NWA-ORC round 2023

Nienke Klomp and Isa Baud | Webinar
NWA programme & ORC call procedure

Nienke Klomp – coordinator NWA-ORC programme
The Dutch Research agenda

The agenda

• Questions from society and science
• 140 cluster questions -> 25 routes
• Agenda initiated: 2015
• Update: 2022
• Reassessment: 2029

The funding programme

• Implemented by NWO on assignment of the Department of Education, Science and Culture
• Start in 2018
• Yearly budget €130 mln
• Science communication and outreach
• Broad knowledge chain, societal organisations and citizens
• Evaluation 2022
Four lines of the NWA funding programme

**Research along Routes through Consortia (ORC)**
- Scientific breakthroughs and societal impact
- Long-term, interdisciplinary research through transdisciplinary consortia
- Connection with NWA
- Annual round

**Thematic programmes**
- Questions submitted by ministries/government bodies
- Co-funding 50/50
- Calls with a focus on societal themes
- European partnerships (Horizon Europe)

**Innovation and networks**
- Support of NWA route networks
- Funding small projects in routes

**Science communication & outreach**
- Making science accessible for the public
- Intensifying interaction between science and society
- Funding science communication initiatives
- Annual public events
2022: evaluation NWA programme

- “The programme is unique and a valuable addition to the available funding options for research in the Netherlands, but adjustments needed” (https://www.nwo.nl/en/news/nwo-work-recommendations-nwa-programme-evaluation-committee)

- Focus as a result of the evaluation:
  - **Strengthen** ‘the connection between science and society’
  - Clearly **profile** the NWA programme - both compared to other funding possibilities, and in terms of the programme's content (prioritisation)
  - Improve **alignment** of NWO instruments with cooperation with social partners
  - Optimise **efficiency and effectiveness** of implementation (at NWO office level and in the field)
Consequences evaluation for NWA-ORC

- More focus
  - Each year there are several themes for which consortia can submit research proposals
  - These themes form an elaboration of one or more of the cluster questions compiled from questions submitted by citizens
  - The route networks submit the themes, and NWO assesses these
  - Each route can propose a theme in either the 2023 or 2024 round
    - 1 project per theme will be awarded

- Collaborative workshops

- Co-funding: With effect from 2023 there is no longer a requirement for co-funding within the ORC programme line
Collaborative workshops

• Encouraging collaboration, combining research ideas
• Consortium formation is actively supported but parties determine whether and with whom they want to collaborate
• Workshops are open, in particular also for parties that did not submit an initiative but that would like to play an active role in the consortium
• The workshops are part of the procedure
  • intended to contribute to the formation of broad, innovative consortia and
  • to the reduction of mutual competition and work pressure
Collaborative workshops - practical

- 2 meetings (during 2-3 subsequent weeks)
- Based on initiatives
  - Either a short project idea or a possible contribution to call theme by groups or individuals
  - Project ideas are published on the NWO website to provide a view of possibilities (substantive and strategic)
- Main applicant has to participate in both workshops
# Collaborative workshops - dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Climate change in the Global South (focus Africa): Impacts and increased resilience</td>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
<td>13 November 2023</td>
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<td>Workshop 2</td>
<td>4 December 2023</td>
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<td>Bending the curve of biodiversity loss towards a nature-positive society</td>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
<td>20 November 2023</td>
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<td>Workshop 2</td>
<td>6 December 2023</td>
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<td>Scalable Positive Energy Districts (PEDs) to create an inclusive energy transition.</td>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
<td>2 November 2023</td>
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<td>Workshop 2</td>
<td>20 November 2023</td>
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<td>Towards a circular economy: Systemic perspective for a sustainable future</td>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
<td>8 November 2023</td>
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<td>Workshop 2</td>
<td>24 November 2023</td>
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<td>Measuring the dynamic exposome for a smart approach to societal transitions</td>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
<td>29 November 2023</td>
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<td>Workshop 2</td>
<td>13 December 2023</td>
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<td>Flashpoints: how and why do conflicts escalate?</td>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
<td>6 November 2023</td>
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<td>Workshop 2</td>
<td>24 November 2023</td>
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<td>A sea of turbines</td>
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<td>16 November 2023</td>
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<td>Workshop 2</td>
<td>7 December 2023</td>
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<td>Cosmic emergence: from abstract simplicity to complex diversity</td>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
<td>22 November 2023</td>
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<td>Workshop 2</td>
<td>14 December 2023</td>
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<td>Origins of life on earth-like planets and moons</td>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
<td>13 November 2023</td>
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<td>Workshop 2</td>
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Aim of the ORC 2023-call

• Innovative, demand-driven research
• With the aim of realising scientific and societal breakthroughs
• Knowledge-chain-wide and interdisciplinary consortia: collaboration between researchers and relevant social partners and citizens

• Based on themes submitted by NWA routes:
  • Complex problems that require an interdisciplinary approach
  • Based on cluster questions, route portfolios (and possibly knowledge agendas of the routes)
  • Support within the broad network of the route concerned and are nationally and internationally innovative and relevant

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Who can apply?

- Consortia consist of:
  - Main applicant*
  - One or more co-applicants
  - One or more cooperation partners
  - Not mandatory: one or more co-funders

*The main applicant submits a proposal on behalf of the consortium
What can be applied for?

• Budget per theme: maximum € 6,750,000
• Duration: 4-8 years
• No more than one proposal awarded per theme

• Budget consists of:
  • Personnel costs
  • Material costs (including citizen science)
  • Investments
  • Knowledge utilisation (mandatory)
  • Internationalisation
  • Money follows Cooperation
  • Project management (mandatory)
Timetable NWA-ORC round 2023

3 October 2023: Deadline initiatives

30 October - 15 December: Collaborative workshops

21 March 2024: Deadline proposals

7 March 2024: Deadline submission documents assessment co-applicants

July 2024: Submission rebuttal

March - May 2024: Consulting referees

End June 2024: Submission rebuttal

September 2024: Interview selections & interviews

End October 2024: NWO Executive Board decision

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Provisional timetable NWA-ORC round 2024

- **Begin 2024:** opening call
- **April - June 2024:** Collaborative workshops
- **October 2024:** Deadline proposals
- **End September 2024:** Deadline submission documents assessment co-applicants
- **End January 2025:** Submission rebuttal
- **April/May 2025:** Interview selections & interviews
- **Second half of March 2024:** Deadline initiatives
- **End September 2024:** Deadline submission documents assessment co-applicants
- **November 2024 - January 2025:** Consulting referees
- **Mid-June 2025:** NWO Executive Board decision
Procedure: what is important?

- Registration of initiatives
  - Project idea (is published on the NWO website)
  - Expertise of individual or organisation

- Collaborative workshops (2 per theme)
  - Mandatory for main applicant
  - Strongly recommended for other consortium partners
  - Aim: Encourage cooperation and work towards limited number of joint project proposals
  - Workshops are open, in particular also for parties who did not submit an initiative
  - Consortium formation is actively supported but parties determine whether and with whom they would like to collaborate
Procedure: what is important?

The main applicant of each proposal must have attended both collaborative workshops for the theme concerned

• Fully completed application form (via ISAAC before 21 March 2024, 14:00 hours)

• Mandatory annexes:
  • Budget
  • Statements of support by cooperation partner(s)
  • Form ‘Statement and signature’

• Annexes, if applicable:
  • Generic expenditure plan (year 5 and further)
  • Statement co-funder(s)
  • Confirmation of contribution to investments
  • Guarantee for continuity in the project supervision
Assessment committee

Isa Baud - chair
Assessment committee composition

• The assessment committee consists of members from the entire knowledge chain, including societal stakeholders
• Experts with a diversity of backgrounds (expertise)
• Experience with inter- and transdisciplinary research

Formulate proposals clearly and intelligibly for this broadly composed committee
Assessment committee: preparations

- **Training sessions for the committee members**
  - Inclusive assessment
  - Impact approaches
  - Getting familiar with assessment criteria

- **Meeting preparation**
  - Reading a set of proposals incl. annexes
  - Reading the referee reports and the rebuttal
  - Drawing up a pre-advice per proposal
  - Preparation for discussions during the meeting
Assessment committee

- Assessment takes place in clusters of themes
- Tasks:
  - Drawing up pre-advice
  - Interview selection
  - Interviews
  - Advice for NWO Executive Board (priority list for awarding or rejecting proposals)
Four assessment criteria

- Assessment criteria (incl. subcriteria, see Call for proposals):
  1. Problem definition and analysis (20%)
  2. Envisaged impact and route to impact (20%)
     ➔ Impact Plan approach, please note: beyond dissemination to interactive knowledge sharing
     ➔ Impact Outlook approach

TIP: follow the Impact workshops at www.nwo.nl/impact
Four assessment criteria

• Assessment criteria (incl. subcriteria, see Call for proposals):

3. Quality of the consortium (30%)
   • Composition: interdisciplinary, knowledge-chain-wide → diversity
   • Complementarity partners
   • Co-design/co-creation
   • Task allocation
   • Development young and mid-career researchers

4. Quality of the research (30%)
   • Knowledge gap
   • Approach (inter-/transdisciplinary!) aligned with scientific problem
   • Design of the proposed research plan
More information

• NWA programme page (general): www.nwo.nl/nwa

• NWA routes: www.nwo.nl/routes

• NWA ORC themes (round 2023): www.nwo.nl/nwa-orc-themas

• NWA ORC round 2023: www.nwo.nl/nwa-orc
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