educational institution or other organisation (with a minimum appointment of 0.2 FTE for 12 months) a maximum of €15,000 in material budget can be applied for per year.

The applicant is responsible for distributing the total amount of material budget across the NWO-funded personnel positions. The material budget that can be applied for is specified according to the three categories below:

Project-related goods/services
- consumables (e.g. glassware, chemicals, cryogenic fluids, etc.);
- measurement and calculation time (e.g. access to supercomputer, etc.);
- costs for acquiring or using data collections (e.g. from Statistics Netherlands [CBS]), for which the total amount may not be more than €25,000 per proposal;
- access to large national and international facilities (e.g. cleanroom, synchrotron, etc.);
- work by third parties (e.g. laboratory analyses, data collection, citizen science, etc.);
- personnel costs for the appointment of a postdoc and/or non-scientific personnel for a smaller appointment size than those offered in the personnel budget modules.

Travel and accommodation costs for the personnel positions applied for
- travel and accommodation costs;
- conference attendance (maximum of two per year per scientific position applied for);
- fieldwork;
- work visit.

Implementation costs
- national symposium/conference/workshop organised by the project researchers;
- costs for Open Access publishing (solely in full gold Open Access journals, registered in the “Directory of Open Access Journals” [https://doaj.org/]);
- costs data management;
- costs involved in applying for licences (e.g. for animal experiments);
- audit costs (only for institutions that are not subject to the education accountants protocol of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science), maximum €5,000 per proposal; for projects with a duration of three years or less, a maximum of €2,500 per proposal applies.

Costs that cannot be applied for are:
- basic facilities within the institution (e.g. laptops, office furniture, etc.);
- maintenance and insurance costs.

If the maximum amount is not sufficient for realising the research, then this amount may be deviated from, if a clear justification is provided in the proposal.

Citizen science
Involving citizens (citizen science) can contribute to the quality of the research. With the help of citizens, data and insights can be acquired that would not otherwise be available for research. NWO also funds citizen science. Applicants can use the budget module “material, project-related goods/services, work by third parties” to request a remuneration for the involvement of citizens in projects. The budget module offers a possibility and is not a requirement. Applicants are free to decide whether it is worthwhile involving citizens in the project and what exactly they use this budget for (for example, reimbursement of expenses of citizens, skills training for citizens or technical devices for the participating citizen).
Explanation of budget module Investments (up to €150,000)

In this budget module, funding can be requested up to a maximum of €150,000 for investments in equipment, datasets and/or software (e.g. lasers, specialised computers or computer programs).

Explanation of budget module Investments (€150,000 to €500,000)

In this budget module, funding can be requested for project-related investments in scientifically innovative equipment and/or data collections of national and international importance. The costs for these project-related investments should be adequately specified and justified in the proposal. The minimum amount that can be applied for is €150,000. The maximum amount that can be applied for is €500,000.

The costs for investments should be adequately specified and motivated in the proposal. Funding can be requested for:

- costs for investments in scientific equipment;
- costs for investments in datasets;
- personnel costs for the setting up of databases and the initial digitisation of the bibliographical equipment, if these cannot be purchased;
- personnel costs for employees with essential technical expertise that is necessary in order to build or develop an investment.

If funding for personnel costs is applied for, then the need for these personnel costs must be justified. If the applicant does not have this expertise available, then it must be stated that this expertise needs to be procured with these costs. The internal procurement procedures and/or guidelines of the applicant are applicable.

Funding cannot be requested for:

- costs of infrastructure facilities that can be regarded as part of the usual infrastructure;
- data collections and any associated software and bibliographies that are already available in other ways;
- other personnel costs, including personnel costs required to operate and conduct research with the facility;
- costs for maintenance and use of the equipment on a project. The costs for researchers using equipment for a project can be applied for via the material budget.

Explanation of budget module Knowledge utilisation

The aim of this budget module is to facilitate the use of the knowledge that emerges from the research. The budget applied for may not exceed €25,000.

As knowledge utilisation takes many different forms in different scientific fields, the applicant needs to specify the required costs, e.g. costs of producing a teaching package, conducting a feasibility study into potential applications, or filing a patent application.

The budget applied for should be adequately specified in the proposal.

Explanation of budget module Internationalisation

The budget for internationalisation is intended to encourage international collaboration. The budget applied for may not exceed €25,000. The amount requested must be specified. If the maximum amount is not sufficient for realising the research, then it may be deviated from if an adequate justification is provided in the proposal.

Funding can be requested for:

- travel and accommodation costs in so far as these concern direct research costs emerging from the international collaboration and additional costs for internationalisation that cannot be covered in another manner, for example from the bench fee;

---

In this budget module, the definition for “knowledge transfer” as used by the European Commission in the Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (PbEU, 2014, C198) applies.
– travel and accommodation costs for foreign guest researchers;
– costs for organising international workshops/symposia/scientific meetings.

**Explanation of the budget module Money follows Cooperation (MfC)**

The module Money follows Cooperation provides the possibility of realising a part of the project at a publicly funded knowledge institution outside of the Netherlands. The applicant must convincingly argue how the researcher from the foreign knowledge institution will contribute specific expertise to the research project that is not available in the Netherlands at the level necessary for the project.

This condition does not apply if NWO has concluded a bilateral agreement concerning Money follows Cooperation with the national research council of the country where the foreign knowledge institution is located. At [Money Follows Cooperation | NWO](https://www.nwo.nl) you will find an overview of research councils that signed a bilateral MfC agreement with NWO.

The budget applied for within this module must be less than 50% of the total budget applied for.

The co-applicant from the participating foreign knowledge institution must meet the conditions set for co-applicants in Section 3.1 of this Call for proposals, with the exception of the condition that the co-applicant must be employed in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The rates for the personnel costs of researchers at the foreign knowledge institution are calculated on the basis of the NWO Country Correction Coefficients (CCC). The table can be found at [Money Follows Cooperation | NWO](https://www.nwo.nl).

The main applicant receives the grant and is responsible for transferring the amount to the foreign knowledge institution and for providing accountability for the MfC part of the grant. The MfC part will be part of the overall financial accountability of the project. The exchange rate risk lies with the applicants. Therefore, gains or losses due to the exchange rate are not eligible for funding. The applicant is responsible for:

– the financial accountability for all costs in both euros and the local currency, for which the exchange rate used must be visible;
– a reasonable determination of the size of the exchange rate. If requested by NWO, the applicant must always be able to provide a description of this reasonable determination.

If more than €125,000 is requested within this module, then the final financial statement must be accompanied by an audit report.

NWO will not award any funding to co-applicants in countries that fall under national or international sanction legislation and rules. The EU Sanctions Map ([EU Sanctions Map](https://eu-sanctions-map.com)) is guiding in this respect.