



Open Competition Domain Science- XS

Round 2024

Call for proposals

Science



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1 Introduction

In this Call for proposals information is provided about the application procedure for the the Open Competition Domain Science - XS funding round 2024. This Call for proposals falls under the responsibility of the Dutch Research Council (NWO).

In this Call for proposals you will find information about the aim of this programme (Chapter 2), the conditions for the grant application (Chapter 3) and how your proposal will be assessed (Chapter 4). This is the information you need to submit a grant application. Chapter 5 states the obligations for grant recipients in the event you are awarded funding. Chapter 6 contains the contact details and Chapter 7 the annexes.

1.1 Background

NWO advances world-class scientific research. Scientific research – fundamental, applied and practice-oriented research – plays a key role in shaping our society. Through their independent, reliable and world-class research, researchers expand the frontiers of our knowledge and capabilities with their creativity and perseverance.

NWO Domain Science (NWO-domein Exacte en Natuurwetenschappen (ENW)) wants to provide opportunity for wonder, discovery, unexpected links and inspiration. Within the Open Competition of the Domain Science, NWO finances curiosity-driven, fundamental research within the research areas of the Domain Science. The research subject is of your own choice without specific thematic prerequisites.

There are three types of funding in the NWO Open Competition Domain Science: XS, M and XL which all have their specific aim and conditions. A promising idea can be quickly explored with a Domain Science-XS-grant and can be further explored with a Domain Science-M-grant. The Domain Science-XL grants allow for the advancement of the research idea into a world-class, challenging and innovative research line by combining the expertise and strengths of multiple researchgroups to work together in a consortium. For more information about the Domain Science-M and -XL grants we refer you to the respective Call for proposals on the NWO webpage.

Domain Science-XS (ENW-XS) grants are available for projects with a maximum budget of €50,000. The budget can be spent entirely at the researcher's discretion. ENW-XS grants are available to researchers who hold a postdoctoral position that spans the entire term of the project. ENW-XS welcomes proposals from postdocs. All of the conditions pertaining to the submission of research proposals are set out in Section 3.

The assessment procedure for ENW-XS differs from standard NWO procedures. The researchers who submit research proposals in ENW-XS also act as assessors for other research proposals that have been submitted. This short-duration assessment procedure was designed to assess research proposals for limited duration projects, involving a smaller budget. The assessment procedure is described in detail in Section 4.

1.2 Available budget

The available budget for this Call for Proposals is €5,600,000. This amount is divided into four equal parts, each of which is allocated to a different package of proposals. Each package has its own deadline, which is specified in Section 1.3. For each package, proposals are dealt with in two clusters – life sciences, and physical and exact sciences. The budget that is available for each package (€1,400,000) is divided proportionately according to the number of proposals taken into consideration in the two clusters, to the nearest €100,000, and then divided equally within the clusters between two groups. Applicants may decide themselves which cluster should deal with their proposals. Applicants should be aware that they will be required to assess proposals from the whole cluster and that their own proposals will be assessed by applicants in their cluster. Proposals should therefore be written with a wide audience in mind. The seven Science disciplines and associated subdisciplines are listed in Section 7.2.

If fewer than twenty proposals are submitted in a cluster before a given submission deadline, they will all be carried over to the next package, the assessment for that cluster will be postponed, and the available budgets for these clusters will be merged.

1.3 Submission deadlines

Four deadlines for submitting proposals for ENW-XS projects are specified for 2024:

Package 24-1: **5 March 2024, at 14:00:00 CET**. Decision anticipated on 25 April 2024.

Package 24-2: **14 May 2024, at 14:00:00 CEST**. Decision anticipated on 11 July 2024.

Package 24-3: **29 August 2024, at 14:00:00 CEST**. Decision anticipated on 17 October 2024.

Package 24-4: **15 October 2024, at 14:00:00 CEST**. Decision anticipated on 12 December 2024.

When you submit your application in ISAAC, you will also need to enter some details online. Therefore please start submitting your application at least one day before the deadline of this Call for Proposals. Applications that are submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.

2 Aim

The ENW-XS grants are intended to support promising ideas and to facilitate innovative and more speculative initiatives within the seven Science disciplines. The seven Science disciplines and associated subdisciplines are listed in Section 7.2. The proposed research is ground-breaking and involves a real risk of failure. What counts is that all results, be they positive or negative, must contribute to the advancement of science. These are 'wild ideas'. All proposals are anonymous, which will ensure that the assessments are based purely on the ideas in the research proposal. By investing in high-risk high-gain research, ENW-XS is helping to fulfil the requirements of NWO's 2023-2026 Strategy¹.

The ENW-XS category is specifically intended to encourage curiosity-driven, fundamental, and bold research that involves the relatively rapid exploration of a promising idea. At the end of the ENW-XS project, researchers can decide for themselves whether or not to pursue this new line of research any further. One way in which this can be done is to submit a proposal within another funding programme in the Open Competition Domain Science (Domain Science-M and Domain Science-XL) or elsewhere.

Due to the emphasis on high-risk research, Domain Science will be devoting extra attention to the publication of the results of all XS projects; not only those that open up potential new lines of research, but expressly also those that do not achieve the expected results.

¹ <https://www.nwo.nl/en/nwo-strategy-2023-2026>

3 Conditions for applicants

This chapter contains the conditions that are applicable to your grant application. Firstly it describes who can apply for funding (Section 3.1) and what you can request funding for (Section 3.2). Subsequently, you will find the conditions for preparing and submitting the application (Sections 3.3 and 3.4) and the specific funding conditions (Section 3.5).

3.1 Who can apply

Researchers who are professors or who have a PhD may submit a proposal if they have a salaried position for at least the duration of the application process and conduct research for which the grant is being requested² at one of the following organizations:

- universities located in the Kingdom of the Netherlands;
- university medical centres;
- institutes affiliated to the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) or NWO; Netherlands Cancer Institute;
- the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen;
- Naturalis Biodiversity Center;
- Advanced Research Centre for NanoLithography (ARCNL);
- Princess Máxima Center;
- Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI);
- IHE Delft.

Persons with a zero-hour employment agreement may not submit a proposal.

Grant preconditions:

- a ENW-XS proposal has a single applicant and no co-applicants;
- one applicant may have one proposal dealt with for each package;
- applicants who had a proposal dealt with in the immediately preceding ENW-XS package may not make a submission. This clause also applies to applicants whose proposals were dealt with in the final package of the ENW-XS 2023 round.

3.2 What can be applied for

For a research proposal in this Call for Proposals, applicants may apply for a sum of up to €50,000. The maximum term of the proposed project is 12 months. There are very few restrictions on the subjects of proposals. For instance, they could involve the appointment of temporary staff, material costs, the costs involved in performing citizen science, and travel expenses for commuting to other locations to conduct experiments. Postdocs are permitted to request their own salary².

Applicants are required to draw up a realistic budget and explain why the spending choices are relevant to the project. This explanation must cover all of the personnel requested.

What cannot be applied for:

- basic amenities within the institution (such as a laptop, office furniture, etc.);
- maintenance costs and insurance expenses;
- overheads.

² Any postdocs who wish to use a ENW-XS grant to extend the duration of their own appointment must hold a salaried position that does not terminate until after the scheduled date of the decision concerning the allocation of the package within which the proposal was submitted. Any postdoc who expects their position of employment to be extended for at least the duration of the application process and the research for which the grant has been requested may also submit a proposal. If it emerges that the position is not extended, or not extended long enough, this could have consequences for the grant.

ENW-XS projects must start no later than six months after the grant has been allocated and must last for no more than 12 months. The grant will be provided in the form of a lump sum. Only apply for the essentials needed to perform the research. Further details of the budget for personnel can be found in Section 7.1 of this Call.

The appointment of PhD students is subject to additional conditions. For details of these conditions, see Section 7.1 of this Call.

3.3 Preparing an application

The steps involved in writing your application are:

- download the application form from the NWO web application ISAAC or from the NWO web page (on the grant page of the funding instrument concerned);
- complete the application form;
- save the application form in ISAAC as a PDF file and upload it with any compulsory annexes;
- fill in the requested information online in ISAAC.

Compulsory annexes:

- budget ;
- information form.

Optional annex only:

- declaration appointment PhD (see section 7.1).

The compulsory annexes must be drawn up in accordance with the template provided by NWO. Annexes must be uploaded in ISAAC separately from the application. The budget must be submitted in ISAAC as an Excel file. All of the other annexes, except for the budget, must be submitted as PDF files (without encryption). Any annexes other than those stated above are not permitted.

You must write your application in English.

An application can only be submitted via the web application ISAAC. Applications that are not submitted via ISAAC will not be taken into consideration.

As the main applicant, you are required to submit the application via your own personal ISAAC account.

It is important to start with your application in ISAAC on time:

- if you do not yet have an ISAAC account, then you should create this on time to prevent any possible registration problems;
- any new organisations must also be added to ISAAC by NWO;
- you also need to submit other details online.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration by NWO.

For technical questions, please contact the ISAAC helpdesk, see contact (Chapter 6).

Applicants are expected to have informed the organization where they work about submitting the application and that the organisation accepts the grant conditions of this Call for proposals.

For this Call for proposals, your application must fit in the NWO Domain Science. Therefore, please consider well ahead of time whether your application meets the substantive criteria. In the event of any doubt, for instance because your application (partly) encompasses various domains and/or has a ZonMw character, then please get in touch with the contact person for this programme well in advance of the deadline. This person can advise you about the substantive connection between your application and this Call for proposals. Please note that the final choice is yours. For contact details please see Section 6.1.1.

3.4 Conditions for submission

3.4.1 Formal conditions for submission

NWO will assess your application against the conditions listed below. Your application will only be admitted to the assessment procedure if it meets these conditions. After submitting your application, NWO requests you to be available to implement any possible administrative corrections so that you can (still) meet the conditions for submission.

These conditions are:

- the main applicant meets the conditions stated in Section 3.1;
- the application form is, after a possible request to make additions or changes, complete and filled out according to the instructions;
- the application is submitted via the main applicant's ISAAC account;
- the application is received before the deadline;
- the application is written in English;
- the application is **anonymized** – in other words, it must meet the following conditions:
 - applicants should include neither their own name nor those of any individuals in their research group;
 - applicants should not include details of any affiliations with institutes or knowledge institutions;
 - applicants should not include references to any publications that they have authored or co-authored;
 - applicants should not include the names of any partners (or potential partners);
- the application budget is drawn up in accordance with the conditions for this Call for proposals and matches the budget justification in the proposal;
- the proposed project has a duration of 12 months;
- all of the required annexes are, after a possible request to make additions or changes, complete and filled out according to the instructions.

When submitting their proposal, applicants agree to assess proposals submitted by other applicants within the same package. If an applicant misses the deadline for submitting assessment reports, then that applicant's own proposal will not be included in the procedure. See Section 4.1 for details of the procedure.

3.5 Conditions on granting

All applications are subject to the [NWO Grant Rules 2017](#), unless this Call for Proposals includes a derogation, and the Agreement on the Payment of Costs for Scientific Research.³

3.5.1 Compliance with the National Knowledge Security Guidelines

World-class science can benefit from international cooperation. The National Knowledge Security Guidelines (hereafter: the Guidelines) helps knowledge institutions to ensure that international cooperation can take place securely. Knowledge security concerns the undesirable transfer of sensitive knowledge and technology that compromises national security; the covert influence of state actors on education and research, which jeopardises academic freedom and social safety; and ethical issues that may arise in cooperation with countries that do not respect fundamental rights.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their project complies and will continue to comply with the Guidelines. By submitting an application, the applicant commits to the recommendations stipulated in these Guidelines. In the event of a suspected breach of the Guidelines in an application

³ Upon approval, the rates will apply of the UNL (the Universities of the Netherlands) or the NFU (Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centres) prevailing at the time of the deadline of the package for which the proposal was submitted. The minimum requirements for the duration of appointments do not apply to ENW-XS.

submitted to NWO for project funding, or in a project funded by NWO, NWO may ask the applicant to provide a risk assessment demonstrating that the recommendations in the Guidelines have been taken into consideration. If the applicant fails to comply with NWO's request, or if the risk assessment is in apparent breach of the Guidelines, this may affect NWO's grant award or decision-making process. NWO may also include further conditions in the award letter if appropriate.

The National Knowledge Security Guidelines can be found on the central government website at: [Home | National Contact Point for Knowledge Security \(loketkennisveiligheid.nl\)](#).

3.5.2 Data management

The results of scientific research must be replicable, verifiable and falsifiable. In the digital age, this means that, in addition to publications, research data must also be publicly accessible insofar as this is possible. NWO expects that research data resulting from NWO-funded projects will be made publicly available, as much as possible, for reuse by other researchers. "As open as possible, as closed as necessary" is the applicable principle in this respect. Researchers, at very least, are expected to make the data and/or non-numerical results that underlie the conclusions of the published work resulting from the project publicly available at the same time as the work's publication. Any costs incurred for this can be included in the project budget. Researchers should explain how data emerging from the project will be dealt with in the data management plan that is drawn up after funding is awarded (see Section 5.1.1).

3.5.3 Scientific integrity

In accordance with the NWO Grant Rules 2017, the project that NWO funds must be carried out in accordance with the nationally and internationally accepted standards for scientific conduct as stated in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2018). By submitting the proposal, the applicant commits to this code. In the case of a (possible) violation of these standards during a project funded by NWO, the applicant should immediately inform NWO of this and should submit all relevant documents to NWO. More information about the code of conduct and the policy regarding research integrity can be found on the website: [Scientific integrity | NWO](#).

3.5.4 Ethical statement or licence

The applicant is responsible for determining whether an ethical statement or licence is needed for the realisation of the proposed project. The applicant should ensure that this is obtained from the relevant institution or ethics committee on time. The absence or presence of an ethical statement or licence at the time of the application process has no effect on the assessment of the application. If the project is awarded funding, then the grant is issued under the condition that the necessary ethical statement or licence is obtained before the latest start date for the project. The project cannot start until NWO has received a copy of the ethical statement or licence.

3.5.5 Nagoya Protocol

The Nagoya Protocol ensures an honest and reasonable distribution of benefits emerging from the use of genetic resources (Access and Benefit Sharing; ABS). Researchers who make use of genetic sources from the Netherlands or abroad for their research should familiarise themselves with the Nagoya Protocol ([ABS Focal Point - ABS Focal Point](#)). NWO assumes that researchers will take all necessary actions with respect to the Nagoya Protocol.

3.5.6 Sharing results

NWO believes it important that the results of all XS projects are shared, including those projects that do not produce the anticipated results. A public summary of all accepted projects will be published online, and Domain Science will request a short report at the end of each XS project.

4 Assessment procedure

This chapter first describes the course of the assessment procedure (Section 4.2). Second, it states the criteria that the assessment committee will use to assess your application (Section 4.2).

The NWO Code for Dealing with Personal Interests applies to all persons and NWO employees involved in the assessment and/or decision-making process ([Code for Dealing with Personal Interests | NWO](#)).

NWO strives to achieve an inclusive culture where there is no place for conscious or unconscious barriers due to cultural, ethnic or religious background, gender, sexual orientation, health or age ([Diversity and inclusion | NWO](#)). NWO encourages assessors to be actively aware of implicit associations and to try to minimise these. NWO will provide them with information about concrete ways of improving the assessment of an application.

4.1 Procedure

The application procedure consists of the following steps:

- Submitting the application
- Consideration of the proposal
- Disclosure of personal interests
- Distribution of applications in packages and groups
- Assessment by the applicants themselves
- Decision-making and ex aequo

4.1.1 Submission of a proposal

For the submission of the proposal, a standard form is available on the funding page of this Call for proposals on the NWO website. When you write your proposal, you must adhere to the questions stated on this form and the procedure given in the explanatory notes. You must also adhere to the conditions for the maximum number of words and pages.

Your complete application form must have been received before the deadline of the package in which the proposal is submitted via ISAAC (see Section 1.3). After this deadline, you can no longer submit a proposal for that package. After submitting the proposal, the main applicant will receive a confirmation of receipt.

4.1.2 Admissibility of the proposal

As soon as possible after you have submitted your proposal, you will hear from NWO whether or not your proposal will be taken into consideration. NWO will determine this based on several administrative-technical criteria (see the formal conditions for submission, Section 3.4). NWO can only take your proposal into consideration if it meets these conditions.

Please bear in mind that within two weeks after the submission deadline, NWO may approach you with any possible administrative corrections that need to be made so that your proposal can (still) meet the conditions for submission. You will be given one opportunity to make the corrections, and you will be given five working days to do this.

Before your application is taken into consideration, NWO may question whether it is sufficiently relevant to the selected cluster. If an applicant is given the opportunity of making corrections, they will also be given the option of changing their choice of cluster. The final choice of cluster is up to the applicant.

4.1.3 Distribution of applications in packages, clusters, and groups

Four submission deadlines are specified over the period of one year (see Section 1.3). All proposals submitted before a given deadline are treated as a single package.

For each package, proposals under consideration are first divided between two clusters based on the preferences expressed by the applicants: life sciences (LS) and physical and exact sciences (PES). More information on what the cluster classification entails can be found in Section 7.2 of this Call.

After the division into clusters, the proposals will be divided between two groups (A and B), so that there are four groups in each package: LS-A, LS-B, PES-A, and PES-B. The division among the groups is based on when submissions are made to NWO, with due regard to the personal interests expressed by applicants.

4.1.4 Assessment by the applicants themselves

In each cluster, proposals in group A are assessed by the applicants in group B, and those in group B assessed by the applicants in group A. The proposals in group A are randomly assigned to the applicants in group B (in the same cluster) and the proposals in group B are randomly assigned to the applicants in group A (again, in the same cluster). This means that every assessing applicant (hereinafter 'assessor') will receive a number of proposals from applicants who are not in the same part of the package as their own proposal. The proposals are allocated to assessors at random (with due regard to the personal interests expressed by applicants), without any account taken of the subject matter of the proposal or the assessors' fields of expertise. The starting point is that each assessor is given ten proposals to assess and that each proposal is assessed by a similar number of assessors.

All applications are anonymous. A research proposal therefore makes no mention of the applicant's name. This ensures that the assessor will make an unbiased assessment of the quality of the ideas contained in that proposal.

Each assessor will rank the proposals they have assessed, based on the assessment aspects (see Section 4.2), whereby the applications must all be allocated a different ranking from one (highest quality) to ten. The assessor writes a report for each proposal, giving the ranking (with regard to the proposals assessed by that particular assessor) and a short written explanation for each assessment aspect that justifies the ranking given.

Assessors must submit their reports within ten working days. If an assessor fails to meet the deadline, then their own proposal will be withdrawn from the procedure and will not be taken into consideration.

4.1.5 Decision-making and ex aequo

The assessors and applicants associated with a particular package of proposals do not meet. The Domain Science office will decide the final rankings of the proposals, based on the rankings submitted by the assessors. Four final rankings are made for each package: one per group. There will be no opportunity for a rebuttal.

The final ranking of the proposals is determined by taking the average of all the rankings received per proposal, with two rankings – one corresponding to the highest ranking and one to the lowest ranking – not counting towards that average.

Ex aequo is defined by NWO as a situation in which two or more proposals are tied on the basis of their average score. In the event of a tied final ranking of two or more proposals (rounded down to one decimal place), the following principles will apply in this order:

- proposals by female applicants will have preference;
- proposals with the highest rankings overall will have preference; the only rankings considered here will be those that were used to determine the average for the final ranking.

Please note: female applicants have to select 'Female' under 'Gender' in their basic personal data in ISAAC to qualify for the preferential treatment.

Finally, the Executive Board of the NWO Domain Science will examine the procedure that has been followed and base its decision to approve or reject the proposals on the results of the four final rankings, the assessment reports and the available funding.

Applicants will be informed of the results once the Executive Board of the NWO Domain Science has completed the decision-making process. In addition to the final ranking, the applicants will also receive the assessment reports concerning their proposal, including the rank provided by each assessor, plus details of each assessor's rationale. Applicants will receive full details of the rankings and the assessors' rationale, including those that were not included in determining the average for the final ranking.

4.1.6 Timetable

Below is the timetable for this Call for Proposals in relation to the first submission deadline. The timelines for subsequent packages are similar, with the submission deadline being week 0, and will be published on the funding page of the NWO website. NWO may be obliged to make adjustments to the timeline of this Call for Proposals during the current procedure. Applicants of course receive timely notification in this case.

XS 2024 timetable, package 1		
5 March 2024, at 14:00:00 CET.	Deadline for the submission of proposals	Week 0
6-19 March 2024	Assessment of requirements for submission	Weeks 1-3
6-19 March 2024	Disclosure of personal interests	Weeks 1-3
21 March 2024	Proposals sent for assessment	Week 3
5 April 2024, at 14:00:00 CEST.	NWO receives assessment reports	Week 5
25 April 2024	The Executive Board of the NWO Domain Science reaches a decision	Week 7
Starting date for project	No later than six months after the date of formal approval	
End date for project	No later than 12 months after starting date	

4.2 Criteria

The assessors who rank the proposals will focus on the following aspects. These aspects are not weighted. At the discretion of an assessor, both of these aspects may be used for the purposes of ranking. However, this ranking must be accompanied by a short written explanation, showing how it was awarded on the basis of the assessment aspects shown below.

High-risk/high-gain

Is the proposed research innovative, highly speculative, and ground-breaking? Could the research proposal potentially have a scientific impact? Does the proposed research align with the aim of the Call, as detailed in Chapter 2?

Feasibility of the research plan

The objective, rationale, and work plan must be clearly described. Can the project be carried out within the maximum period of 12 months and within the requested budget?

Proposals must be drawn up with a wide audience in mind, to enable assessors from all Science disciplines in the relevant cluster to properly evaluate the research plan and the above assessment aspects. The seven Science disciplines and associated subdisciplines are listed in Section 7.2. The assessors may award a lower ranking to any proposal drawn up in a way that is not accessible to those in other disciplines in that cluster.

5 Obligations for grant recipients

This chapter details the various obligations that - in addition to the conditions stated in Section 3.5 - apply after funds have been awarded.

5.1.1 Data management

Researchers whose proposals have been approved must draw up a data management plan. The applicant describes in the plan whether use will be made of existing data, whether new data will be collected or generated, and how the data will be made FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable. Before submission, the data management plan should be checked by a data steward or similar officer of the organization where the project will be realized. The plan should be submitted to NWO via ISAAC within four months of the proposal being awarded funding. NWO will check the plan as quickly as possible. Approval of the data management plan by NWO is a condition for disbursement of the funding. The plan can be adjusted during the research.

More information about the data management protocol of NWO can be found at: www.nwo.nl/en/research-data-management.

5.1.2 Intellectual property

With respect to intellectual property (IP), the NWO IP policy applies. This can be found in Chapter 4 of the NWO Grant Rules 2017.

Applicants must carry out a project funded by NWO during the time that they work for the knowledge institution. If an applicant or a researcher funded by NWO is appointed by more than one employer, then the other employer should relinquish any possible IP rights that emerge from the project of the applicant.

5.1.3 Socially responsible licensing

The knowledge that emerges from the project could be suitable for use in society. When agreements about licensing and/or the transfer of research results developed under this Call for proposals are made, due consideration should be given to the ten principles for socially responsible licensing, as stated in the NFU factsheet "[19.4511 Ten principles for Socially Responsible Licensing v19-12-2019.pdf](#) (nfu.nl)".

5.1.4 Open Access

As a signatory to the Berlin Declaration (2003) and a member of cOAlition S (2018), NWO is committed to making the results of the research it funds openly accessible via the internet (Open Access). By doing this, NWO gives substance to the ambitions of the Dutch government to make all publicly funded research available in Open Access form. Scientific publications arising from projects awarded on the basis of this Call for proposals must therefore be made available in Open Access form in accordance with the Open Access Policy.

Scientific articles

Scientific articles must be made available in Open Access form immediately at the time of publication (without embargo) via one of the following routes:

- publication in a fully Open Access journal or platform registered in the DOAJ;
- publication in a subscription journal and the immediate deposition of at least the author accepted manuscript of the article in an Open Access repository registered in Open DOAR;
- publication in a journal for which a transformative Open Access agreement exists between UNL and a publisher. For further information, see [Open Access I](#).

Books

Different requirements apply to scholarly books, book chapters and edited collections. See the Open Access Policy Framework at [Open Science | NWO](#).

CC BY licence

To ensure the widest possible dissemination of publications, at least a Creative Commons (CC BY) licence must be applied. Alternatively – in case of substantial interest – the author may request to publish under a CC BY-ND licence. For books, book chapters and collected volumes, all CC BY licence options are allowed.

Costs

Costs for publication in fully Open Access journals can be budgeted in the application using the budget module for “material costs”. Costs for publications in hybrid journals are not eligible for reimbursement by NWO. For Open Access books, a separate NWO Open Access Books Fund is available.

For more detailed information about NWO’s Open Access policy, see [Open Science | NWO](#).

6 Contact and other information

6.1 Contact

6.1.1 Specific questions

For specific questions about this Call for proposals, please contact:

Susan Licumahua
Tel. +31 (0)70 344 06 15

Dr. Sophie Schmid
Tel. +31 (0)70 349 40 81

E-mail: enw-xs@nwo.nl

6.1.2 Technical questions about the web application ISAAC

For technical questions about the use of ISAAC, please contact the ISAAC helpdesk. Please read the manual first before consulting the helpdesk. The ISAAC helpdesk can be contacted from Monday to Friday between 10:00 and 17:00 hours on +31 (0)70 34 40 600. However, you can also submit your question by email to isaac.helpdesk@nwo.nl. You will then receive an answer within two working days.

6.2 Other information

The whole text of this Call for proposals has been published in both Dutch and English. The Dutch version is deemed authentic. For legal interpretation the text of the Dutch version will be decisive.

NWO processes data from applicants received in the context of this Call in accordance with the NWO Privacy Statement, [Privacy Statement | NWO](#).

NWO might approach applicants for an evaluation of the procedure and/or research programme.

7 Annexes:

7.1 Explanation notes concerning the budget for personnel

Personnel appointments that may be requested	Maximum amount
PhD student	in accordance with UNL or NFU rates ⁴
Postdoc	in accordance with UNL or NFU rates ⁴
Non-academic staff (NWP) at organizations listed under 3.1	in accordance with UNL or NFU rates ⁴
Other academic staff (OWP) at organizations listed under 3.1	€50,000

A grant to cover salary costs can be requested for any personnel who make a substantial contribution to the research in question. Funding for these salary costs depends on the type of appointment and the organization where the staff member is (or will be) employed.

- For university institutions, salary costs are funded in accordance with the UNL salary tables that apply at the time the grant is awarded (www.nwo.nl/salaristabellen).
- For university medical centres, salary costs are funded in accordance with the NFU salary tables that apply at the time the grant is awarded (www.nwo.nl/salaristabellen).
- In the case of the Caribbean Netherlands, the Dutch government appoints civil servants on the BES islands (Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba) subject to conditions that differ from those in the European Netherlands (<https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/werken-bij-rijksdienst-caribisch-nederland/arbeidsvoorwaarden>).

The rates for personnel costs are included in the proposal form's budget template. Remunerations for PhD scholarship students ('bursalen') at a Dutch university are not eligible for funding from NWO. Below is an explanation of the available appointments.

PhD students (including MD-PhDs)

In ENW-XS, applicants may apply for sums of up to €50,000, which is insufficient for paying for a full four-year appointment of a PhD student. Accordingly, research proposals that include a request for a budget for a PhD student must be accompanied by a statement signed by the dean of the applicant's faculty or the director of the applicant's research institute. This statement must indicate that the requested PhD student will be newly appointed for 48 months at 1.0 FTE, or the equivalent thereof, and that the difference will be adjusted by the applicant's institution. However, the ENW-XS project itself must be completed within twelve months. Any further research carried out by the requested PhD student is not covered by the ENW-XS proposal. Accordingly, there is no need to include explanatory notes regarding such further research in the research proposal.

The budget may not be used to extend the appointment of an existing PhD student. A PhD student whose dissertation has already been approved can be appointed as a postdoc. The applicant is personally responsible for ensuring that this appointment is in keeping with any relevant guidelines drawn up by the institution at which the research is to be carried out.

⁴ Upon approval, the rates will apply of the UNL (the Universities of the Netherlands) or the NFU (Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centres) prevailing at the time of the deadline of the package for which the proposal was submitted. The minimum requirements for the duration of appointments do not apply to ENW-XS.

Postdoc

Any postdocs who wish to use a ENW-XS grant to extend the duration of their own appointment must hold a salaried position that does not terminate until after the scheduled date of the decision concerning the allocation of the package within which the proposal was submitted. There are no additional conditions attached to the appointment of a postdoc.

Non-academic staff (NWP) at universities

These may include student assistants, programmers, technical assistants, or analysts. Depending on the level of the position, the appropriate salary table for NWO at MBO, HBO or university level applies. No additional conditions are attached to the appointment of non-academic staff.

Other academic staff (OWP) at universities

Funding can also be requested for the appointment of other academic staff (OWP), such as AIOS (doctor in training to become a specialist), ANIOS (doctor not in training to become a specialist), or people with a university Master's degree or the Dutch academic titles of 'drs.' or 'ir.'. The applicant is personally responsible for ensuring that this appointment is in keeping with any relevant guidelines drawn up by the institution at which the research is to be carried out. The appointment must also be in accordance with the applicable Collective Labour Agreement for the institution at which the research is to be carried out. No additional conditions are attached to the appointment of other academic staff.

7.2 Science research areas

The scope of this Call for Proposals includes proposals in the fields (or those closely related to them) of earth and environmental sciences, astronomy, chemistry, computer science, life sciences, physics, and mathematics. At ENW-XS, science disciplines are divided between two clusters – life sciences, and physical and exact sciences. It goes without saying that there are various fields that cannot be readily classified into specific disciplines. Accordingly, some of the following research areas are listed under more than one discipline (underlined); the inclusion of disciplines here is mainly intended to make the research areas easy to find. Applicants may decide themselves which cluster should deal with their proposals.

The research areas are listed in alphabetical order, for each specified discipline.

7.2.1 Life sciences cluster

Life sciences

Agronomy
 Animal sciences, zoology
Biochemistry
Bioinformatics
 Biomedical research
Biotechnology
 Cell biology
 Developmental biology
 Ecology
Environmental sciences
 Evolutionary biology
 Genetics, omics
 Immunology
 Microbiology, virology, parasitology
Molecular biology
 Neurosciences
 Nutrition, food

Organismal biology
Pharmaceutics, pharmacology
Physics of life
Physiology
Plant sciences
Systems biology
Theoretical biology, modelling

7.2.2 Physical and Exact sciences cluster

Astronomy

Galaxies
Gravity and the universe
High-energy astrophysics
Instrumentation - telescopes, detectors and techniques
Planetary sciences
Stars
Very large databases in astronomy: archiving, handling and analysis

Chemistry

Analytical chemistry
Biochemistry
Biotechnology
Catalysis
Chemical biology
Chemical technology, process technology
Inorganic chemistry
Macromolecular chemistry, polymer chemistry
Materials chemistry
Molecular biology
Organic chemistry
Physical chemistry
Structural biology
Synthetic biology
Theoretical, computational and quantum chemistry

Computer science

Artificial intelligence, expert systems
Algorithms, data structures, complexity, and computability
Bioinformatics
Computer graphics, computer simulation, virtual reality
Computer systems, architectures, networks
Data management, data mining and information theory
Information systems, information storage and retrieval, user interfaces, multimedia
Security and privacy
Software engineering, programming languages, formal methods

Earth and environmental sciences

Atmosphere sciences
Environmental sciences
Geochemistry
Geophysics
Geodesy, physical geography
Geodynamics, sedimentation, tectonics, geomorphology
Geotechnics

Hydrosphere sciences

Marine sciences

Palaeoceanography

Palaeoclimate

Palaeontology, stratigraphy

Petrology, mineralogy, sedimentology

Planetary sciences

Mathematics

Algebra, number theory, discrete mathematics

Mathematics of data science

Functional analysis, control theory

Dynamical systems, differential equations

Geometry, topology

Logic, set theory

Numerical analysis, scientific computing

Optimization, operations research

Probability, statistics

Physics

Atomic, molecular and optical physics

Condensed matter, materials and nanophysics

Particle and astroparticle physics

Physics of energy

Physics of fluids and soft matter

Physics of life

Physics of technology and instrumentation

Plasma physics

Quantum physics and technology

Theoretical and mathematical physics

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