

Frequently Asked Questions about the Innovational Research Incentives Scheme 2012

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1. Is there an age limit or are there any other time-limits for applicants under the scheme?

There are no age limits, but there are set limits for the number of years that have elapsed since the award of a doctorate. For Veni applicants the time-limit is 3 years, for Vidi applicants 8 years, and for Vici applicants 15 years from the award of the doctorate. Starting from 2009 there are no restrictions for certain functions: also professors are permitted to submit Vidi and Vici applications.

2. Can foreign researchers apply?

The scheme is open to researchers of all nationalities working anywhere in the world.

3. Is it possible to apply from abroad without being an employee of a Dutch research institute?

Yes, but the research must take place at one of the Dutch host institutions listed in the brochure, and the researchers concerned must become employees of that institution. To set up an Iris account, applicants have to select a Dutch research institute. Any applicant who is not yet employed by a Dutch institution when setting up the account should select the one at which s/he plans to conduct the research. The applicant must, however, always give his/her current address in the application itself.

4. Can a researcher with a permanent contract of employment apply?

Researchers can apply irrespective of the nature of their current employment.

5. Can researchers apply for a Veni grant even if they have not yet received a doctorate?

A researcher who has not yet been awarded a doctorate can apply but the application must be accompanied by an official declaration by the entire manuscript committee that the manuscript of the thesis has been approved.

6. Do applications always have to be submitted via the IRIS system?

Yes, use of the Iris system is compulsory. To submit a new application, go to the website (www.nwo.nl/vi) and select the Veni, Vidi or Vici page. Once the round has begun (around two months before the deadline), you will then be able to click on a link to Iris. A crucial preparatory step in submitting an application via Iris is to convert the completed application form to the compulsory PDF format (see question 7). The only exception to this rule concerns applications within the medical sciences. The Medical Sciences division uses a similar system called ProjectNet, to which access is provided via the division's own website (www.zonmw.nl).

7. Is PDF format really necessary?

Yes. PDF is the only format accepted by the electronic system because it is the only one that guarantees that the files received by NWO are identical to those sent by the applicants. If you experience any technical problems with conversion from Word to PDF, contact your own computer support service or NWO's Iris helpdesk: iris@nwo.nl or tel. 0900-6964747 (15 eurocents p/m). The helpdesk is open on weekdays between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Dutch time). In the case of technical problems when submitting to ZonMw (ProjectNet), please contact the ProjectNet helpdesk: projectnet@zonmw.nl or 070-3495178.

8. Does the maximum number of words for the project application ("proposed research") include the bibliographical references?

The maximum number of words is excluding references.

9. Can a Veni applicant include the cost of additional research manpower in the budget?

No, the costs of additional research staff cannot be included. Recipients of Veni grants are not supposed to set up research teams. Since Veni grants are designed to help individual researchers, applicants must include only their own salary costs in the budget. N.B. This is a key difference between Veni grants and ones under the Vidi and Vici schemes, where recipients are allowed to appoint additional research staff.

10. Can the grant-aided research be done on a part-time basis?

Part-time research is a possibility under the scheme. In the case of Veni grants, the duration of the project can be extended by a maximum of 1 year (from 3 to 4 years) if the research is being done part-time (0.75 fte). In the case of Vidi and Vici grants, no time extension is permitted but there is the possibility of appointing additional research staff.

11. Is it permissible to apply for two forms of grant simultaneously (e.g. Veni and Vidi)?

No, candidates are not allowed to have applications for more than one form of Innovational Research grant running simultaneously. For example: a candidate that in principle is eligible for applying for both Veni and Vidi and has chosen to apply for a Vidi grant in 2011, is not allowed to apply for a Veni in the 2012 round, because the outcome of the Vidi application isn't known before the deadline for the second Veni round.

12. Can the applicant's entire salary be included in the budget, or must deductions be made for time spent on non-research activities, such as teaching?

If the applicant is to devote no more than 25% of his/her working time to non-research activities (teaching/administration/management), the entire salary may be covered by the grant. If more than this amount of time is to be spent on such activities, the grant application should relate only to the proportion of working time to be directly devoted to the research.

For example:

- Applicant A has a full-time appointment and devotes 50% of her time to research and the other 50% to teaching duties and other tasks. She can apply for grant to cover 50% of her gross salary (0.5 fte).
- Applicant B has a 0.5 fte appointment and devotes 0.4 fte (80%) to research. He can apply for grant to cover his entire salary (0.5 fte).
- Applicant C has a 0.6 fte appointment and devotes 0.2 fte (33%) to teaching duties and administration. She can apply for grant to cover the costs of 0.4 fte.

13. Can the budget exceed the maximum available subsidy?

The budget can exceed the maximum stated in the brochure (Veni € 250,000, Vidi € 800,000, Vici € 1,500,000), but NWO's contribution will never be more than that amount. Where the budget exceeds the maximum, the institution (or a third party) must send NWO an authorised letter guaranteeing to meet the excess costs. The letter should be sent by post and timed to coincide with submission of the application.

14. What are the cost guidelines for employing an additional PhD student or postdoc research assistant?

Determining the gross salary costs can be done by taking the current gross salary costs and incorporating periodic increases and other salary increases that are expected according to the current CAO-NU (NU stands for 'Dutch Universities').

15. When does an institutional guarantee need to be provided?

If the budget in an application exceeds the maximum stated in the brochure (Veni € 250,000, Vidi € 800,000, Vici € 1,500,000), the institution (or a third party) must send NWO an authorised letter guaranteeing to meet the excess costs. A form for the institutional guarantee can be downloaded from the website (www.nwo.nl/vi). Besides, an institutional guarantee was compulsory only for applications submitted in rounds taking place in or before 2008.

16. What about conditions of grant?

From the beginning of 2009, institutional guarantees will no longer be compulsory. They will be replaced by specific grant conditions (e.g. regarding employment by the institution). The exact conditions will be sent to applicants along with the award letter.

17. Is the knowledge utilisation section compulsory?

Yes, from the round of 2012 each researcher applying for a VI grant is asked to devote a few paragraphs to knowledge utilisation. All applications will, in addition to assessing the quality of the candidate and the quality of the project, be judged on the aspect of knowledge utilisation. The assessment of knowledge utilization will count for 20% of the overall assessment.

18. How should I submit an application which does not fit neatly into the field of study covered by any one NWO division?

For Veni and Vidi applicants, NWO offers the option of submitting such an applications to a separate interdivisional portal. Interdivisional applications will be handled in accordance with procedures similar to those used when applications are submitted to a particular division, but there will be a separate committee to rank the interdivisional proposals in comparison with each other. As the Vici applications are assessed on a science-wide basis, Vici candidates can submit their application to a single central portal within NWO. A separate interdivisional portal will therefore be scrapped.

19. What is meant by divisions?

The application form asks you to say which division should deal with your application. If, on receiving your application, NWO feels that a different division would be more appropriate, the secretary for the round will contact you.

20. What does the form mean by 'non-referees'?

This relates to an optional section of the application which gives you the chance to designate up to 3 people or groups who should NOT be asked to assess your application because you believe that they might be prejudiced against you or it. These are the people termed 'non-referees' in the form. Do NOT name these people in the electronic version of your application. Their names and addresses should be uploaded in electronic form in a separate document in Iris or ProjectNet. For further information, see the explanatory notes accompanying the application form.

21. Can I send publications?

No, publications are not required and will not be taken into account.

22. How do I calculate the average impact factor of the research field?

It is only compulsory to calculate the average impact factor if your proposal is submitted to the Medical Science division. Information on the average impact factors of the different research fields can be found on the 'ISI Web of Science' website. Via "subject category" and "view category summary list" you can find all kinds of information about the specified category, including the average impact factor. The applicant may use data from different categories to calculate the average impact factor of their research field.

23. How do I calculate the man-years of research?

NWO understands man-years of research to be the time you have been employed to do research since your doctorate. The man-years of research do not include the time you were appointed to perform management tasks or to teach. As an example, we have calculated the man-years or research for the following CV. Please write your own calculation on your application.

CV

June 1999: Doctorate

- I. July 1999 – December 1999: unemployed.
- II. January 2000 – June 2003: 0,8 fte position. 80% to be spent on research, 20% on education.
- III. July – December 2003: sick leave.
- IV. January 2004 – April 2004: maternity leave.
- V. May 2004 – December 2008: 1 fte position. 60% to be spent on research, 20% on education, 20% on management.
- VI. January 2009 – May 2010: 0,8 fte position. 60% to be spent on research, 20% on education, 20% on management.

Calculation man-years of research (in months)

- I. 0 months
- II. 42 months * 0,8 fte position * 0,8 spent on research = 26,88 months
- III. 0 months
- IV. 0 months
- V. 56 months * 1 fte position * 0,6 spent on research = 33,6 months
- VI. 17 months * 0,8 fte position * 0,6 spent on research = 8,16 months

Total: 26,88 + 33,6 + 8,16 = 68,6 months of research

The man-years of research serve to give reviewers and committee members an indication of the time you have actually spent on your research. Please note that the man-years of research does not have a correlation to the rules for applying for extension. For more information about applying for extension please refer to question 24 of the FAQ.

24. When can I apply for an extension to the time-limit for applications on the grounds of care responsibilities or training in a clinical specialism?

If you want to apply for an extension to the career deadline, you can say so on the application form. This is necessary only if the period that has elapsed since the award of your doctorate is longer than that stated in the brochure. Before you submit your application, contact the coordinator of the Innovational Research Incentives Scheme to discuss your chances of obtaining an extension (vi@nwo.nl).

a) Care responsibilities

An extension on the grounds of care responsibilities will be granted only if you can show that you are taking or have taken parental, maternity or care leave, or that you have combined a part-time research appointment with care responsibilities. The care responsibilities must have related to a child/children (aged 12 or under) who was/were part of your own household. The rules for calculating the extension are stated in full in the explanatory notes on the grant application forms. They relate only to the period since the award of your doctorate (the effective research career).

- Female researchers who have given birth to a child/children are granted a standard extension of 18 months per child.
- Male researchers are granted an extension of up to 1 year per child born in the period since the doctoral award, but only to compensate for formal reductions in working hours. A distinction is drawn between children under the age of 4 and children aged between 4 and 12, see the scheme below.

	Full-time care responsibilities	Part-time care responsibilities
Children under the age of 4	...years x 1.0 fte care x 1 year extension	...years x 0.? fte care x 1 year extension
Children aged 4 –	...years x 1.0 fte care x 0.5 year extension	...years x 0.? fte care x 0.5 year extension

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- In the case of sick leave or leave taken to care for blood relatives or relatives by marriage in the first degree, compensation will be given for any formal reduction in working hours.
- **The maximum extension permitted by NWO to any applicant will be 5 years,** and the maximum for each child will be 18 months. Even if an applicant has taken care leave and trained in a clinical specialism during the relevant period, the permitted extension will never exceed 5 years.

b) Training in a clinical specialism

You can also apply for an extension of the time-limit if you have undertaken training in a clinical specialism during the relevant period. For the complete list of clinical specialisms for the extension scheme we kindly refer you to our website:

http://www.nwo.nl/nwohome.nsf/pages/NWOP_8L7EUH.. The following rules apply:

- You can add the total aggregated time spent on training in the clinical specialism since the award of your doctorate to the normal time-limit for applying for the Veni, Vidi or Vici grant.
- If you undertook medical training and research simultaneously, you can calculate the extension in the same sort of way as if you had had care responsibilities.
- For example: Following the award of your doctorate, you spent 3 years training in a clinical specialism and at the same time spent 10% (0.1 fte) of your time on academic research. In that case, the time-limit for your grant application can be extended by 90% (0.9 fte) of 3 years. In the case of a Veni application, this means that the time-limit of 3 years following the award of the doctorate can be extended by 32 months (90% of 3 years).
- The maximum extension permitted by NWO will be 5 years. Even if an applicant has taken care leave and trained in a clinical specialism during the relevant period, the permitted extension will never exceed 5 years.

Full-time training	Part-time training/research
... years x 1.0 fte training x 1 year extension	... years x 0.? fte training x 1 year extension