1. General

1. What is the adjusted timeline for the NWA-ORC 2020/2021 round?
   Below you will find the adjusted timeline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full proposals</th>
<th>Deadline for submitting documents for assessment of co-applicants (see Section 3.1.2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 September 2021, 14:00:00 CEST</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting full proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 October 2021, 14:00:00 CEST</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting full proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October - November 2021</td>
<td>Consulting of referees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last week of November/First week of December 2021</td>
<td>Request for rebuttal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second half of January 2022</td>
<td>Selection committee meeting regarding selection for interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>First half of February 2022</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2022</td>
<td>Decision of Executive Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Can we make explicit reference to the pre-proposal in the full proposal, avoiding duplication?
   You can make reference to the pre-proposal and the advice you have received from the committee in the full proposal. Please note however, that only the full proposal will be sent to the reviewers and committee in the full proposal phase.

3. Can the title of the proposal change from the pre-proposal and can I make other changes?
   Yes, small alterations can be made to the title of the proposal, however the essence should remain the same. Keep in mind that the essence of the content of the proposal and the following information in the full proposal should be the same as in the pre-proposal:
   a. the main applicant;
   b. the primary NWA route;
   c. the cluster question, i.e. the choice of one or more of the 140 cluster questions and the reference (if any) to a knowledge agenda;
   d. the budget range in which the proposal was submitted.
   Please note that the secondary cluster question and secondary NWA route, as well as a co-applicant can be altered as well.

4. Is it possible to replace a co-applicant (name person only, not organization itself), due to the long NWA-ORC 20-21 submission procedure and later project starting date? (Of course with permission of the persons concerned)
   Yes, when substantiated, changes in the consortium are allowed.

5. Are there any explicit or implicit expectations regarding the TRL’s, SRL’s or MRL’s to be achieved?
   No, NWO does not have specific expectations to these regards.
6. Is it mandatory to have a secondary route mentioned on the proposal?
Yes, this is allowed, however not mandatory. On the full proposal application form you can indicate multiple appropriate NWA-routes and/or cluster questions, as long as the main cluster question and the primary NWA route remain the same between the pre-proposal and the full proposal.

7. Can additional partners be added to the consortium after having been funded?
Yes, additional partners can be added after funding of the proposal.

8. Can the same project to submitted again in the ORC 2022 round?
Yes, the same proposal can be submitted again. Do take possible changes in the terms and conditions into account when submitting an initiative or pre-proposal for the next ORC round. Also note that the deadline for submitting an initiative will take place during the current 2020/21 round. Therefore, we advise you to keep an eye on the website for relevant deadlines and requirements.

2. Application form

9. Can we deviate from the template?
No, it is not allowed to make changes to the formatting of the application form. This is to ensure a level playing field for all proposals.

10. The format asks to describe co-design and co-creation activities in sections 3, 4, 5 and 6. Could you clarify what you expect in each of these sections and how to avoid duplication?
In sections 5 and 6, the applicants are asked to zoom in on the proposal, whereas in sections 3 and 4 the applicants are asked to answer this question on a more meta perspective.

11. In which part of the proposal form can I describe the general methods, which transcend the methods of the workpackages?
These can be described under the section ‘Project structure and coherence’ in the application form.

12. Are the ‘stakeholders’ in the ‘stakeholder engagement’ in 4.2 the same as the ‘stakeholders’ in 3, so explicitly excluding the societal partners in the consortium (i.e. the most important partners to engage in your activities?)
A stakeholder is any person or group that can influence or is influenced by the achieving of goals. Within the NWA-ORC it is desirable that stakeholders are part of the consortium as stakeholders are important to achieve the desired change. However, sometimes this is not possible. In this case, stakeholders can be added in section 3.2 of the full proposal form. With the Impact-Plan approach, the consortium is expected to budget costs to include stakeholders and other relevant parties. Stakeholders mentioned in the ‘stakeholder engagement’ in 4.2. can be both consortium partners, as well as societal partners which are not part of the consortium.

13. What is the logic behind the order of the sections of the application forms?
The application forms follow the same logic as the Impact outlook and Impact plan approaches, respectively. For the Impact Plan approach, this means that in the application form, you first complete the sections on the problem statement and societal impact, and the scientific part of the proposal is addressed later in the format. For more information on the Impact Plan approach: also see the online e-learning workshop at: https://impact.nwo.nl

14. Can we include a figure in the table of contents?
It is allowed to place a figure or scheme on the title page, adding a figure to the table of content is not allowed.
3. Attachments to the proposal

15. What is the difference between "letters of support from co-funders" and "confirmation of contribution to investment"?
Both letters concern different types of contributions to the project. The annex “Confirmation of contribution to investment” is mandatory if funding in the budget module ‘investments’ is requested. This letter should be submitted by the research institution requesting for the investment. The “letter of support” refers to in-kind or in-cash contributions by partners that are co-funders in the consortium.

16. Can the letter of support refer to a specific Work package? So a contribution to a specific Work package?
Letters of support should not refer to a specific work package. As a consortium however, you can agree on the contribution being meant for a specific work package.

17. Does the main applicant have to submit a letter of support from his organization?
This letter has been submitted during the proposal phase and does not have to be submitted again in the full proposal phase.

18. Letter of cofounders: What is "old letter " in this case? If the date is from the preproposal phase, is it considered ok or old?
Letters of support should be specific, and dated, for the current full NWA-ORC proposal. Old letters, for example from submissions in previous NWA-ORC rounds or declaration of intent for the pre-proposal phase, are not allowed in the full proposal phase.

19. Should the response form be filled out in English or in Dutch?
You can choose yourself in which language you draft the response, as this form will only be forwarded to the assessment committee and not to the referees.

20. If we obtained letters from cooperation partners during preproposal stage, do we need to ask them for a new letter?
No, in principle these letters do not need to be renewed after the preproposal stage, as the support letters from cooperation partners are not strictly mandatory. However, please make sure that if you submit a letter from a cooperation partner, it follows the format provided by NWO.

4. Assessment of proposals

21. Our project is about a theme that might not always be easy to grasp for non-experts on the topic. Does NWO have tips on how to deal with this?
It is important to realize that the full proposal will be assessed by both expert reviewers and by a broader committee. Therefore, applicants should find a balance in writing their proposal, to make sure it can be assessed by both. We would for example advise you to have your proposal read by someone who is not an expert on the topic of your proposal.

22. How does the reviewing process by referees work?
Full proposals will be sent for review to referees, which are expert on the subject of the proposal. These experts referees are selected by NWO, with (amongst others) the keywords and summary of the proposal as a starting point for selecting suitable referees. If you want to submit (non-)referees, you must fill in the ISAAC fields ‘referees’ and ‘non-referees’ when submitting the pre-proposal. Referees assess only the full
proposals and not the pre-proposal, but suggestions for referees and non-referees should be submitted in the pre-proposal phase.

23. How specific should the timetables mentioned in Annex 2 be?
In Annex 2 timetables should be provided for both the project and the work packages. It is not necessary to add timetables for sub-work packages. These timetables should be general and fit the page. Should the table in Annex 2 not be suitable for your project, you can replace this by a figure that illustrates your project better.

5. Budget form/financial aspects

5.1 General and budget format

24. Can I add extra rows to the budget form if needed?
It is not possible to add extra rows in the budget form yourself, due to the formulas and checks in the format. If you need additional rows in the budget form, please send an email to the bureau at nwa-orc2020@nwo.nl.

25. In the budget table, how to fill in the benchfee section for all the different institutions involved? It seems not possible to add rows.
In the benchfee section, it is not necessary to put every institute on a different row in the Excel format. This means, for instance, that the benchfee for all PhD students at a university can be ‘clustered’ in one row. In ‘name organisation’, you then include the names of all organisations.
If this does not solve the problem and extra rows in the budget sheet are needed, please send an email to the bureau at nwa-orc2020@nwo.nl.

5.2 Personnel costs

26. Which appointments other than PhD students and postdocs can be paid from the budget?
Here, a distinction is made between personnel to be appointed at academic institutes and personnel of other institutes. Please consult the call for proposals sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 for more information.

27. Can a PhD student be appointed at an applied university?
This is possible, but these will not be eligible for bench fees and HOT-scales should be used for their salary.

28. How should we ask for ‘research leave’? Is that allowed for every fte/position we apply for (phds/postdocs), or for every co-applicant?
Research leave can only be requested for the main applicant or co-applicants, and per applicant that research leave is requested for, the equivalent of 5 fulltime months research leve can be requested. Please consult the call for proposals section 6.2.1 “Research leave for applicants”.

29. We have more than 20 personnel positions at academic institutes. This is because each replacement subsidy has to be entered on a separate line (in our case, one for each WP leader, i.e. 8 lines). And there are more than 12 PhD students.
If extra lines in the budget sheet are needed, please send an email to the bureau at nwa-orc2020@nwo.nl.

30. Am I correct in assuming that research leave / replacement is standard = Euros 31.276? And is that amount per year or for the entire duration of the project?
NWO funds the research leave in accordance with the salary tables for a senior scientific employee (scale 11.0) at the time the grant is awarded (https://www.nwo.nl/salary-tables). Five fulltime months of
research leave per applicant indeed amounts to € 31,276, if the VSNU rates are used. When using the NFU rates, five fulltime months research leave amounts to € 33,997. This amount is for the entire duration of the project.

5.3 Knowledge utilisation costs

31. Can an organization be a cooperation partner and also receive knowledge utilisation budget?
Yes, it is possible for cooperation partners to be “hired” to perform knowledge utilisation activities. The funding necessary to perform these activities can then be requested via the budget module “knowledge utilisation”.

32. Can you only hire cooperation partners to conduct knowledge utilisation activities, or can you also “hire” them for other activities crucial to the project?
Yes. Activities that are crucial to the project and cannot be performed by the applicants themselves, can be done by third parties as part of the budget module “material costs”. See section 6.2.2 of the Call for Proposals. In addition, cooperation partners can also be hired for project management activities.

33. Which costs taken into account to determine whether the budget complies to the 80:20 rule?
The 80:20 rule applies to all funding requested from NWO. Please note that the ratio between fundamental research on one hand, and applied- and practice-oriented research on the other hand, can be between 75:25 and 85:15.

34. When a junior researcher or PhD student will perform a feasibility study: can the salary of that person then go under “knowledge utilisation”?
Researchers that mainly perform research activities, should be included under “personnel”. If the personnel involved have knowledge utilization activities as main task, for instance, a postdoc that is hired to do feasibility studies, the salary of that postdoc can be included under “knowledge utilization”.

35. Do costs for consortium meetings go under management budget or under knowledge utilisation or is either possible?
In general these can be substantiated under the project management budget. The knowledge utilisation module also has a section for these types of meetings, but only when the meeting is focused on knowledge utilisation.

36. The Knowledge Utilisation module does not seem to foresee in personnel costs. Is that correct?
The knowledge utilization budget requested for can also include personnel costs.

37. Which parties can budget for knowledge utilization? Can this also be co-funders?
The costs made by co-funders for knowledge utilization activities cannot be included in the budget module ‘knowledge utilisation’, as co-funders cannot receive funding from NWO. The knowledge utilization activities by co-funders should be included as in-kind contribution.

38. Can a PDEng (doing applied research) do (some of the work) in facilities of a cofunder but paid by the grant?
The PDEng can be paid by the grant, and should then be included in the “personnel” part of the budget.

39. Are knowledge utilisation activities eligible as in-kind co-funding?
Yes, a co-funder can contribute in-kind to the project by performing knowledge utilisation activities. Please note these activities then cannot be included in the budget under “knowledge utilization”, as co-funders can never receive funding from NWO.

40. Is there a specific proportion of the budget that should be allocated to knowledge utilisation?
At least 5% and no more than 20% of the budget requested from NWO should be allocated to knowledge utilisation.

5.4 Internationalisation and Money follows Cooperation

41. If a project makes use of the “money follows cooperation”, does the foreign institution needs to be approved as co-applicant, or are the funds re-directed by one of the official applicants?
When a foreign institution is making use of the Money follows Cooperation (MfC) module, it needs to be included as a co-applicant, and therefore it needs to be approved of as co-applicant. Foreign universities are approved of by default, other institutions need to be approved of. The co-applicant from the participating foreign knowledge institution should satisfy 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 should be employed in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

With respect to the funds, 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.

42. Do recipients of internationalisation money need to be approved of by NWO?
No, these recipients do not need to be approved of by NWO.

5.5 Co-funding

43. What is allowed in kind co-funding?
In principle, there are many possibilities for an organization to provide in kind co-funding. Therefore, in the call for proposals we only have listed what is NOT allowed. In-kind funding should be capitalized, in other words expressed in financial terms (i.e. number of units at cost price or hours x rate), and forms part of the budget. The co-funding organisation should clarify the rates used for this in its letter of support.

Admissible as in-kind co-funding are:
- Personnel input and material contributions on condition that these are capitalised and form an integral part of the project.
- Personnel input is subject to the condition that the expertise provided in the form of man-hours is not already available at the research institution(s) and is therefore used specifically for the project.
- Material contributions in the form of supplies of services are subject to the condition that the service can be identified as a new endeavour.

More information can be found in the call for proposals, section 3.5.6 “Co-funders”. When in doubt whether a specific case is allowed as co-funding, please contact the bureau at nwa-orc2020@nwo.nl.

44. Should in-cash contributions by co-funders need to be specified?
No, it is not mandatory to specify in-cash contributions, neither in the support letter, nor in the budget form. However, the in-cash contribution could be specified further if desired.

45. Can an organisation both be a co-funder and receive NWO funding for, for instance, knowledge utilization costs?
It is not allowed for a co-funder to receive funds from NWO (either direct or indirect). Therefore, any additional effort by a co-funder should also be included as in-kind contribution (keeping in mind the regulations for this type of contribution).

46. Could you give an example on how students can be part of co-funding? This is given as an item in the explanation of the cost estimation for in kind co-funding.
For instance: if you have a co-funding organisation that uses students to take surveys, and taking these surveys is necessary for performing the project, than the number of hours these students work on the
project, multiplied by their hourly rate, can be given as in-kind co-funding. More information can be found in the call for proposals, section 3.5.6 “Co-funders”.

47. My co-funders want to provide facilities but I’m not sure how to put a price tag on this. How should I do this?
For this, you can make use of the rates normally used by the co-funding organisations, for instance, the (commercial) rates that usually apply when someone wants to make use of the facilities. It is up to the co-funder to provide a realistic estimate of the value of the in-kind contribution. The co-funding organisation should clarify the rates used for this in its letter of support. More information can be found in the call for proposals, section 3.5.6 “Co-funders”.

48. How do I determine the value of in-kind contributions from abroad?
See the answer to question 47.

49. Can the travel costs and time investment of the co-funders be included as in-kind contribution?
Personnel input is subject to the condition that the expertise provided in the form of man-hours is not already available at the research institution(s) and is therefore used specifically for the project. The capitalising of personnel input by third parties is subject to the valuation of in-kind co-funding referred to in the call for proposals. More information can be found in the call for proposals, section 3.5.6 “Co-funders”.
Please note that costs (including travel expenses) relating to supervision (e.g. of PhD students), consultancy and/or participation in the Advisory Committee or consortium meetings or similar activities, are not eligible for in-kind contributions.

50. Can data of existing studies be included as in-kind contribution?
This will not be admissible in all cases. Please consult with the bureau at nwa-orc2020@nwo.nl, before submitting your proposal.

51. Does the entire in cash contribution need to be transferred to NWO at the start of the project, or can it be transferred in instalments?
Both are possible. When the project is granted, the co-funder needs to confirm its contribution by a separate letter. In this letter, the co-funder can specify which option is preferred.

6. Advisory Board

52. Who can take part in the Advisory Committee, should they be part of the consortium and should they submit a letter of support?
The Advisory Committee consists of:
- Representation from the co-funder(s);
- Representation from the cooperation partners (if applicable);
- At least one independent scientific member not involved in this consortium;
- At least one independent societal member not involved in this consortium and relevant for advancing the results.

It is not required for these representatives to be part of the consortium and therefore they do not have to submit a letter of support. In addition, NWO does not require all co-funders and cooperation partners to be represented in the Project Advisory Committee. Each consortium is free to decide on the representatives in the Project Advisory Committee according to their own considerations. Independent scientific members can be at the same university as the main- or co-applicants. Please note that independent members should also be part of the advisory committee.

53. How can the work of the advisory board be compensated?
The hours spent by the Advisory Committee cannot be declared as in-kind co-financing. However, costs, such as travel costs, can be declared in the budget module knowledge utilization.

54. Do the costs for inviting international members of the Scientific Advisory board to the Netherlands for a dissemination count as costs that can be funded from the budget module internationalisation or knowledge utilisation?
These costs can be funded from the budget module knowledge utilization.

7. Impact Plan approach

General note: Please consult our online workshops and the documents and background theory at https://impact.nwo.nl for any questions regarding the Impact approaches.

55. What are productive interactions?
The definition of productive interactions is: Exchanges between researchers and with other stakeholders during which knowledge is generated and valued that is both scientifically robust and societally relevant.

Productive interactions are relational factors that promote (intermediate) knowledge utilisation and that can be consciously steered. The productivity of the interaction determines whether it contributes to knowledge utilisation.
The interactions can be direct/personal, indirect or financial.
The number and quality of productive interactions are a measure of the likelihood of societal impact.
Productive interactions do not occur automatically; they require an active process.

Examples of productive interactions are:
Designing research together with potential end-users (co-design).
The joint execution of research, the interactive discussion of research results (co-creation)

56. Can you say something about the relative importance of the societal impact and the scientific breakthroughs - the way we set up the project is specifically targeted to achieve societal impact, which necessarily will make the scientific impact secondary - is this how NWO views this as well?
No. Scientific impact is not considered to be less important than societal impact. Every ORC project should clearly show scientific impact. The application form is set up according to the logic between the Impact Plan approach, starting from the problem statement and desired societal impact, and going back from there to the scientific part of the project.

57. In the strategic activity planning of section 4.2 on the application form, it is asked to specify the activities that will be undertaken to achieve relevant outputs, as well as to enhance the potential for outputs leading to outcomes. In what sense is this different from the description in the work packages?
There is indeed an overlap between the two. In section 4.2, an overview for the entire project is asked. In the work package description, the activities are specified per work package.

58. What is the idea behind the “assumptions” in the Impact Plan approach?
In the Impact pathway, several levels of assumptions are mentioned: between societal problem and impact, between output and outcomes etc. An important part of composing the Impact Plan is making assumptions explicit, especially in a consortium with different kinds of partners and different viewpoints. Everyone makes assumptions, consciously or unconsciously. Those assumptions can differ: from person to person, between organisations or groups, and over time. Making assumptions explicit contributes to a common viewpoint, and reflecting on assumptions helps in the execution of the project and increases the chance of impact.
For concrete examples of Impact pathways and assumptions used, please refer to the online workshops.
59. **How does one need to indicate the assumptions in the proposal, in a bullet list fashion or in a narrative?**

In the application form, a bullet list is indicated in the format. It is advised to keep to the bullet list format, but one does not need to limit oneself to only using keywords. Each bullet can contain more elaboration on the assumption mentioned.

60. **What is the difference between ‘outputs’ and ‘indicators’?**

An ‘output’ in the Impact Plan context is an insight that is needed from the project in order to achieve the desired impact, and is not a research activity itself. Please note that this definition of ‘output’ is different than the ‘standard’ definition where output is publications, patents, policy documents etc. ‘Indicators’ of output can be used to monitor progress in terms of output. An output indicator can therefore include: publications, data-sets, models, and patenting requests, policy briefs, other communication products and services, pilots/proof of concept, workshops/trainings, etc.