

NWO Regulation on Granting

Who may submit a grant proposal, what can be applied for and how? The answers to these questions can be found in the Application procedure of the NWO Regulation on Granting. This part of the Regulation contains the NWO-wide conditions for the submission of grant proposals. More specific rules and conditions are given in the relevant grant brochures.

If a proposal is honoured then the grant is awarded under the General Provisions. In additions to these, extra provisions may be sent with the grant award letter.

The assessment procedure is described in the Assessment and Funding Allocation Procedure. Explanations of the terms used are described in the Definitions.

These three regulations:

- Application procedure
- Assessment and Funding Allocation Procedure
- General Provisions (at awarding);

supplemented by the

- Definitions

apply to all NWO funding instruments including those that are partly funded by NWO and partly by external financiers. The aforementioned regulations together form the **NWO Regulation on Granting** which, from a legal perspective, is generally binding.

The NWO Regulation on Granting elaborates upon the legislation concerning grants. The General Administrative Law Act, in particular, contains quite an extensive regulation about 'Grants' and 'Grant decisions', albeit in abstract form. In relation to this Act, the NWO Regulation on Granting forms a concrete grants regulation within the context of this Act.

Exceptions to the application of the NWO Regulation on Granting are:

- a. Small grants awarded by a grant settlement decision:
A general exception to the scope of the NWO Regulation on Granting are grants that are immediately settled without a prior funding allocation decision, as long as the amount awarded is not higher than 50,000 euros.
- b. Funding instruments realised by NWO but that are partially or completely funded by another party, can remain outside of the scope of this Regulation if that is agreed with the external granting body and the rules that apply are included in the grant brochure instead.

The NWO Regulation on Granting applies to all sections of NWO including the NWO temporary taskforces and the legal bodies mandated by NWO to award grants, namely WOTRO Science for Global Development, NCF, Technology Foundation STW and FOM.

For ZonMw, the NWO Regulation on Granting applies to funding instruments realised by ZonMw for the (with ZON merged) NWO-Division for Medical Science.

Besides these general rules, additional specific rules may apply per funding instrument or funding round. These are described in the relevant programme brochure or, where more appropriate, are sent with the grant award letter. The administrative body which publishes the specific regulation or brochure bears responsibility for ensuring that these specific rules fit within the framework of the NWO Regulation on Granting. The NWO Regulation on Granting refers at several points to specific regulations such as the Agreement on the Payment of Costs for Scientific Research and Code of Conduct on Conflicts of Interest.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. Who can apply?

Article 1.1 Standard opening

The submission of grant proposals is open to researchers from the following knowledge institutions:

- a. Dutch universities
- b. NWO and KNAW institutes
- c. the Netherlands Cancer Institute
- d. the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen
- e. researchers from the Dutch-Belgian Beam Line at the ESRF in Grenoble

Official representatives from these institutions may also submit proposals if this is explicitly stated in the brochure.

Article 1.2 Extension of submission

A. By the decision-taking body

The aforementioned possibilities for submission can be extended for specific funding instruments in favour of other researchers and/or knowledge institutions as meant in Article 1.1 by means of a decision of the administrative body that will take the relevant grant allocation decisions.

Decisions to extend the possibilities for submission cannot be taken at a hierarchally lower level than that of the divisional board.

In the event of such a decision, further conditions for submission can be set. In principle, research funded by the NWO is carried out at a knowledge institution.

In the event that the decision to extend the possibilities for submission is in favour of certain organisations and, where applicable, their employees, then at the very least the following cumulative conditions apply:

- a. such an organisation is located in the Netherlands, unless
 - it is an international funding instrument wherein an NWO administrative body bears the responsibility for the application and assessment procedure, or
 - a cofinancer of an NWO funding instrument makes a significant contribution to the budget available for this instrument and an agreement has been reached between NWO and this financier about the types and/or percentage of foreign organisations that may submit proposals.
- b. such an organisation has a public task, carries out independent research and is financed for at least 50% by public means.
- c. such an organisation has no profit status other than that for the purposes of further research.
- d. the researchers enjoy freedom of publication in the international academic literature.

B. By the Governing Board

The Governing Board can, at the request of an NWO administrative body or otherwise, decide to further extend the possibilities for submission for a specific funding instrument.

Article 1.3 Submission limitations

In principle, submission takes place in response to open calls unless the administrative body concerned decides otherwise and announces this in the brochure or makes this known in another manner.

Furthermore, NWO administrative bodies retain the right to impose limits on the type of applicants and their knowledge institutions and/or the number of proposals that may be submitted within a funding round (possibly in combination with proposals in other funding rounds) within a certain period. The period in which these limitations apply must – insofar as this is possible – be stated in the relevant brochure(s).

The NWO administrative body also retains the right to determine how often the proposal in question, or an improved version thereof, may be submitted within a funding instrument as long as this limitation is included in the brochure. However, an applicant may not derive any rights from the assessment of his proposal when submitted in an earlier round.

Article 1.4 Applicant's qualifications

The following requirements apply to all grant applicants:

- a. they have at least a masters' diploma or are qualified to a comparable level.
- b. during the period for which the grant is requested they should continue to be involved in the research that the grant proposal relates to.

In those cases where the applicant is not the person responsible for executing the research proposal, this person must also:

- d. hold a doctorate and/or be a professor.
- e. If an applicant is not working at a university then this person must clearly have sufficient experience in the research area concerned and in the supervision of research.
- f. on submitting his proposal supply a declaration from the knowledge institution concerned from which it is apparent that condition b. is satisfied.

2. What can be requested?

Article 2.1 The context of the grant

Grants can be requested for the realisation of scientific research and the activities associated with this as specified in the brochure. The starting point for this is that good employment conditions are guaranteed by the institution where the research will be realised.

Article 2.2 Budget structure

Each proposal must be accompanied by a budget based on the activities to be realised for which – insofar as it is applicable – a distinction is made between the following cost categories:

- a. personnel costs
- b. material costs
- c. where applicable, a bench fee attached to the personal appointment(s).

Article 2.3 Fundable costs

For a grant proposal the costs incurred are fundable as long as:

- a. these are direct research costs and other costs associated with the aim described in the proposal and fit within the objective described in the brochure.
- b. these research costs and other costs are incurred after both the date on which the funding was allocated and the starting date of the project, unless the grant-awarding administrative body explicitly decides otherwise due to exceptional circumstances associated with the (partial) external funding of a funding instrument.
- c. these research costs and other costs are not being funded from other sources.
- d. when the grant is used to remunerate personnel costs for persons who do not fall under the NU or UMC collective labour agreements then in NWO's opinion the decision to appoint these persons justifies payment from public research funding.

The Agreement on the Payment of Costs for Scientific Research provides maximum rates for the fundable costs. The amounts stated for these costs in the grant proposal, including the associated increments, may not exceed the standard amounts stated in the Agreement. The same applies where the Agreement is not followed unless explicit permission to do otherwise has been obtained from the Governing Board.

3. What can be applied for?

Article 3.1 The application system

Proposals may only be submitted via the application system as stated in the brochure.

Article 3.2 The appropriate language

The brochure states which language the proposal should be submitted in.

NWO Assessment and Funding Allocation Procedure

1. Principles

Article 1.1 Principles underlying assessment and funding allocation

The assessment of proposals is

1. non-discriminatory
2. independent
3. confidential
4. efficient, and
5. transparent

These principles form the basis for this Regulation on Granting. The principle of independent assessment implies that the provision of advice and the taking of decisions are distinct tasks that are clearly separated from each other. The Code of Conduct on Conflicts of Interest explicitly states how involvement with proposals should be dealt with. With respect to confidentiality, an information policy is detailed in the Rules for NWO.

2. Assessment and funding allocation

Article 2.1 The brochure

When a funding instrument is opened for the submission of proposals, NWO publishes a brochure with information about the instrument, which at the very least should contain information about:

- who can apply
- what can be applied for
- the total (maximum) budget
- instructions for drawing up an application
- description of the assessment procedure
- the timeframe in which the assessment and funding allocation procedure will be completed
- the selection criteria
- administrative criteria, such as the maximum number of pages the proposal may contain, structure of the budget, etc.
- where applicable, the policy criteria employed by the administrative body; these might affect the final ranking of the proposals.

Article 2.2 The admissibility of the proposal

The office will assess the proposal for administrative completeness using the administrative criteria included in the brochure. If a proposal is found to be administratively incomplete then the applicant will be given the opportunity to rectify these shortcomings so that the proposal can still be included in the assessment process.

The evaluation committee can conclude that a proposal does not fit in the research area of the research programme.

In both cases NWO can decide to reject the proposal (Art. 4.5 of the General Administrative Law Act). Such a decision can be taken by a mandated board member or by the director of the divisional board on behalf of the administrative body.

Article 2.3 Preproposals

The submission of a preproposal may be a requirement for the submission of a full grant proposal.

The following criteria apply to a preproposal:

1. the preproposal is announced in the brochure of the funding instrument
2. the preproposal entails the submission of a *concise* proposal
3. the concise proposal is evaluated according to the procedure described in the brochure
4. in the brochure it is stated whether the assessment of the preproposal will lead to a non-binding advice or the issuing of a decision by the administrative body in question to the applicant concerning whether or not a full proposal should be submitted
5. without a preproposal, a full proposal may not be submitted.

Article 2.4 Preselection

If a large number of proposals is submitted relative to the number that can be awarded, then an administrative body can decide to make a preselection of all (full) proposals submitted. This is only possible if the number of proposals submitted is greater than four times the maximum number of proposals that can be awarded.

Usually, all of the grant proposals submitted are globally assessed by the assessment committee against the selection criteria described in the brochure. The programme brochure may contain a more detailed description of how the criteria are weighted in the case of a preselection.

The assessment committee gives the applicant the opportunity to issue a rebuttal and then advises the administrative body. Based on this advice the administrative body decides to reject the proposals with less chance of being awarded.

If the application pressure is so high that a preselection is not enough to reduce the number of proposals to be assessed to an acceptable level then additional measures may be taken. For example, in addition to, or even instead of, the preselection a 'who first comes, first will be served' criterion can be implemented (limiting the number of proposals accepted) to determine which proposals are eligible for further selection and the evaluation by referees.

Article 2.5 The use of referees

In general, referees will be involved in the assessment of research proposals. However, due to the special character of a funding instrument an administrative body may decide not to make use of referees. The administrative body shall explain this decision in the brochure for the funding instrument.

If referees are involved in the assessment, then the grant proposals declared admissible will in principle be evaluated by at least two referees each of whom will write an evaluation report about the grant proposal. The administrative body responsible can decide to increase the minimum number of referees to be consulted for a certain funding instrument. This is then stated in the brochure.

The minimum number of referees' reports can be deviated from under the following conditions:

1. a reasonable number of referees have been invited to evaluate;
2. the lack of referees' evaluations is sufficiently compensated for in the sense that the assessment committee concerned still has enough material available to be able to form an opinion about the proposals to be assessment.

Referees' reports that are received before the deadline that applies for these reports are always included in the assessment of the proposal concerned unless they are clearly unsuitable as a basis for issuing an advice.

For each proposal dossier there is then a closing point for the inclusion of new reports. As long as this closing point has not been passed and the dossier does not contain the requisite number of referees' reports then the deadline for referees' reports may be postponed insofar as the procedure allows this.

If no referees' reports become available then the administrative body concerned will decide which procedure to follow.

Unless this possibility is excluded in the brochure then referees may be objected to in the following manner: upon submitting their proposals to the office applicants may state a maximum of three persons who they do not want to act as referees. With this the anonymity of non-referees is safeguarded (outside of the office).

Article 2.6 The rebuttal

The applicant is given the opportunity to respond to the referees' reports by means of a rebuttal. The brochure specifies the procedure for this. The rebuttal is added to the assessment documentation.

Article 2.7 Interview or site visit

The aim of an interview or site visit, where part of the assessment procedure, shall be stated in the brochure.

The invitation for an interview or the announcement of a site visit is sent timely so that the applicant can prepare for this. In the invitation, or at the very least one week before the event, the names of the members of the interview or site visit committee are made known to the applicant.

After the interview or site visit a report is compiled of the facts that arose during the site visit or interview that are relevant to the assessment of the proposal. This report is added to the assessment documentation.

Article 2.8 Assessment Committee or Jury

Within a funding round, an advisory body in the form of an assessment committee or a jury, will be appointed by the administrative body under whose responsibility the funding round will be executed to assess and compare the applications received.

The composition and method of working of the assessment committee or jury will be realised in accordance with the rules drawn up by the administrative body for this purpose insofar as these rules do not conflict with the following provisions.

The task of the assessment committee or jury is to assess the proposals submitted and the documents related to these proposals coherently and on their own merits. The assessment takes place on the base of the selection criteria stated in the brochure.

a. The assessment committee's method of working contains at least the following aspects:

1. the committee meets - preferably in person - to discuss the quality of the proposals.
2. before issuing an advice, the committee discusses any possible conflicts of interest and takes a decision about such a conflict.
3. the committee comes to an (absolute) final conclusion for each separate proposal based on the proposal and the additional information obtained using the criteria described in the brochure.
4. the committee establishes its ranking advice including the reasoning concerned and an adequate description of its method of working. The ranking of the proposals may be realised (at the end) by means of an anonymous vote. In that case no additional motivation concerning the the quality ordeal needs to be provided.

b. The jury's method of working contains at least the following aspects:

1. Independently from each other, the jury members determine the quality of the proposals and the additional information obtained (including the rebuttal) and using the criteria described in the brochure they come to an absolute final conclusion of all the proposals received;

2. The outcomes are compiled and evaluated by the office, which provides a score list that serves as the basis for a provisional or final ranking.

If the number of proposals is too large to be handled by a single assessment committee or jury then the assessment and ranking can be awarded to subcommittees as long as a protocol is available at the start of the assessment procedure which states how the ranking will be realised.

During the assessment procedure the assessment committee or jury can draw upon new information or its own opinion about an aspect of the proposal where the referees have provided no judgement. In that case feedback (in the form of a rebuttal) should be given to the applicant and the committee or jury should take the applicant's response into account when making its assessment.

The ranking (classification) is determined at each moment in the selection process at which a number of proposals are excluded from the further assessment process and shall at the very least be provided with a number of categories in which the proposals to be selected are classified.

Article 2.9 The decision

Decisions about the grant application are taken by an administrative body.

The administrative body takes a decision about the grant applications based on the advice from the assessment committee or jury, and any policy-related criteria announced beforehand in the brochure. The administrative body first controls whether the procedure has been conducted properly and then takes a decision. The administrative body may reject the proposal, allocate funding or allocate conditional funding.

A funding round will have different moments at which decisions are taken about the proposals under assessment and a decision will be issued earlier for some proposals than for others, but only if stated so in the brochure.

In the brochure, information is given about the timeframe and/or when decisions are made. If delays occur in the decision-making process then the administrative body will inform the applicants of this as soon as possible and certainly no later than the date by which the decision should have been made. The reason for the delay shall be given as well as the latest date by which the funding allocation decision will still be taken.

The administrative body may not adopt the requested advice or parts thereof only in the following cases:

- a. policy-related considerations insofar as these are explicitly stated in the brochure, or
- b. a procedural error, or
- c. a manifest inaccuracy or shortcoming.

In these cases deviations from the advice issued by the assessment committee shall be substantiated.

The amount of the available budget allocated shall also be established in the decision. The only proposals eligible for funding are those that have passed through the entire selection process and satisfy the prior selection criteria. Within the available budget, proposals are usually funded in full or completely rejected. The decision-taking body may, with reasons, reduce the budget associated with a proposal or reject part of a proposal for funding.

Article 2.10 Announcement of the decision

The grant allocation decision of an administrative body is announced in writing. This applies to both the grant award letter and grant rejection letter.

A grant allocation decision contains the following elements:

- a. the notice that the grant application and associated budget have been approved, although there may be an adjustment to the budget or a rejection of part of the proposal;
- b. the (at maximum) awarded grant amount with a distribution across the main cost categories. For each separate cost category maxima may be set and/or own contributions may be requested from the recipients of the grant;
- c. arrangements about the disbursement;
- d. the following terms:
 1. the term on which the project has to start ultimately, to be calculated from the date on which the grant allocation decision was made;
 2. if the grant payment is not higher than 50,000 euros then also:
 - i. the completion date of the project;
 - ii. the latest date on which the grant settlement decision will be taken as far as such decision is taken without a concerned request by the applicant;
- e. the arrangements concerning progress and final reports;
- f. any other additional arrangements such as about the output to be delivered;
- g. the 'General Provisions' and where applicable, Particular and/or Division-specific granting provisions.

Moreover, a Project Information Form (PIF) will be sent with the grant allocation decision.

Each decision about rejecting or awarding NWO-funding will be supported by arguments – according to objective criteria – that are comprehensible to the applicant and will include an appeals clause. If any questions remain about how the procedure was executed or the reasons of rejection provided then the applicant may contact the programme secretariat.

Article 2.11 Appeal

A person whose interests are affected by a decision may lodge an objection or appeal. This should be submitted to the Governing Board of NWO within six weeks of the date of the decision.

Where an appeal has been forwarded, the Governing Board takes a decision based on an advice of the NWO Appeals and Objections Committee concerning the case.

If the Governing Board revokes or nullifies a contested decision a decision, then the person lodging the appeal will receive a new decision.

If the Governing Board is dependent on further information from another administrative body (such as the NWO division involved) for taking a new decision then:

- the Governing Board will first of all have to obtain this information before it can issue a decision about the appeal.
- the interested parties will be informed without delay stating the latest date on which the decision about the letter of objection or appeal will be taken.

3. Current research

Article 3.1 Start of project

Once the completed and signed Project Information Form (PIF) has been received, or as soon as there is evidence of acceptance of the grant by some other means, then the project can start and the grant-awarding administrative body can proceed to disburse the grant funds.

Here the following clauses apply:

- a. The grant allocated will be paid into the account of the knowledge institution wherein the project will be executed, in accordance with the payment method that applies to this grant. Any deviations thereof require the prior approval of the NWO director concerned.

- b. The knowledge institution shall make the funds received available to the project leader with due consideration to the approved grant budget attached to the grant allocation decision and, where applicable, the valid Agreement.
- c. The institution's accountant will check the legitimacy of how the funds awarded are spent by means of auditing the annual accounts in accordance with the auditing protocol of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. This does not diminish NWO's powers to audit the accounts or to investigate if the institution is complying with the requirements attached to the grant. The institution shall cooperate with NWO as requested during these site visits.
- d. In the event of incidents in the employer-employee relationship that could harm the research results, the employer shall without delay inform NWO and the parties will make efforts, in consultation with the project leader, to reach a solution that benefits the realisation of the research.
- e. In the event that the NU or UMC collective labour agreements do not apply to the personnel appointed to the project, NWO shall be informed in writing without delay and shall attach the appointment decision(s) concerned to the information letter.

Article 3.2 Progress of project

Throughout the execution of the project, NWO shall monitor the progress by requesting output data and where desired progress reports or evaluations. The applicant will be further informed hereover upon receiving the grant allocation decision. The general framework for requesting output data and progress reports/evaluations is described in the 'General Provisions'.

Article 3.3 Completion of project

The project ends with the issuing of the grant settlement decision. This decision can be taken once Article 24 of the 'General Provisions' has been satisfied.

General Provisions

General

Publicity around allocation

1. NWO can place a notification about the grant awarded on its website together with a summary of the research proposal. When submitting the grant proposal the main applicant can give a reasoned argument against details being published on NWO's website in the event that a grant is awarded.
2. NWO handles all proposals and research reports submitted confidentially. However, it retains the right to publish data and results from the research it has funded with the exception of specific information that could lead to the exploitation of research data or research results.

Project leader and staff

3. The project leader is the point of contact and bears responsibility for the project.
 - a. In the event that the main applicant of the research proposal is a researcher, this person is considered the project leader from the effective date of the grant allocation decision, with the possibility that prior to the start of the funded project a researcher other than the main applicant can explicitly be accepted by NWO as the project leader. This project leader is responsible for the research project funded by NWO and is NWO's point of contact for the project.
 - b. In the event that the main applicant of the research proposal is a knowledge institution then the researcher appointed by this knowledge institution in the role of main applicant is NWO's point of contact for the research project. This official is, in addition to the knowledge institution, responsible for the spending of the grant. In the event that the knowledge institution acts as the main applicant on behalf of a consortium of several knowledge institutions then this institution will be acknowledged by NWO as the official secretary of the consortium.
 - c. In the event that the main applicant is a legal entity other than a knowledge institution then that entity or person is recognised as the project leader unless explicitly stated otherwise in the grant allocation decision. Such other legal entity is also understood under the term 'knowledge institution', where is referred to the term 'knowledge institution' below in these 'General Provisions'.
4. The project staff to be appointed to the project must at least possess the qualifications regarded by NWO as the standard for the duties they are to perform.
5. Staff of projects funded by NWO can, in principle, perform a limited number of secondary tasks as long as these tasks do not detract from their project responsibilities. If the grant brochure gives concrete maximum percentages on secondary tasks, then these maximum percentages may not be exceeded.

Accountability

6. The administrative body can reduce or withdraw the grant awarded, where necessary retrospectively, as long as the grant has not been settled (Art. 4.48 of the General Administrative Law Act) if:
 - the obligations arising from this decision have not been or have not been fully fulfilled, or
 - the funds have not been disbursed, or
 - the funds are being used for a purpose other than what they were allocated for or that cannot be accounted for in another way, or
 - the information provided gives reason to do so.If the conditions specifically stated for this by the General Administrative Law Act (Art. 4.49 and 4.50 Awb) are satisfied then the administrative body can also withdraw or amend a decision to award or settle a grant.
7. The research must be conducted, reports must be submitted and results must be published in accordance with the normal standards of ethical behaviour and integrity expected of those engaged in academic and/or technological research and with due regard to the substance of the memorandum

on scientific integrity [*Notitie Wetenschappelijke Integriteit*] issued jointly by the KNAW, VSNU and NWO.

8. Where the activities for which the grant is awarded may have adverse consequences for third parties - for example, in the case of clinical research - the principal investigator, or alternatively his employer, must take out adequate insurance against the risks of related claims and must indemnify NWO against any liability in this regard.
9. The project leader shall make efforts and, where this may be expected, take the necessary precautions to ensure that the funded activities and/or the results generated by it do not or could not contribute to terrorist activities, the violation of human rights or activities for which the use of illicit resources is not shunned. In addition to this, the activities funded and/or the results generated by it may not be in conflict with any legal provision or any codes of conduct generally recognised and in use within the discipline concerned.

Size of the grant

10. Funds are allocated on the basis of the grant proposal approved by NWO and the adhering approved budget.

The project leader executes the research plan described in this proposal to his best knowledge and ability and in so doing uses the funds awarded as effectively as possible.

11. The only costs that may be funded are those included in the grant allocation decision and/or the adhering approved budget, and which are directly associated with the research funded.
12. The remuneration of and payment for both the personnel and material costs are established in the grant allocation decision. Payment is made by means of advance payments.
The first payment for the costs to be incurred takes place after approval by NWO of a Project Information Form (PIF) signed by both the applicant and the knowledge institution.
Division-specific provisions may only deviate from the provisions stated in this article if this does not detract from the starting point that good employment conditions are guaranteed by the institution where the research will be executed.
13. The knowledge institution where the research takes place, becomes the owner of the materials and equipment purchased with the grant unless determined otherwise in the grant allocation decision.
The grant allocation decision may contain special conditions for the remuneration of costs for the purchase of equipment, including the requirement to make this equipment available for use by third parties at NWO's request. Equipment should be purchased in accordance with the prevailing legislation concerning tendering.

Project management

14. The project leader and the knowledge institution will be responsible for ensuring that the funds awarded are properly managed and that proper financial records are kept. Any agreements or contracts with third parties concerning the execution of activities for which the grant is awarded must be made in writing.
15. Prior permission from NWO is needed for each substantial deviation from the research proposal awarded funding by NWO. The cost categories included in the grant allocation decision and/or the approved budget are maximum amounts.
The transfer of amounts between the categories personnel and material requires permission from NWO unless other arrangements have been reached in advance (e.g. in the brochure or in the grant allocation decision).
16. As soon as there is reason for the project leader, or alternatively the knowledge institution, to presume that the activities for which funding was allocated will not or will not be fully completed before the completion date of the project or if the provisions of the grant will not be fully met then the project leader, or alternatively the knowledge institution, must inform the grant awarding body of this immediately.
17. The project leader will inform NWO if the research project related to the grant allocation decision receives or is pledged financial support from another source.

18. NWO retains the right, if the information supplied gives reason for this, to adjust the frequency of the advance payments of the grant.
19. NWO can request a progress report for grants and in so doing adheres to the 'Aanwijzingen voor subsidieverstrekking'.
Irrespective of the size of the grant an overview of the research results can be requested each year. Once every 2 to 3 years a progress report can be requested for:
 - i. projects awarded a grant over 50,000 up and including 125,000 euros and that, in the case of a fulltime appointment, have a duration longer than 3 years, or
 - ii. projects for which the NWO grant awarded is more than 125,000 euros and for which the period the activities are executed is more than 12 months.A maximum of one progress report every 12 months can be requested for:
 - iii. Projects awarded a grant of more than 50,000 euros and for which:
 - the project is funded by or executed with external parties, or
 - knowledge valorisation plays a significant role and the period for executing the fundable activities is more than 12 months.
20. For progress and final reports about funded activities the following criteria apply:
 - a. they must be submitted via the electronic system indicated by NWO and, insofar as it is required, be in the format appropriate for this;
 - b. they are signed by the project leader. The knowledge institution signs the financial reports to show approval, and the scientific reports to show that these have been read.
21. Based on the progress reports it receives, NWO can give further technical-scientific and/or financial instructions to the project leader.

Grant settlement

22. Three categories are distinguished for the settlement of grants:
 - a. If a realistic budget is not submitted in advance (and the grant is worth more than 50,000 euros) then the project leader, or alternatively the knowledge institution, must demonstrate the correctness of the total amount of the actual fundable costs within 13 weeks of the completion date of the project, inclusive the own contribution and possible contributions from third parties.
 - b. For grants up and including 125,000 euros the project leader, or alternatively the knowledge institution, must demonstrate within 13 weeks of the project completion date that the activities for which funding was granted were actually performed and that the obligations attached to the grant were met.
 - c. For grants above 125,000 euros both a final technical-scientific report and a final financial report must be submitted within 13 weeks of the project completion date. The reports are signed by the project leader and - where involved - by the knowledge institution.NWO provides guidelines in advance that state how various requirements must be supplied or demonstrated.
23. The final financial report fits the budget submitted to and approved by NWO.
At the very least it contains the data about the size and duration of the appointment of project staff and an overview of the material costs reimbursed.
In principle, no final financial accountability needs to be given for any bench fee awarded.
24. Within 13 weeks after receipt of the final report NWO takes a decision about the final settlement of the grant. However, NWO can postpone taking a grant settlement decision until a date later to be determined giving the concerned reasons.
If the final report is not submitted on time or is incomplete then NWO does not have to disburse any remaining amount of the grant. If 6 months after the project completion date NWO has still not been able to settle a grant due to the lack of a satisfactory final report then NWO regards this as equivalent to the rejection of the final report. If it rejects the final report then NWO may decide to claim back the funds made available.

Publications and other research results

25. Research results that have been produced with the aid of NWO funds should be made accessible to the general public and for further research as much and as soon as possible. With a view to expected exploitation rights on research results, the project leader, or alternatively the knowledge institution, can postpone the publication of research results up to a maximum of 9 months after these were obtained.
26. With a view to an optimal dissemination, respectively application, of results from publicly funded research the project leader, or alternatively the knowledge institution, shall ensure prior to the execution of the research that in the event that the research will entirely or partly be conducted by persons not employed by the knowledge institution, these persons waive in writing any possible intellectual property rights derived from the research results.
27. Contributions to the research in cash or in kind by third parties give no rights to the use and/or application of the results, unless matters have been arranged otherwise by means of a written agreement prior to the research and for so long as this agreement does not deviate from or violate the applicable legislation concerning state aid.
28. NWO tries to ensure access to publications that have arisen from the research it funds. Publications supported by NWO funds should therefore, irrespective of other publication possibilities, be made accessible to the general public as quickly as possible via Open Access. Copyrights may only be assigned to a third party insofar as this does not block the option to publish via Open Access.
Deviation from this rule is only possible with the explicit prior approval of NWO.
29. In the case of databases NWO and the knowledge institution where the research was performed are together considered to be the 'producer of the databank' as meant in the Databank Act.
30. By accepting a grant for research that results in copyrighted work and/or databanks, the copyright holder or the producer of the databank(s) respectively grant permission for the following:
To facilitate knowledge transfer from research results, NWO can impose further conditions on the copyrights and extraction rights on databanks that are created within the framework of the research.
Databanks with the associated explanation should at the very least be made available for use and for the purpose of further academic research in a manner indicated by NWO. The data collected during a research project should therefore be stored and documented in a thorough and accessible manner.
31. When the results from the funded research are published the financial support received from NWO is stated.
In English, French, German, Italian and Spanish NWO's name is translated as follows:
 - Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research
 - Organisation Néerlandaise pour la Recherche Scientifique
 - Niederländische Organisation für Wissenschaftliche Forschung
 - Organizzazione Nazionale Olandese per la Ricerca Scientifica
 - Organización Neerlandesa de Investigacione Científicas

Exploitation rights and utilisation

32. Without prejudice to Article 25, NWO may claim the intellectual property rights to research results that are eligible for exploitation as long as the specific objectives of the funding instrument require this and the brochure states how the patent rights will be distributed in such cases and, where relevant, what the means of exploitation and the associated preconditions are.
In such a case, prior to the realisation of the research concerned, the concrete agreements concerned are recorded in a written agreement as meant in Article 4:36, para 1, of the General Administrative Law Act under the grant allocation decision.
This is concluded between the organisations where the research will be realised and NWO, unless the entire of the research project takes place abroad under the responsibility of a knowledge institution located in that country where the research is performed.
In the event that the entire research project is carried out abroad under the responsibility of a

knowledge institution located in that country then this knowledge institution may apply the patent legislation applicable in this country as long as this patent legislation, compared to its Dutch counterpart, is not to the detriment of the involved Dutch party (parties) and/or research results. Such an agreement is usually drawn up on an individual basis. In this agreement, the parties concerned should make all necessary agreements about the relevant background knowledge needed for executing the research and its utilisation to which not all parties have free access. In the case of a public-private partnership this agreement should also contain arrangements about the consequences of stopping the research project before its completion.

The project leader, or alternatively the knowledge institution, will ensure that employees or others who can claim exploitation rights on the research results transfer these rights to those who, according to the aforementioned, are entitled to the research results.

33. The project leader, or alternatively the knowledge institution, will try to ensure both during and after the project that the results are utilised in a satisfactory and effective manner. Where relevant, the date until which the project leader, or alternatively the knowledge institution, can be held accountable for this can be stated in the grant settlement decision.

Definitions

In the General Terms and Conditions of NWO Grants, the General Grant Regulations and the Assessment and Allocation Procedure the following are understood:

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| <i>'Aanwijzingen voor subsidieverstrekking'</i> | Regulation of the Minister-President, Minister of General Affairs, of 15 December 2009, no. 3086451, concerning the establishment of Instructions for Awarding Grants (Stcrt. 2009, no. 20306). |
| <i>Administrative body</i> | Administrative body as meant in Article 1.1 of the Awb, which is also part of the NWO organisation as defined in Article 1.2 of the NWO Regulation, or a body that – without being an administrative body itself – is mandated by an NWO administrative body to take decisions about proposals submitted. |
| <i>Agreement</i> | The Agreement on the Payment of Costs for Scientific Research reached between the grant-awarding bodies (NWO, ZonMw, charity funds) and grant recipients (VSNU, KNAW, NFU). The text of the Agreement can be found on the NWO website. |
| <i>Applicant</i> | The person or institution who submits the grant application to NWO. |
| <i>Assessment committee</i> | A committee appointed by the relevant administrative body charged with providing the administrative body with an advice about the proposals submitted within a funding round. |
| <i>Awb</i> | General Administrative Law Act. |
| <i>Bench fee</i> | A bench fee can be made available for some projects. This bench fee is intended for the person carrying out the project but is made available to the project leader. The person carrying out the project is therefore entitled to this fee. How the bench fee is to be spent should be discussed by the person carrying out the project and the project leader. Where a bench fee is applicable then this is a pre-printed category in the budget. |
| <i>Brochure</i> | Programme brochure or Call for Proposals of a funding instrument in which the procedure of the application process is described and explained. At the very least, the brochure contains the assessment criteria, including possible policy considerations and the provisions of the grant insofar as these deviate from this NWO Regulation on Granting. |
| <i>Budget</i> | The overview, which forms part of the proposal submitted, of all costs directly related to the proposed activities, irrespective of the naming (such as 'budget' or 'spending plan') and/or the moment at which this overview was added to the project proposal (such as: on submission, or after funding allocation prior to the start date of the project). |
| <i>Completion date of the project</i> | The date on which the activities related to the grant allocation decision must have been carried out or, in the case of an early termination of the project, the date on which the project activities were stopped. |
| <i>Databank</i> | A collection of data compiled in a structured manner, irrespective of what the data consists of, such as figures, completed questionnaires, audiovisual material, body material, etc. |
| <i>Division</i> | A scientific domain covered by a divisional board. |
| <i>Divisional board</i> | A board of directors as meant in Article 3.1 of the NWO Regulation. |
| <i>Full proposal</i> | A proposal that has been fully elaborated for all aspects considered in the assessment. |
| <i>Funding instrument</i> | An instrument arising from the NWO grant policy and set up as an entity of rules via which a certain quantity of funding resources are made available to the research field concerned. |
| <i>Funding round</i> | A funding round is a regulated process within a funding instrument. Each funding round begins with a Call for Proposals, contains a round-specific |

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| | assessment procedure, and ends with the funding allocation decision of the administrative body concerned about the proposals submitted. |
| <i>Governing Board</i> | The Governing Board of NWO. |
| <i>Grant allocation decision</i> | A decision in which, prior to the activities to be realised, a provisional maximum grant sum is awarded to the grant recipient, subject to the grant provisions issued with the decision. |
| <i>Grant settlement decision</i> | A decision in which, after approval of the final report(s), it is determined to what extent the funds allocated under the grant allocation decision should actually be paid to the grant recipient. |
| <i>Grant provisions</i> | Provisions issued with the grant allocation decision and which the recipient of the grant must comply with. A distinction must be drawn between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the General Provisions, as given in this regulation; - particular grant provisions, and - Division-specific grant provisions. Particular grant provisions are attached to a specific funding instrument of NWO and are therefore published in the brochure concerned. Division-specific grant provisions are applicable to all grant allocation decisions in a specific NWO unit. These provisions are announced on the website and in the brochures of the NWO unit concerned. |
| <i>Individual grant</i> | A grant aimed at a researcher who is both the applicant and the main person responsible for executing the research. |
| <i>Interview committee</i> | If an interview is part of the assessment procedure, it is conducted by this committee. The members of the committee are drawn from the members of the assessment committee involved. |
| <i>Jury</i> | An assessment committee in which each of the members give an individual assessment but do not consult each other to reach a joint point of view. |
| <i>Knowledge institution</i> | A public legal entity or foundation located in the Netherlands that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. has the execution of academic research and/or the management of academic knowledge as one of its main objectives, partly for the benefit of further academic research; b. receives part of its basic funding from public funds; c. has no profit status other than that for the purposes of further research; d. allows the researchers freedom of publication in the international academic literature, and e. has access to a repository. |
| <i>NWO unit</i> | Besides the divisions of NWO and its research organisations, each unit of NWO for which a management body is appointed as meant in Chapter 3a of the NWO Regulation. |
| <i>Office</i> | The office of the NWO organisation as meant in Article 8 of the NWO Organisation Act, which is under the leadership of the General Director of NWO. |
| <i>Preproposal</i> | An outline proposal that requires further elaboration before it can be submitted for evaluation to external experts in a subsequent phase of the assessment procedure. |
| <i>Preselection</i> | A phase at the start of the assessment procedure in which full proposals are assessed without the use of referees according to the selection criteria described in the brochure. The programme brochure can contain a more detailed description of how the criteria are weighted in the case of a preselection |
| <i>PIF</i> | The Project Information Form that must be completed and signed by the |

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| | project leader and the knowledge institution involved before the funded research activities may be started and the first grant payment will be made. |
| <i>Project leader</i> | The person who bears final responsibility for the success of the research project funded. This is usually, but not necessarily, the main applicant of the project grant. |
| <i>Project start date</i> | The date on which the project activities are actually started and which may not precede the date on which the administrative body awarding the grant has received a fully completed and signed PIF. |
| <i>Project researcher</i> | A researcher who executes the project or a part thereof. |
| <i>Publication</i> | The disclosure of results by any means with the exception of disclosure arising from patent applications on results. |
| <i>Referee</i> | An independent, external expert who is involved to evaluate a single proposal due to his subject-specific expertise in the field of the proposal. |
| <i>Repository</i> | A facility at a knowledge institution intended for the systematic storage of research results with access facilities for further use. |
| <i>Research organisation</i> | A legal entity, or an organisational unit operating within a legal entity with a mandate to this effect from the highest body within the legal entity. |
| <i>Research results</i> | All inventions, outcomes, materials, methods, processes, products, programmes, software, findings or discoveries that are generated within a project. |
| <i>Secondary tasks</i> | Tasks in the areas of education, management and administration, which a knowledge institution can require its staff to perform with a view to the further development of these researchers. |
| <i>Utilisation</i> | The sum of activities that have the aim of maximising the use of research results by third parties. |