Programme line 3: Innovation and networks

The NWA supports 25 routes. These routes form self-organising networks that connect the 140 cluster questions, encourage new networks and put important scientific, societal and economic issues on the agenda and investigate these.

Routes play a role in the organisation of the field and ensure greater involvement of the entire knowledge chain, the bringing together of relevant consortium partners, the realisation of knowledge utilisation, recognising potential societal and scientific breakthroughs within a route and monitoring the core objectives of the route and the NWA. In this way, routes can also ensure a programming effect within the research field.

Networks
So-called route leaders and quartermasters organise the routes. They can apply for funding to support their network activities.

Self-organising networks and small-scale, high-risk projects

Innovation
Besides facilitating connections between the entire knowledge chain, the NWA programme line focuses on innovation: the NWA as a stimulus for curiosity and inspiration. In the (since stopped round) Idea generator, researchers could test the receptiveness for their ideas. The possibility for such short projects now exists within the routes.

Overview of the routes in Dutch
https://2.wetenschapsagenda.nl/overzicht-route
Essence of programme line 3:
Consortia can apply for the funding of management costs within NWA routes. They can also apply for funding for small projects. In both cases, there is no competition.

Highlights
- In 2017, within the Kickstarter programme (prior to the NWA programme) an amount of 20 million euros was awarded to 8 routes in the form of kickstarter grants
- In 2019, Idea Generator grants were awarded to 79 (young) researchers, and together, these amounted to 4 million euros in funding awarded
- In 2020, a total of 3 million euros was awarded for small projects to be realised in 24 routes
- Each year, the 25 routes request funding for route management and network activities

‘As a researcher, you are often active in your own little patch – whereas there is a high chance that someone else in the world is working on exactly the same issues from a different perspective’. The chance to bring different disciplines together was unique, Dumontier agrees: ‘Another type of research funding body would never have given me the opportunity to set up a comparable experimental research with this mix of disciplines. While it was the interaction between the different working fields that was decisive for obtaining the research results.’

Michel Dumontier, Maastricht University. Kickstarter project Responsible value creation with Big Data (VWData)
- A closer look at big data.

The consortium members are, among others: Erasmus University Rotterdam, Leiden University Medical Center, Open University, Radboud University, TU Delft, Eindhoven University of Technology, Maastricht University Medical Center+, Leiden University, Maastricht University, University of Twente, Utrecht University, University of Amsterdam, VU Amsterdam, Wageningen University & Research, Institute for Information Law, Data Science Center Eindhoven, Netherlands eScience Center, SURF, TNO, Fontys University of Applied Sciences, Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, Zuyd University of Applied Sciences, Ministry of Justice and Security.