NGF AiNed Fellowship Grants
Call for proposals
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Chapter 1: Introduction / NGF AiNed Fellowship Grants

1 Introduction

In this Call for proposals information is provided about the application procedure for the “NGF AiNed Fellowship Grants” funding round. This Call for proposals falls under the responsibility of the Dutch Research Council (NWO). Funding is provided by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy in the framework of the National Growth Fund.

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

NWO and the National Growth Fund

With the National Growth Fund, the government invests €20 billion over the next 5 years in projects that ensure long-term economic growth. The National Growth Fund invests amongst others in Research, Development and Innovation projects. In some of these projects, NWO is one of the executive organisations, for example in organising grant programs for scientific research or scientific talent.

NGF AiNed programme

The NGF AiNed programme facilitates the development and application of artificial intelligence (AI) in Dutch industry and government bodies. It propels the Netherlands into the leading group of AI countries and makes a major contribution to its international competitive position. AiNed also tackles bottlenecks in the area of innovation, knowledge base, the labour market, society and sharing data. In the first phase of the programme, public-private investments will therefore be made in four sub-programmes:

1. Knowledge and innovation base
2. People and skills
3. Application of AI systems
4. Collaboration in the AI ecosystem

The NGF AiNed Fellowship Grants programme falls under sub-programme 1. It aims to strengthen the knowledge base of fundamental and applied AI research and satisfy the high demand for AI talent. This talent will also contribute to the national AI ecosystem.

1.2 Available budget

The available budget for this Call for proposals is €19,943,524. It is expected that a maximum of 23 proposals will be awarded funding within this Call for proposals.

On the programme page, NWO will keep an up-to-date list of how many proposals have already been awarded funding, which AI talents this concerns and how much of the call budget is still available. See www.nwo.nl/AiNedFellowship.

1.3 Submission deadline(s)

Proposals can be submitted from 5 September 2022 until 15 December 2023 at 14:00:00 CET. If the grant ceiling is reached before 15 December 2023, no more proposals will be considered and the Call for proposals will be closed. PLEASE NOTE: Grant proposals that are complete will be taken into consideration in the order that these have been received. A grant application is complete if it satisfies the conditions stated in Section 3.4.1.

Please note: the submission of proposals is subject to conditions. See Sections 3.1, 3.4 and 3.5.
2 Aim

This chapter describes the aim of the programme.

2.1 Aim of the programme

This programme focuses on knowledge and talent development and strengthening the national AI ecosystem (see Section 7.2).

The aim of the NGF AiNed Fellowship Grants programme is to attract internationally much sought after AI talent to Dutch academic research organisations. Besides carrying out their own research, these AI talents will contribute to the national AI ecosystem.

The Dutch AI research agenda AIREA-NL\(^1\) constitutes the substantive framework of the programme. This agenda covers the broad spectrum of AI research, from technology to the social sciences and humanities.

The research carried out by AI talents should connect with the national AI research agenda. Besides developing their own research, AI talents also contribute to the national AI ecosystem with a plan for participation in (a selection of) AI hubs, AiNed Innovation labs, AI education outside of the own organisation and a contribution to positive societal effects through a human-centric approach (as detailed in Chapter 7).

This programme is geared towards Dutch academic research organisations that, in line with their strategy, want to invest (see Section 3.5.1) in attracting AI talent to the position of (tenure track) assistant professor, associate professor or full professor. The AI talent will be selected by the research organisation. This programme enables research organisations to offer this AI talent a more attractive starting package. After the start of the project, the research organisation will subsequently make an effort to find additional external funding.

Besides, the programme seeks to contribute to an increasingly diverse Dutch AI research community. The target of this programme is to award at least 30% of the grants to female AI talents, and at least 30% of the grants to male AI talents.

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\(^1\) https://www.nwo.nl/sites/nwo/files/documents/AIREA-NL%20AI%20Research%20Agenda%20for%20the%20Netherlands.pdf
Chapter 3: Conditions for applicants

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

Proposals can be submitted by the Executive Boards of universities located in the Netherlands, the Foundation Board of the Institutes Organisation of NWO (NWO-I), and the board of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

Only one of these boards can function as the official secretary of a proposal. The technical submission in the electronic submission system of NWO should be made by the main applicant.

Extra conditions for submission:
- A new proposal can only be submitted by the concerned board after a decision has been taken about a pending proposal.
- A board may acquire a maximum of three grants from this call. Proposals from a board to which three grants have already been awarded, will not be taken into consideration.
- If a board has acquired the first grant for a female AI talent, then it may only submit a grant for a male AI talent for a subsequent proposal, and vice versa. After a board has acquired a grant for one female and one male AI talent, then the board may apply for a grant for either a female or male AI talent in a third proposal.
- If a proposal for an AI talent is rejected, then a board may submit another proposal for this same AI talent no more than once and this must, of course, satisfy all conditions for admission at that moment, including these extra conditions. The date and time of the submission of the resubmission that satisfies the conditions for submission, will determine the order in which proposals will be considered.

A board acts as the official secretary. University medical centres must therefore submit via the Executive Board from which they receive the direct government funding. The extra conditions for submission are applicable to this board (including any possible associated university medical centre). The official secretary should guarantee adequate supervision by the proposed AI talent of all persons working on the project for whom funding is applied for. The technical submission in the electronic submission system of NWO should be made by the main applicant. The main applicant submits the proposal on behalf of the proposed AI talent.

Full, associate and assistant professors and other researchers with a comparable position* may submit an application if
3) They are a dean or – if the structure of the institution does not have deans – institute director or a person of a comparable administrative responsibility for the research in their own organisation unit and
4) 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 Netherlands;
- university medical centres;
- institutes affiliated to the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) or NWO.

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* Erasmus University Rotterdam; Open Universiteit; Radboud University; University of Groningen; Tilburg University; TU Delft; Eindhoven University of Technology; Leiden University; Maastricht University; University of Twente; Utrecht University; University of Amsterdam; Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam; Wageningen University & Research.
*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.

**Nomination AI talent**

Researchers can be nominated as AI talent if a contract at the official secretary for a scientific position** of at least 0.6 fte for the entire duration of the project

a. has been offered to them, or

b. is accepted by them and this contract started after 1 January 2022.

Excluded from being nominated as AI talent are researchers who, in a period of 12 months before the submission date, already had a scientific position** at one of the institutions stated in Section 3.1 other than that of the official secretary. This exclusion does not apply to postdocs.

Extra conditions for the nomination of AI talent:

- a proposal has no co-applicant(s);
- a maximum of one AI talent may be nominated per proposal;
- for each AI talent, a maximum of one grant can be awarded.

**A scientific position is understood to be a position as a full professor, associate professor or assistant professor (whether or not with a tenure track appointment) or a scientific position other than a postdoc at a research institute, with a salary scale comparable to that of a professor, associate professor or assistant professor.

3.2 What can be applied for

In this Call for proposals, applicants can apply for the following:

- personnel costs for all PhD and/or postdoc positions of at least € 785,000 and at most a budget which equals the size of three PhD positions (that amounts to € 806,211 incl. bench fees as per the 2022 UNL rate);
- material costs and investments with a joint maximum of € 38,903.

The maximum duration of the proposed project is five 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 annexe 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>Max. 3 positions, according to UNL rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoc</td>
<td>according to UNL rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material costs</td>
<td>A maximum amount totalling € 38,903 for material costs and investments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 annexe(s);
- fill in the requested information online in ISAAC.
Compulsory annexe(s):
- budget (Excel), including the own contribution from the official secretary,
- signed submission letter from the highest administrative body of the official secretary (Executive Board of a university located in the Netherlands; Foundation Board NWO-I; KNAW board), in which the organisation of the main applicant commits to
  - the own investment consisting of an in-kind contribution by means of an appointment of the AI talent and also a budget for temporary scientific personnel (PhD, postdoc) which equals the budget for two PhDs and
  - the commitment to recruit extra temporary research personnel (see Section 3.5.1).

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.

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.

3.4 Conditions for submission

3.4.1 Formal conditions for submission

NWO assesses 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 official secretary, the main applicant and the AI talent meet the conditions stated in Section 3.1;
- the proposal satisfies the extra conditions for submission as stated in Section 3.1;
- the own investment of the official secretary satisfies the conditions stated in Section 3.5.1;
- 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 at or before the deadline set;
- the application is written in English;
- the application budget is drawn up in accordance with the conditions for this Call for proposals;
- the proposed project has a duration of at most five years;
3.4.2 Recruitment and selection procedures

The transparency and objectivity of the recruitment and selection procedures of the research organisations are particularly important for realising the aim of this programme, as they assess the quality of AI talent and select which AI talent the organisations want to nominate in this programme. AiNed shall request information from the submitting research organisations about the internal procedures that the organisations use to recruit and select AI talent for whom a grant application has been submitted. The applicant is aware that, upon submitting a proposal, AiNed will require the provision of this information. The information about the recruitment and selection procedures is useful for the design of an expected subsequent call within this programme.

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 Own investment by the official secretary

Proposals are awarded funding on the condition that the official secretary contributes an own investment. The own investment should consist of at least an in-kind contribution by means of appointing the AI talent and also a budget for temporary scientific personnel (PhD, postdoc) which is at least the size of two PhDs. In this instance, the AI talent has a say in the deployment of personnel and assumes responsibility for the day-to-day supervision. The official secretary commits to this investment in the letter of submission. This personnel will be registered with NWO, and personnel reports will be submitted to NWO.

Investment with existing temporary research positions

The own investment budget for temporary scientific personnel (PhD, postdoc) equivalent to two PhDs, may (partly) be realised with positions already funded by the official secretary or positions acquired for temporary scientific personnel (PhD, postdoc) that have not yet been filled – as long as the AI talent has a say in how the positions are used and assumes responsibility for the day-to-day supervision. The own investment may not consist of positions funded from NWO, the Dutch government or EU sources other than direct government funding, which must be made apparent in the budget.

Commitment after award

The applicant who accepts the grant commits to making an effort to appoint at least one external publicly/privately funded PhD or postdoc (3 years, 1 FTE; or equivalent) to the project within at most one year after the awarding of the grant. Funding from NWO or from the Dutch government or EU sources does not suffice to satisfy the commitment. The applicant will register this personnel with NWO and submit personnel reports to NWO.

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.

– All of the required annexes are, after a possible request to make additions or changes, complete and according to the instructions filled out and according to the conditions of this Call for proposals completed and submitted.
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 of whether to award funding. However, 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: www.nwo.nl/en/scientific-integrity.

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 (www.absfocalpoint.nl). NWO assumes that researchers will take all necessary actions with respect to the Nagoya Protocol. http://www.absfocalpoint.nl/
4 Assessment procedure

This chapter first of all describes the steps involved in the substantive assessment of your proposal (Section 4.2). It then 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 (www.nwo.nl/en/code-dealing-personal-interests).

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 (www.nwo.nl/en/diversity-and-inclusion). NWO encourages 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 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: www.nwo.nl/en/dora.

4.2 Procedure

4.2.1 Timetable

You can submit proposals on a continuous basis. NWO shall consider these in the order that it receives them. The order in which submitted proposals are considered is determined by the submission date and time of a proposal that satisfies the conditions for submission. As soon as the indicative dates for considering your proposal are known, you will be informed about this. NWO aims to complete the substantive assessment within no more than two months after your proposal was submitted.

The application procedure consists of the following steps:
- Submission of the proposal
- Consideration of the proposal
- Initial advice assessment committee
- Assessment committee meeting
- Decision-making
4.2.2 Submission of a proposal
For the submission of the proposal, a standard 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 this form and the procedure given in the explanation. You must also adhere to the conditions for the maximum number of words and pages.
Your complete application form must have been received before 15 December 2023 at 14:00:00 CET via ISAAC (see Section 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.

4.2.3 Consideration 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.

4.2.4 Pre-advice assessment committee
After this, your proposal will be submitted for comments to one or 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).

4.2.5 Meeting of the assessment committee
The proposals will not be assessed in competition with each other. The assessment committee will assess every proposal on its own merits based on the criteria in this call, with due consideration to the preliminary advice.

The committee draws up a written recommendation addressed to the NWO Domain Board Science about the quality 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 the funding. In addition, the proposal must at least receive a qualification “very good” for the first two separate assessment criteria and at least the qualification “good” for the third criterion.
For more information about the qualifications, see www.nwo.nl/en/apply-funding-how-does-it-work.

4.2.6 Decision-taking
Finally, the NWO Domain Board Science 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.

4.2.7 Indicative dates
Below, you will find the indicative dates for this Call for proposals. During the current procedure, NWO might find it necessary to make further changes to the indicative dates for this Call for proposals. You will, of course, be informed about this in time.
You will find the most recent (indicative) dates on the programme page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposals</th>
<th>Deadline proposals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 15 December 2023, at 14:00:00 CET</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several weeks before the decision by the board</td>
<td>Assessment committee meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4: Assessment procedure / NGF AlNed Fellowship Grants

| Within two months after submission (target period) | Decision by the board |

4.3 Criteria

4.3.1 Substantive assessment criteria

The applications submitted within this Call for proposals will be substantially assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Suitability (1/3)
   – suitability of the research plan for carrying out research about an AI aspect from the AIREA-NL agenda, incl. track record of the AI talent in this research
   – suitability of the activities plan for embedding in the AlNed-NL AIC ecosystem (See Section 7.2)

2. Quality (1/3)
   – quality of the research plan for carrying out research about an AI aspect from the AIREA-NL agenda, incl. track record of the AI talent in this research
   – quality of the activities plan for embedding in the AlNed-NL AIC ecosystem

3. Quality of the commitment plan for realising temporary research positions externally funded by companies and public organisations (1/3) (see Section 3.5.1.)

The criteria carry equal weighting and each account for one-third of the overall assessment.

Ad. 2

The proposal allows different possibilities for embedding in the AlNed-NL AIC ecosystem, including, for example:

a. relation hub;
b. connection with innovation labs and other current AI knowledge/innovation projects;
c. contribution to education outside of your own organisation;
d. giving shape to human centricity.

These are examples. In your proposal, it is also possible to suggest a different embedding in the AlNed-NL AIC ecosystem. See Annex 7.2 for more information about the AlNed-NL AIC ecosystem.

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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 Work plan

Upon submitting the proposal, it is possible that the research plan for carrying out research about an AI aspect from the AIREA-NL agenda does not yet contain a precise work plan for the appointment of temporary research personnel. This is because the AI talent is allowed to (further) elaborate this after funding has been awarded. In such a case, the work plan must have been submitted for the purpose of monitoring and progress to NWO via ISAAC within four months of the proposal being awarded funding. The research plan in the proposal must, of course, be detailed enough for the assessment committee to be able to assess it based on the assessment criteria.

5.1.2 Accountability and project completion

NWO prescribes reporting obligations in accordance with Article 3.2.2 of the NWO Grant Rules 2017. The obligations imposed on NWO by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency that are relevant with respect to these reports will be incorporated by NWO in the templates for these reports. In line with these obligations, NWO will share (parts of) these reports with the Netherlands Enterprise Agency for the purpose of reporting in the context of the National Growth Fund.

AI talents who work within this programme will also be invited by AiNed to provide additional information for the purpose of reporting by AiNed in the context of the National Growth Fund.

5.1.3 Changes

Changed circumstances will be reported and processed in accordance with Article 3.4 of the NWO Grant Rules 2017. However, if the AI talent withdraws from the project before it is completed, then NWO has the right to reclaim or withdraw any funding for personnel positions that have not yet been filled.

5.1.4 AiNed meetings

AI talent and temporary researchers who work within this programme will be invited by AiNed to participate in the AiNed meetings.

5.1.5 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 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: www.nwo.nl/en/research-data-management.

5.1.6 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.

AI talents must carry out a project funded by NWO during the time that they work for the official secretary. If an AI talent 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.
5.1.7 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 “Socially Responsible Licensing Toolkit for knowledge institutions” (www.nfu.nl/sites/default/files/2020-09/200902-NFU%20Factsheet%20Toolkit%20SRL.pdf).

5.1.8 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 www.openaccess.nl/en.

Books


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 www.nwo.nl/en/open-science.
Chapter 6: Contact and other information

6 Contact and other information

6.1 Contact

6.1.1 Specific questions

For specific questions about this Call for proposals, please contact:

Ms Eva Blokker MSc, tel. +31 70 344 0710, NGF-AINedFellowship@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

The whole text of this Call for proposals has been published in both Dutch and English. The Dutch version is deemed authentic. For legal interpretation the text of the Dutch version will be decisive.

NWO processes data from applicants received in the context of this call in accordance with the NWO Privacy Statement, www.nwo.nl/en/privacyverklaring.https://www.nwo.nl/privacyverklaring

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 (www.nwo.nl/en/salary-tables).

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; 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” 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.

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.

Explanation of budget module Material

A maximum of €38,903 for material budget and possible investments can be applied for together. 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 €38,903 per proposal, together with possible investments.
- 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
In this budget module, funding can be requested up to a maximum of €38,903 for investments, together with any material costs, in equipment, datasets and/or software (e.g. lasers, specialised computers or computer programs).

7.2 AiNed-NL AIC ecosystem
This programme focuses on knowledge and talent development, and the strengthening of the national AI ecosystem.

The research carried out by the AI talent should connect with the national AI research agenda. Besides developing their own research, AI talents also contribute to the national AI ecosystem with a plan for participation in (a selection of) AI hubs, AiNed Innovation labs, AI education outside of the organisation, and by implementing a human-centric approach to help achieve positive societal effects.

The national AI ecosystem has been shaped by means of the seven AI hubs, see

An AI talent can contribute to the AI ecosystem by playing an active role in an AI hub. This could be realised, for example, by seeking connection with innovative SMEs or startups/scaleups via the AI hub.

Another possibility is to incorporate the knowledge developed in the AI talents’ discipline in education modules that are more widely accessible than those developed only for their own discipline. The AI hubs also offer possibilities for this via the AI learning communities⁴, which will be further developed in the coming years.

The same applies to the incorporation of knowledge in the network of existing or yet-to-be-formed innovation labs, such as the ICAI labs, the emergent labs in the NWO ROBUST programme, and the labs still to be developed within the AiNed programme in the area of embedded AI, hybrid AI systems, AI controlled and managed infrastructure, AI for the Dutch language, personalisation and privacy protection, and sharing data for AI; see also https://ained.nl/en/focus-areas/.

7.3 Contacts AiNed

For this programme, a supervisory committee has been appointed by AiNed to encourage and support institutions in applying for grants. The supervisory committee also has the task of identifying possible AI talents. On behalf of AiNed, the supervisory committee will also reflect upon the effect and effectiveness of this programme. See also https://ained.nl/en/.
