Aspasia 2022

Program Brochure 2022

Exacte en Natuurwetenschappen
Sociale en Geesteswetenschappen
Toegepaste en Technische Wetenschappen
ZonMw
# Inhoud

1 Introduction
   1.1 Background
   1.2 Available budget
In Aspasia (2022), there is no traditional grant ceiling. All Vidi applicants who meet the conditions (see section 3.5) are eligible for an Aspasia grant.

1.3 Validity program brochure

2 Goal
   2.1 Goal of the program

3 Directives for candidates
   3.1 Who can apply
   3.2 Who can be nominated
   3.3 For what can you be nominated
   3.4 When can you be nominated
   3.5 Grant conditions

4 Procedure
   4.1 Contact Vidi-applicants
   4.2 Nomination to the Executive Board
   4.3 Granting of premiums
   4.4 Timeline Aspasia 2022

5 Contact information
   5.1 questions
1 Introduction

This program brochure explains the application process for the Aspasia 2021 funding round. This program brochure is the responsibility of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). In this program brochure, you will find information about the background, goal and budget of this program (chapter 1), the purpose of the program (chapter 2), the guidelines for applicants (chapter 3) and the procedure of the Aspasia procedure (chapter 4). Finally, in chapter 5 you will find contact information.

1.1 Background

The number of women in senior scientific positions still lags behind men: at the end of 2019, 23.1% of Dutch professors were women. Although recent years have seen a slow growth in the proportion of women in science, a proportional male/female distribution is not expected until 2042. The Aspasia program aims to accelerate the promotion of women scientists to associate professorships. Aspasia is linked to the NWO Talent Program (formerly de Vernieuwingsimpuls). NWO has decided to award grants to institutions that promote female Vidi applicants who were rated as ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’ to the position of associate professor within one year.

Who was Aspasia?

Aspasia was a Greek philosopher who lived from 470 to 410 B.C. She was born in the Greek city of Miletus (located in present-day Turkey), the daughter of an educated man who gave her a good education. As a young woman, she left for Athens, where she was classified as a “foreigner” in the class of "hetairen. Hetairen were usually developed and independent women. According to various sources (Plato, Plutarch), Aspasia taught rhetoric and Socrates attended her classes.

1.2 Available budget

In Aspasia (2022), there is no traditional grant ceiling. All Vidi applicants who meet the conditions (see section 3.5) are eligible for an Aspasia grant.

1.3 Validity program brochure

This program brochure is valid for female applicants from the NWO Talent Program Vidi round 2022 with the official decision in 2023.
2 Goal

2.1 Goal of the program

The Aspasia program aims to accelerate the promotion of women scientists to the rank of associate professor (UHD)
3 Directives for candidates

This chapter contains the requirements that apply to Aspasia. It first describes who can nominate (section 3.1) and who can be nominated (section 3.2). Then you will find for what candidates can be nominated for (sections 3.3 and 3.4) and specific premium terms (section 3.5).

3.1 Who can apply

It is not possible to submit an application within the Aspasia program on your own initiative; Vidi-applicants who may be eligible will be approached by NWO (see Chapter 4 for more information on the procedure).

3.2 Who can be nominated

Eligible applicants include both female Vidi applicants who have been honored (laureates), and female Vidi applicants who have been rated as "very good" or "excellent" after interviews, but who have not been awarded a Vidi grant (candidates). The grant is exclusively for the promotion of female Vidi applicants who were not yet associate professors at the time of the date of the Vidi award letter. Applicants who were already associate professor at the time of submission of the Vidi application will not be approached. Also, applicants who have been promoted to associate professor in the period between the time of submission and the date of the Vidi result letter are not eligible for the Aspasia premium (see also section 3.5 for premium conditions). For more information, see Chapter 4, Procedure The premium is €40,000 for the promotion of Vidi laureates. For the promotion of Vidi candidates who have not been honored, the premium is €120,000. The latter group thus receives no grant from the NWO Talent Program Vidi round, but does receive a higher Aspasia premium. The premium is awarded to the institution to which the nominated Aspasia candidate is promoted. Depending on the decision of the institution's Executive Board, the premium can be spent on salary increments or can be added to the Aspasia laureate’s research budget in appreciation of her achievement and in addition to any grant already awarded. This budget will broaden her possibilities to do research (for example by appointing an extra postdoc or research assistant, a teaching free period and/or a period of research at a foreign university) and can in this way also stimulate other female scientists to apply for a grant. If the Governing Board decides that part of the grant will benefit the Aspasia Laureate herself, NWO will award that part of the grant directly to the Aspasia Laureate (for Vidi Laureates in addition to the previous Vidi grant). This is subject to the spending conditions of the NWO Talent Programme.

3.3 For what can you be nominated

The premium is €40,000 for the promotion of Vidi laureates. For the promotion of Vidi candidates who were not honored, the premium is €120,000. The latter group does not receive a grant from the NWO Talent Program Vidi round, but does receive a higher Aspasia premium. The premium is awarded to the institution to which the nominated Aspasia candidate is promoted. Depending on the decision of the institution’s Executive Board, the premium can be spent on salary increments or can be added to the Aspasia Laureate’s research budget in appreciation of her achievement and to supplement any grant already awarded. This budget expands her opportunities to conduct research (e.g., through the appointment of an additional postdoc or research assistant, a teaching free period and/or a period of research at a foreign university) and in this way may also encourage other women scholars to apply for grants. If the Governing Board decides that part of the grant will benefit the Aspasia Laureate herself, NWO will award that part of the grant directly to the Aspasia Laureate (in the case of Vidi Laureates in addition to the previous Vidi grant). This is subject to the spending conditions of the NWO Talent Program.
3.4 When can you be nominated

After deciding on the award of Vidi grants, NWO contacts the applicants who are eligible for an Aspasia grant. If the applicant agrees, NWO nominates her to its Executive Board for promotion. For details and a timeline of the procedure, see Chapter 4 of this brochure.

3.5 Grant conditions

Aspasia 2022 is linked to the NWO Talent Program Vidi Round 2023 and is exclusively for the promotion of female Vidi applicants who were not yet associate professors at the time the Vidi award letter was signed.

Aspasia round 2022

- Vidi applicants nominated for the Aspasia premium (hereinafter Vidi applicants) must have been promoted within one year from the date of the announcement of the results of the Vidi round, i.e., no later than June 29, 2024 (the effective date of the promotion must be before June 29, 2024) to associate professor with permanent employment or at least a five-year contract with a minimum size of 0.4 FTE. There will be no derogation from this promotion period, except for Vidi applicants to whom the exception rule below applies and for Vidi applicants who are entitled to maternity leave during this period (the extension applies to the number of weeks the Vidi applicant is entitled to maternity leave within the promotion period). In special cases, such as long-term illness, an extension of up to six months may be granted after consultation with NWO. The scope of employment after promotion must be at least equal to the scope of employment that the Vidi applicant had at the time the Vidi result letter was signed. The Executive Board must submit a contract to NWO showing the promotion (see also Chapter 4, Procedure).

- For Vidi applicants who did not yet have permanent employment and/or employment as a university lecturer at the time of the date of the Vidi result letter, a modified two-step arrangement is possible: they must in that case have been appointed as a university lecturer (permanent employment or at least a five-year contract with a minimum size of 0.4 FTE) within 2.5 years after the announcement of the decision of the Vidi round (i.e. no later than December 29, 2025) and as a university senior lecturer (permanent employment or at least a five-year contract with a minimum size of 0.4 FTE) within three years after the announcement of the Vidi round (i.e. no later than June 29, 2026). In this case, the premium will be awarded in portions: one-third of the premium will be awarded after the appointment to associate professor (€13,000/€40,000 depending on the size of the premium) and two-thirds of the premium will be awarded after the appointment to associate professor (€27,000/€80,000). The award of the first part of the premium does not depend on whether or not the promotion to UHD is ultimately achieved within the stipulated period and conditions.

- Vidi applicants affiliated with KNAW or NWO institutes or other institutions from which scientists may submit a Vidi application may also be eligible for the Aspasia premium. They must then be promoted to a position equivalent to that of UHD, with consideration given to salary and seniority. This will be determined in consultation between NWO and the institution concerned. In these cases, the institution should contact NWO about this after receiving the nomination - and therefore before any promotion. Individuals who already hold a position equivalent to that of UHD are not eligible for the bonus. Furthermore, the same conditions apply to spending as for all Aspasia grants (see section 3.3 of this brochure).
4 Procedure

4.1 Contact Vidi-applicants

In early July 2023, NWO will contact Vidi applicants who may be eligible for the Aspasia grant to ask whether they would appreciate possible promotion under Aspasia (see also Sections 3.1 and 3.2). NWO requests the employment contract valid at the time of the date of the Vidi award letter to verify that the applicant does indeed meet the conditions. If no response from the applicant has been received by NWO by October 31, 2023 at 14:00:00 CET after a reminder from NWO, the file will be closed and the offer of the premium will lapse.

4.2 Nomination to the Executive Board

If the Vidi applicant meets the requirements and would like to be promoted under Aspasia, NWO will contact the Executive Board of the institution where she is employed in early November 2023. The Executive Board submits a letter via aspasia@nwo.nl by Thursday, February 15, 2024 14:00:00 CET (see timeline in Section 4.4) indicating whether it intends to propose the relevant Vidi applicant for promotion.

Conditions for responses by the Executive Board
There are some conditions attached to the responses from the Executive Boards:
1. All responses by Executive Boards to nominations for Aspasia must be sent by email to the Aspasia email address aspasia@nwo.nl. Only e-mails that contain a letter from the Board and are signed by an authorized entity will be processed.

2. Only responses received by NWO before Thursday 15 February 2024 14:00:00 CET, will be considered

If after 15 February 2024 14:00:00 CET no response from the Executive Board has been received by NWO, the offer of the Aspasia premium will expire and the file will be closed.

In past Aspasia rounds, a first come, first serve rule was in effect. This arrangement is no longer in effect for Aspasia 2022.

4.3 Granting of premiums

Within six months after the deadline of the applicable promotion period, the documents must be submitted by the Executive Board through aspasia@nwo.nl, (see timeline in Section 4.4). If these documents are not received by the deadline, then the required conditions have not been met and the conditionally awarded promotion will be withdrawn.

NWO will pay out the conditionally awarded premium after receipt of the following documents:
- Cover letter from the Executive Board
- Contract showing the promotion of the candidate
- Spending plan of the premium. The spending plan must include at least a budget and a brief explanation (for more information see section 3.3).
### 4.4 Timeline Aspasia 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 29, 2023</td>
<td>Announcement Vidi Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning of July 2023</td>
<td>NWO contacts the Vidi-applicants eligible for the Aspasia grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31st, 2023 14:00:00 CET</td>
<td>Deadline for response by Vidi-applicants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First week November 2023</td>
<td>NWO sends a request to the Executive Boards for promotion of female Vidi applicants who want to be considered for the Aspasia grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday February 15, 2024 14:00:00 CET</td>
<td>Deadline reaction Executive Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of February, 2024</td>
<td>NWO contacts Vidi-applicants and en Executive Boards whether responses will be considered</td>
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**If the Executive Board accepts the nomination for promotion and the response has been processed by NWO**

**Normal procedure**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 29, 2024 (latest)</td>
<td>Promotion of Aspasia candidate to associate professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 29, 2024 (latest)</td>
<td>Notification of promotion of Aspasia candidates to associate professor by Executive Board with budget plan and copy of employment contract to NWO</td>
</tr>
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**Two-step procedure**

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<tr>
<th>Date/Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December, 29, 2025 (latest)</td>
<td>Promotion of Aspasia candidate to assistant professor (first step)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 29, 2026 (latest)</td>
<td>Notification of promotion of Aspasia candidates to associate professor by Executive Board with budget plan and copy of employment contract to NWO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 29, 2026 (latest)</td>
<td>Promotion of Aspasia candidate to associate professor (second step)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 29, 2026 (latest)</td>
<td>Notification promotion second step of Aspasia candidates to associate professor by Executive Board with copy of employment contract to NWO</td>
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</table>
5 Contact information

5.1 questions

For questions about this call for proposals, please contact:

Tamara Dijkstra, Jochem Spaans or Hanneke Dekker
Tel +31 (0)70 349 42 57
E-mail: aspasia@nwo.nl

NWO Aspasia-programma
Postbus 93138
2509 AC Den Haag

Website www.nwo.nl/aspasia
Uitgave: juli 2023

Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek

Bezoekadres:
Locatie Den Haag
Laan van Nieuw Oost-Indië 300

Locatie Utrecht
Winthontlaan 2
3526 KV Utrecht
www.nwo.nl