Explanatory notes for application form:

**Take-off phase 2 Autumn 2023**

**Vroegefasetrajecten WO/HBO/TO2**

This document contains explanations for writing an application for a Take-off phase 2 - Vroegefasetraject WO/HBO/TO2, round autumn 2023.

The application procedure consists of two stages:

- Pre-proposal
- Full proposal

For both stages, instructions can be found in this document.

For more information and the call for proposals, visit [https://www.nwo.nl/en/calls/take-off-phase-2-vroegefasetrajecten-wo/hbo/to2](https://www.nwo.nl/en/calls/take-off-phase-2-vroegefasetrajecten-wo/hbo/to2)
Instructions for pre-proposal stage

General information

Submit your pre-proposal as a PDF via the ISAAC system via the account of the main applicant. Please delete any instruction text before exporting to PDF.

The pre-proposal contains:
- Information regarding the application, the applicant, and the knowledge basis;
- A letter from the knowledge institute or a (concept) agreement between the knowledge institute and the start-up. (Appendix A)
- A full extract of the KVK registration of the start-up. This extract should make clear who is authorized to sign for the loan. If one or more parties are shareholder and therefore the main applicant is not solely authorized to sign the loan, the contact details of the (additional) authorized persons to sign on the loan need to be provided. (Appendix C)

The document has a maximum length of 3 pages, excluding the front page and the appendices.

During submission, select your own organization (start-up), under the “Organisaties (organisations)” tab. If your organization is not in this list, or you have not requested it to be added in time, choose the option “Take-off Innovatieve Starter”, as shown below.

![Figure 1: screenshot of het ISAAC environment, "Organisaties" tab](image)

1. Administrative information

Please fill the contact details of the main applicant, employed at the start-up, and the point of contact at the involved WO/HBO/TO2 knowledge institute.

1.1 Ownership structure start-up

Please provide the ownership structure, owners, and share (max. 150 words).

1.2 Ownership of the knowledge or technology described in the application

Please indicate whether the knowledge is protected by a patent. If this is the case, the applying start-up is required to add a (concept) license agreement to the ‘full proposal’ stage. If the knowledge is not protected by a patent, a (concept) knowledge transfer agreement is required that meets the requirements in the Call for proposals.
1.3 Preferred cluster to process the application
Indicate your preferred cluster. Select the cluster in which the center of gravity of the activities lies. The Take-off team will decide on the final classification of the applications in the subclusters.

2. Knowledge basis

2.1 Research that forms the basis of this application
(1) Provide a short summary of the technology/knowledge/process, and the research that forms the basis of this application.
(2) Indicate (and motivate) the technological maturity and corresponding TRL level.
(3) Explain how the acquired knowledge or technology enables the business case of the start-up. The Take-off team will use this information to assess whether the application fits with the Take-off program.

Max 300 words, bullet points are permitted.

Appendix A: Letter/ knowledge transfer agreement

Table 1 Required document per stage of the application process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Signed letter of intent</th>
<th>Concept agreement</th>
<th>Signed agreement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-proposal</td>
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‘Pre-proposal’ stage
When you submit your pre-proposal, a concept knowledge transfer agreement between the involved knowledge institute and the start-up is required. A signed letter of intent is optional.

‘Full proposal’ stage
In this stage, when submitting a full proposal, a concept agreement between start-up and involved knowledge institute is mandatory. An agreement that lacks explicit descriptions of the knowledge basis and the (intent to) transfer thereof to the start-up that submits the application could result in the application being declared as inadmissible.

Within 8 weeks after granting a signed legal document is required that describes which knowledge or IP is transferred to the startup, including how this is transferred and what rights are start-up has acquired or will acquire. Especially the economical exploitation rights are of importance. This agreement has to be signed by authorized representatives of both organizations*.

The legal knowledge transfer agreement between knowledge institute and start-up at least needs to describe:
- What knowledge or IP is (to be) transferred, and where this knowledge or IP was developed;
- Against what conditions this transfer takes place;
- What rights and obligations the start-up acquires and which “freedom to operate” the start-up derives from the agreement;
- The ways of knowledge transfer (license, sale, other);

The names, salutation, roles and contact details of the authorized representatives for potential verification.

*The representative from the knowledge institute that is authorized to sign this legal document might not be the same as the contact person.
Appendix B: Completed and signed form ‘SME-test’

Is your organization an SME? Please complete the online test, print it and include it in the application here. Please see the website from the European Commission for the test: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/SME-Wizard/smeq.do

Appendix C: Extract of KVK registration start-up

Add the extract of KVK registration of the start-up. NWO requires this information when it drafts the concept “uitvoeringsovereenkomst” (loan agreement for the phase 2 vroegefasetraject) in case the proposal will be granted. This extract should make clear who is authorized to sign for the loan. If one or more parties are shareholder and therefore the main applicant is not solely authorized to sign the loan, the contact details of the (additional) authorized persons to sign on the loan need to be provided.
**Instructions for full proposal stage**

**General information**

The proposal should not exceed 20 pages, excluding appendices. The attached feasibility report (Appendix B) should not exceed 8 pages.

Submit this form via the application system ‘ISAC’. Please refer to the Call for Proposals for additional information. The completed application form should be uploaded, together with all appendices, in a single PDF document.

During submission, select your own organization (startup), under the “Organisaties (organisations)” tab. If your organization is not in this list, or have not requested it to be added in time, choose the option “Take-off Innovatieve Starter”, as shown below.

![Figure 1: screenshot of het ISAC environment, "Organisaties" tab](image)

1. **Administrative information**

   1.1. **Contact details start-up**

       Please fill in the contact details of the start-up.

   1.2. **Contact details knowledge institution**

       Please fill in the contact details of the knowledge institution.

   1.3. **IBAN start-up**

       For payment of loan instalments please provide the IBAN bank account of the start-up (employer of the main applicant).

   1.4. **Ownership structure start-up**

       Please provide the ownership structure (organization chart), owners, and shares of the start-up (max. 150 words).
2. Summary

2.1. Summary NWO Domain AES website
Max. 100 words. This English summary should be suitable for publication. Be aware of confidentiality regarding IP and company strategy.

2.2. Project summary
Max. half a page.

3. Vroegefaseplan

3.1. Scientific research that lies at the core of the business idea
Please describe the scientific research at the core of the business idea and where this scientific basis was created. Please clarify the quality of this research. Furthermore, please indicate the technology readiness level (TRL) of the research to make it clear to the committee which developments are necessary before a market introduction could be realised. Max. half a page.

3.2. The problem
Please elaborate which problem you have identified in the market, who experiences that problem and, if possible, how the problem manifests itself. This provides the context for the envisioned solution. Max. half a page.

3.3. The proposition and added value
Please explain your approach for solving the problem. Indicate the different elements that make up the solution, and how the solution can be applied. Describe the business model, and elaborate on how the results of the scientific research will be implemented in the proposed solution.

Explain what makes the solution unique and innovative compared to the current situation. What breakthroughs will be enabled by the investigated technological discoveries. Please describe how the new solution distinguishes itself from solutions that already exist or are currently under development.

Also, motivate how the proposed solution will create added value for potential users, and how they will apply the solution. Please elaborate on how you want to position the solution in the market and what the current and expected demand is. Max. 1 page.

3.4. Market analysis (including competitor analysis)
Include an analysis of the market need, target market, market size, competition, etc. Please describe your insight(s) in the targeted market and what conclusions you draw as to what issues have to be developed or solved in order to get your new idea/technology/product/process/service accepted and implemented. Please support your insights with your analysis.

Please describe your main competitors, and what advantage your new idea/technology/product/process/service provides compared to them. Max. 3 pages.

3.5. Company strategy
Please describe the strategy of the start-up. This should contain a number of broad aspects such as the mission/vision, goals, important milestones, activities, and specific strategic considerations that have led to this ‘Vroegefaseplan’. You can further elaborate on this in sections 3.6 – 3.8. Max. half a page.
3.6. **IP-position and strategy**

Describe the knowledge base and IP strategy, and what arrangements have been or will be made concerning the intellectual property. Indicate what Freedom to Operate you consider essential to operate effectively in the market. If you do not own the IP, elaborate on the agreements that you already have, or plan on having, with the IP owner. Please include the following information for all IP:

1. **Patent name**
2. **Inventor**
3. **Patent number**
4. If no patent has been published, please indicate the claim being made.

Max. half a page.

3.7. **The team and division of roles**

Describe the team that will carry out the ‘vroegefaseplan’. Please cover background, motivation, track record, network, personal strengths and weaknesses, division or roles, and the coaching and mentoring plan. If applicable, please state what competences are still missing in the team, and how and when to plan on acquiring these. Max. 2 pages.

3.8. **Partnerships**

Please describe your network (of the start-up): prospective or current customers, suppliers, distributors and (strategic) partners. What is the added value of these partnerships and how do they aid in making the start-up commercially successful? Max. half a page.

3.9. **Business model**

The committee would like you to enter one (business) model of your company. Where NWO previously asked for a specific model (Business model canvas or SWOT), we are happy to leave it up to you. The committee looks at how well you are able to complete the model, and of course at the content. Think of “value proposition canvas”, "business model canvas", "SWOT", "...". Max. 1 page.

3.10. **Activities, milestones and time schedule**

Please describe the activities and work-packages (including a time schedule) that compose your Take-Off phase 2 vroegefasetraject, and which results (milestones and quantifiable (intermediate) goals) these should yield. Explain how these will achieve the goal of attracting external investment(s) after the vroegefasetraject. Also state which team members will carry out the described work.

If applicable, please describe at least the following items in separate headers:

1. **Research and development** *
2. **Certification**
3. **Production and scale up**
4. **Marketing and sales**
5. **Coaching and training**
6. **Synergy with other activities of the start-up**
7. **Risk assessment**

Max. 6 pages.

* For assessing your status as an ‘innovatieve starter’, in Dutch: Het vroegefaseplan is ook van belang voor het bepalen of u een innovatieve starter bent in de zin van het O&O&I-steunkader1, art. 5.4. Voor zover u niet kunt
Instructies: application – Take-off phase 2 Vroegefasetrajecten WO/HBO/TO2 | autumn 2023

aantonen dat het percentage van uw onderzoeks- en ontwikkelingskosten van uw onderneming meer is dan 15%, zult u in uw vroege faseplan een uiteenzetting moeten geven van wat u in de voorzienbare toekomst aan producten, diensten of procedés zal ontwikkelen die technologisch nieuw zijn of een wezenlijke verbetering inhouden ten opzichte van de state-of-the-art in uw sector in de Europese Unie en die een risico op technologische of industriële mislukking inhouden. Op basis van deze uiteenzetting kan de Adviescommissie Vroegefasefinanciering academische innovatieve starters een evaluatie verrichten. Deze commissie bestaat uit externe deskundigen die op basis van uw informatie zullen toetsen of u voldoet aan de definitie van innovatieve starter en de Minister van Economische Zaken daarover adviseren. Het niet voldoen aan de vereisten in het O&O&I-steunkader betekent immers dat de aanvraag moet worden afgewezen aangezien de subsidie uitsluitend aan een innovatieve starter in de zin van het O&O&I-steunkader. Indien u beschikt over een S&O verklaring kan deze eveneens dienen als bewijs dat u een innovatieve starter bent.

1. Communautaire kaderregeling inzake staatssteun voor onderzoek, ontwikkeling en innovatie, 2014/C 198/01

3.11. Motivation Take-off application

Summarize 3.1 – 3.10 in 1 or 2 paragraphs. Please indicate the connection between the product or service and the underlying knowledge or technology, the added value for the customer, the value proposition, an assessment of the target market, the IP situation, and the suggested solution.

Provide a brief motivation why you submit this Take-off application, and how this will contribute to the success of your organization/start-up. Max. half a page.

4. Budget plan

4.1. Budget

The budget form should be prepared in accordance with the NWO template. This form has restricted fields for budget details, such as maximum hourly rates for personnel and costs of external parties. Modifications to this template, such as additional rows are not allowed, to guarantee consistency and legibility between proposals.

Applications with a different budget form, or not adhering to the restrictions in the NWO budget form, will not be processed.

You can download this template from the NWO website or via the online application system ISAAC. Editable fields are marked light blue. Complete the budget form and save it as a PDF. The budget form should be readable in its entirety, without parts being removed, in one page (A4). Attach the saved PDF page with your budget to the application form by adding it as appendix E to the PDF file of the application form. Without the budget form as the last page in your application form, your application is not complete and cannot be processed.

Extra explanations concerning eligible and non-eligible costs:

A) Personnel costs

Eligible:
• Salary costs of personnel who are employed by the start-up (the organisation where the main applicant is employed).

Non-eligible:
• Proposals that budget costs for personnel of the start-up with an hourly rate above €35/hour.
Please put the costs for hiring external services under F) Others. For example: the hiring of student assistants through a (student) employment agency, or personnel costs of team members that are employed by the TO2 knowledge institute.

B) Investments
Eligible:
- Investments in equipment and devices Only if the start-up becomes the owner thereof.

Non-eligible:
- Investments in general business operations such as computers/laptops/printers, general software such as Adobe of MS office, office furniture such as chairs, office space, etc.
- Investments that are not described in the project plan.
- Investments in equipment and devices of which the knowledge institute will be owner.

C) Materials
Eligible:
- Costs for consumables, small equipment and tools.

Non-eligible:
- Costs for general business operations such internet subscription, mobile phones, printing paper, ink cartridges etc.
- Costs for consumables that are not mentioned in the project plan.

D) Travel Expenses
Eligible:
- Travel expenses for business travels.

Non-eligible:
- Travel expenses for (day-to-day) commuting.
- Travel expenses that are not mentioned in the project plan.

E) Costs for IP protection
Eligible:
- Costs for IP protection during the project duration only, and only if the patent is owned by the start-up.
- Costs for research into IP position of the start-up, up to a potential patent filing.

Non-eligible:
- Costs for the filing of a patent.

F) Others
Eligible:
- Costs for external services (people/external service providers that are not employed by the start-up where that employs the main applicant), for the part these services are hired by the main applicant.
- Other costs that are directly linked to the project.

Non-eligible:
- General business operation costs such as services for legal and administrative means (accountancy, founding a company, etc), costs for housing.
- Proposals that budget costs for external services with an hourly rate above €125/hour.
- Cost for other items that are not described in the project plan.

4.2. Specification

Please specify further, where relevant, your budget by linking it to milestones / work-packages from your project plan.

4.3. Additional required activities or investments

It may be possible that this Vroegefasetrajecten does not cover all the activities or expenditures required to successfully launch your product/process/service or start-up. E.g. as co-founders you might choose not to declare your own hours from the loan, but they do support the project. Or you may invest in other equipment
necessary to support the project that are not covered by the loan. You may include such information here. Please include only that which is indispensable.

5. Statement by the applicant

5.1. Application of NWO research results

If applicable, please provide NWO project number and a short overview of results. If applicable, please describe how a start-up fits with the valorisation/utilization plan of the project.

5.2. Statements

Answer the questions by selection YES or NO and providing the necessary additional information. Select the cluster from the drop-down menu.

5.3. Signatory

Complete the fields below. The signatory declares that all the required documents are enclosed and that he or she is familiar with the requirements and procedures of the Take-off call.

6. Appendices

A. Cashflow prognosis

Please include a prognosis of the cashflow(s) of your organization for the next 5 years, starting at the application date. Please indicate based on the prognosis at what times what (financial) resources are available to pay off the loan, finance new investments etc. Max. 2 pages.

B. Report feasibility study

A report from a feasibility study of maximum 8 pages that indicates/supports:

- The technical feasibility of the idea, technology, process, service etc.
- That the envisioned product/service/process has sufficient commercial potential.

The report also has to show what obstacles need to be taken or solved in order to be able to obtain a successful market implementation.

If the feasibility is the result of a previous governmental subsidy please indicate this on the cover page of the report and include the financing institution, name of the instrument, and the project number.

The feasibility study does not have a standard format.

C. Proof of IP-agreement with knowledge institute

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R = Required
O = Optional
- = Not required

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D. Support letter(s) (optional)
Letters of third parties i.e. future investors or customers in which they express their confidence in the application and development.

E. Budget form
See the supporting text listed in paragraph 4.1.
Mandatory. Use the template provided by NWO and append this to your proposal. Should be the last page of the proposal, and should be readable in 1 page.