Do you have a question that is not included in this Q&A? Please contact SDF@nwo.nl

**Who can apply?** (Chapter 3.1 of the Call for proposals)

Can Bachelor Master, or PhD students at universities apply?

*No. However, researchers who did not obtain their PhD degree yet, but whose PhD date is fixed are also eligible to submit an application. They must have obtained their PhD degree at the start of the fellowship.*

Can foreign (i.e. non-Dutch) nationals apply?

*Yes, provided that they are employed by a Dutch knowledge institution. A list of eligible institutions is included in chapter 3.1 of the Call for proposals. The fellowships are also open to non-Dutch speakers. Some posts may consider it an advantage when the researcher can speak Dutch or, for example, the language of the country the post is based in.*

Can Dutch nationals employed by a non-Dutch knowledge institution apply?

*No. This call is only open to employees of Dutch knowledge institutions.*

Can you apply for more than one Embassy Science Fellowship?

*No. Researchers can apply for a maximum of 1 of the 9 selected positions for 2024.*

Can you apply if your background is not fully aligned with the assignment?

*One of the three criteria in the selection procedure is the match between the applicant and the assignment as formulated by the embassy or consulate. It is up to the researcher to decide whether his/her expertise indeed matches the assignment, and explain in the motivation letter that it fits the proposed research project.*

**What can be applied for?** (Chapter 3.2 of the Call for proposals)

What can be covered by the grant?

*For an application in this Call for proposals, a maximum of € 25,000 can be applied for. Fellows receive an allowance for travel and accommodation costs, research costs (including domestic travel, representation costs, meeting costs and other costs necessary for the implementation of the fellowship) and a small replacement fee. The replacement fee does not replace the fellow’s salary. Fellows continue to receive their regular salary from their home institution. The replacement fee is intended to (partially) cover the costs of absence.

Regarding accommodation costs, there are no tabulated values because the accommodation costs might differ depending on the post of choice. It is up to the applicant to divide the max. budget of
€ 25.000 across allowances for travel and accommodation costs, research costs and the replacement fee. Unfortunately, it is not possible to use the requested budget for material costs.

For an indication of the amount that could be used for the replacement fee, please visit the salary tables on the NWO website: https://www.nwo.nl/en/salary-tables. The table for ‘Senior Scientific Employee’ provides a good indication. However, as mentioned above, you are free to divide the max. budget of € 25.000 across the different allowances types.

Is VAT included?

The overall grant includes all costs including VAT where applicable. The grant ceiling cannot be exceeded.

The fellowship and collaboration with the post

Does the post provide a visa?

No. The researcher will need to apply for the visa him/herself. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will provide a support letter. However, it is at the host country's discretion to provide the researcher with a visa. In case a visa is not issued, the researcher will need to notify NWO and the post in order to find a suitable solution. Researchers with nationalities (or a potentially tricky track record in a specific country) that may reasonably expect to be denied a visa, are expected to refrain from applying or to indicate this as a possible issue in the application.

What is the legal status of the researcher?

The researcher will remain employed by his/her home institution. The researcher will not be entitled to a diplomatic status. The researcher will receive an award letter from NWO with the grant conditions.

Is it possible to do the entire fellowship from The Netherlands?

No. The added value of the grant is to become embedded within the post for the duration of the project. Local circumstances may allow for working from outside the post or on location, in agreement with the respective post.

Can you deviate from the preferred time of placement mentioned in the call for proposals?

This depends on the assignment. If the fellowship is linked to a specific event it might be difficult. In other cases the fellow and the post might agree that a different timing of the fellowship is more realistic. Please note that feasibility is one of the three criteria in the selection procedure. The fellowship has to be completed between 1 September 2024 and 1 September 2025.

Are you allowed to breakdown the fellowship of 1-3 months into several shorter periods?

This is possible. But, the travel frequency is restricted to maximum 2 return trips. The added value of the grant is to become embedded within the post for the duration of the project. If it adds value to the research to breakdown the fellowship into shorter periods and the post agrees with the proposal, this is allowed.
What kind of support is provided by the post?

The researcher is embedded within the post. The post will appoint a direct counterpart, provide office space, and allow the researcher to become part of the team for the duration of the project. The researcher and post will make further arrangements taking into account local circumstances (security, general conduct, use of premises, secretarial support, etc.). The post will assist the researcher in the search for accommodation. The researcher will provide for his/her tickets, insurances, laptop, telephone, and any other personal matters required for the duration of the project.

How do researcher and post collaborate?

The researcher will conduct relevant research and perform related activities within the assignment described in chapter 7.1 of the Call for proposals. However, embedded research differs from contracted research in the sense that the post is not directing the research. Rather, it is expected that the researcher and the post will further a spirit of mutual learning and exchange. The researcher will determine the research deliverables. Other deliverables might have been described in the assignment or agreed upon by the researcher and post. As part of the grant decision, NWO expects the researcher to submit a short write-up at the end of the fellowship, which does not have to meet peer review standards.

Is it possible to be (partially) placed with another institution than the post?

Yes, but only in discussion with the post. Researchers have to be embedded within the embassy or consulate, but this does not necessary mean that their office space should be at the embassy or consulate only. However, it is expected that the fellow has intensive and content-related interactions with the post about the research project to ascertain a good fit between research demands of the post and the planning and execution of activities.

Selection procedure and grant conditions (Chapter 4 and 5 of the Call for proposals)

What is the format of the application?

The application takes the form of a motivation letter and narrative Curriculum Vitae (CV) incl. key outputs (See Section 3.3 of the Call for proposals). Mandatory annex: Excel budget form, including replacement fee (for more information, see Section 3.2 of the Call for proposals). The application should be submitted as one PDF file (without encryption). The budget must be submitted in ISAAC as a separate Excel file. Any other annexes are not permitted. You must write your application in English.

How do I submit my application?

You have to submit your application in NWO’s online system ISAAC before 14:00:00 CEST, 14 May 2024. If you submit your application after the deadline it will not be included in the selection procedure. If you do not have an ISAAC account yet, then please create one at least one workday in advance of the submission deadline.

How are the Embassy Science Fellows selected?

Due to the small size of the grant, the assessment is performed by the ESF-NL bureau which consists of policy officers from relevant NWO domains. The ESF-NL bureau assesses criteria 1, 2 and 3 (see section 4.3.1 of the Call for proposals). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the post in question will provide qualitative advice on the assessment of criteria 2 and 3. The ESF-NL bureau draws up a funding recommendation and will submit it to NWO’s executive board, which then takes the award or rejection decision.

How does the researcher report to NWO?

The research activities are accounted for to NWO by means of a short final report.