Insight into educational innovation
2024

Call for proposals

Netherlands Initiative for Education Research (NRO)
1 Introduction

In this Call for proposals information is provided about the application procedure for the “Insight into educational innovation 2024” grant round. This Call for proposals falls under the responsibility of the Netherlands Initiative for Education Research (NRO). NRO is a unit of the Dutch research council (NWO). NRO coordinates and finances education research and promotes the connection between scientific research and the practice of education to enable innovation and improve education.

NRO programmes and finances research along the following lines:
1. Research into key issues in education;
2. Research into (the most promising) approaches;
3. Open research aimed at the development of knowledge for the future of education;
4. Talent, innovation and incentive grants for knowledge-driven work carried out by education professionals.

This Call for proposals helps promote open research and falls under the responsibility of the NRO Programme Committee for Higher Education (PCHO).

In this Call for proposals, you will find information about the aim of this programme (chapter 2), the conditions for the proposal (chapter 3) and how your proposal will be assessed (chapter 4). This is the information you need to submit a proposal. 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

The grant round ‘Insight into educational innovation 2024’ is part of the research programme initiated by the PCHO. This consists of three related funding instruments: ‘Higher education for the future’, ‘Significant questions in higher education’ and this grant round ‘Insight into educational innovation’. More information about the research programme and the themes that the PCHO will focus on in the coming years can be found here.

1.2 Available budget

The available budget for this Call for proposals is € 2,600,000.00. Within this Call for proposals, it is expected that 13 proposals will be awarded funding. For a proposal in this Call for proposals, a maximum of € 200,000.00 can be applied for in total.

There are seven themes in this Call for proposals. A maximum of two proposals per theme can be awarded in themes 1 through 6. A maximum of one proposal may be awarded for theme 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Maximum number awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Educational approaches of the future</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Professional development of teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Student wellbeing</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Diversity and inclusion</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Societal issues</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Connection to the labour market</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Higher education institutes as learning organisations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If the budget is not exhausted after prioritising the two proposals in the themes 1 through 6, the second proposal in theme 7 that complies with Section 4.2.6 will be eligible for awarding.

1.3 Submission deadlines

The deadline for submitting statements of intent is June 13, 2024, before 14:00:00 hours CEST. The deadline for submitting proposals is September 10, 2024, before 14:00:00 hours CEST.

When you submit your statement of intent and proposal in ISAAC, you will also need to enter some details online. Therefore, please start submitting your statement of intent and proposal at least one day before the deadlines of this Call for proposals. Statements of intent and proposals that are submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.
2 Aim

This chapter describes the objectives of this grant round (section 2.1). Thereafter, in section 2.2 an overview is provided of the themes within which proposals can be submitted.

2.1 Objectives of the programme

This grant round will fund research projects that foster knowledge and expertise on the working principles of educational innovation in higher education. The innovations being studied are existing innovations. The studies may focus on existing educational innovations such as completed Comenius projects or innovations that have been locally developed. This grant round does not aim to develop new educational innovations.

In Dutch higher education, there is increasing focus and space for innovations in education. Innovation projects are designed in an evidence-informed way where possible and evaluated after completion to determine whether the innovation has actually improved education. Such projects are often developed at a single university or university of applied sciences. It is often unclear whether the educational innovation works and whether it works in other settings - and if it does work, how does it work? This is the reason that it can be less appealing for other educational institutions to adopt existing innovations in their own degree programmes, which reduces the impact of innovations. To gain a better understanding of the effective principles of educational innovations, it is therefore important to examine the same innovation in at least two different educational contexts.

Educational contexts include subjects, degree programmes, faculties, domains and education sectors in higher professional education and university education. The proposal will clarify what the added value is of the research in the chosen educational contexts. In addition, it will also become clear how the research will be of added value to the various contexts and what the added value is outside these educational contexts.

Lecturers and researchers will conduct the research together to increase the relevance of the research for educational practice and to facilitate the further professionalisation of parties involved. The lecturers involved are knowledgeable about the relevant educational context within which the educational innovation will take place. The researchers involved have expertise in the field of educational research and perhaps educational innovation.

The research that will be funded by this Call for proposals will foster the improvement of higher education by providing an understanding of the working principles of educational innovations. The purpose of the studies is to generate actual results or products that can be used by other education professionals. For this reason, there will be a focus on knowledge utilisation and knowledge sharing.

Knowledge utilisation and knowledge sharing

Knowledge utilisation is an important aspect of the educational research funded by the NRO. The NRO considers knowledge utilisation to be an integrated part of research, from the demand articulation up to and including using the insights of research.

Knowledge utilisation can be defined as the process whereby researchers, users, potential users, and other stakeholders give meaning to research findings, relate these to educational practice, education policy and/or educational science, and where possible incorporate insights from research into practice. This is most likely to happen if relevant stakeholders are involved in the research at an early stage. This is possible, depending on the type of research, by setting up and/or conducting the research together with stakeholders. An equal relationship between researchers, educational professionals and other stakeholders is essential to achieve this.
Knowledge sharing is a prerequisite for knowledge utilisation. In knowledge sharing, insights from research are transferred through products. These products can be publications, lectures, teaching modules, workshops, or websites. The chosen products should be appropriate for the intended target group of end-users. It is important to think about this in good time, preferably when drafting up the proposal.

Not everything can be envisaged at the start of the research. Ideally, knowledge utilisation is a topic of ongoing discussions between researchers, users, and other stakeholders. In this process, plans are not fixed and can be adjusted as needed.

2.2 Themes

Proposals can be submitted within one of the following themes:

1. Educational approaches of the future
2. Professional development of teachers
3. Student wellbeing
4. Diversity and inclusion
5. Societal issues
6. Connection to the labour market
7. Higher education institutes as learning organisations

The themes have been taken from the 2023-2026 Knowledge Agenda for Higher Education. Full theme descriptions can be found in the knowledge agenda. Proposals relate to the theme for which they were submitted.

It is conceivable that a study may be at the interface of multiple themes. If this is the case, you are recommended to submit your proposal within the theme that connects most to the research.
3 Conditions for applicants

This chapter contains the conditions that are applicable to your proposal. 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 proposal (Sections 3.3 and 3.4) and the specific funding conditions (Section 3.5).

3.1 Who can apply

Professors, (university), (associate) lecturers at a university, (lecturer) researchers, university lecturers and (associate) lecturers may submit a proposal if they have a paid position for the duration of the project or a tenure track agreement at one of the following organisations:

– universities located in the Kingdom of the Netherlands;
– university medical centres;
– universities of applied sciences, as referred to in Article 1.8(1) of the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act.

You are submitting your proposal on behalf of a consortium.

– The consortium must consist of one main applicant and at least one co-applicant. No more than nine co-applicants may be listed;
– At least one of the applicants must be a lecturer with an appointment at a university of applied sciences, a university medical centre or university, and at least one person must be researcher with a PhD and a research appointment at a university of applied sciences, a university medical centre or university.

Extra conditions:
– A researcher may submit a maximum of one proposal in this round, either as the main applicant or as a co-applicant.

It could be the case that the applicant’s paid position ends before the intended completion date of the project for which funding is applied for, or that before that date, the applicant’s paid position ends due to the applicant reaching retirement age. In that case, the applicant needs to include a statement from their employer in which the organisation concerned guarantees that the project and all project members for whom funding has been requested will receive adequate supervision for the full duration of the project.

3.1.1 Main and co-applicants

The main applicant submits the proposal via the NWO web application ISAAC. During the assessment process, NWO will communicate with the main applicant. After a proposal has been awarded funding, the main applicant will become the project leader and point of contact for NWO. The knowledge institution of the main applicant is the main beneficiary and will become the official secretary. Co-applicants have an active role in realising the project. The (sub)project leader(s) and beneficiary/beneficiaries are jointly responsible for realising the entire project.

3.2 What can be applied for

For a proposal in this Call for proposals, a maximum of € 200,000.00 can be applied for in total. The minimum duration of the proposed project is two years, the maximum duration is three years. The budget modules (including the maximum amount) available for this Call for proposals are listed in the table below. Apply only for funding that is vital to realise the project. A more detailed explanation of the budget modules can be found in the annexe to this Call for proposals (7.1).
Chapter 3: Conditions for applicants / Insight into educational innovation 2024

### Budget module & Maximum amount

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget module</th>
<th>Maximum amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postdoc at universities</td>
<td>According to UNL or NFU rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-scientific staff (NSS) at universities</td>
<td>€100,000, according to UNL or NFU rates; in combination with postdoc(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel at universities of applied sciences and other staff at universities</td>
<td>In accordance with the applicable rate as taken from Table 2.2, column ‘Hourly rate productive hours, excl. Dutch VAT’ from the <em>Handleiding Overheidstarieven</em> [HOT- Manual Dutch Government rates](Salary tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material costs</td>
<td>€15,000 per year per FTE postdoc position and/or per 0.2 FTE (other) scientific employee at a university or university of applied sciences (with a minimum appointment of 0.2 FTE for a period of 12 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge utilisation</td>
<td>€25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalisation</td>
<td>€25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3.3 Preparing and submitting the statement of intent and the proposal**

You must write your statement of intent and proposal in Dutch or English. A statement of intent and proposal can only be submitted via the web application ISAAC. Statements of intent and proposals that are not submitted via ISAAC will not be taken into consideration. As the main applicant, you are required to submit the statement of intent and proposal via your own personal ISAAC account.

It is important to start with your statement of intent and proposal 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.

Statements of intent and proposals submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration by NWO. For technical questions, please contact the ISAAC helpdesk, see contact (chapter 6).

The appendix must be drawn up in accordance with the template provided by NWO. Annexes must be uploaded in ISAAC separately from the proposal. 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.

Does a main and/or co-applicant work at an organisation that is not included in the ISAAC database? You can report this via relatiebeheer@nwo.nl so that the organisation can be added. This will take several days. It is therefore important that you report this at least one week before the deadline.

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

More information on submitting a statement of intent and proposal can be found in Section 4.2 of this Call for proposals.

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1 This module is based on the definition for “knowledge transfer” as used by the European Commission in the Commission Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (OJEU 2022, C 414/1).
3.4 Conditions for submission

3.4.1 Formal conditions for submission

NWO will assess your proposal against the conditions listed below. Your proposal will only be admitted to the assessment procedure if it meets these conditions. After submitting your proposal, 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:
- a statement of intent was submitted on time by the main applicant through ISAAC. This was correctly completed according to the instructions, perhaps after a request to make additions or changes;
- the main applicant and co-applicant(s) meet the conditions stated in Section 3.1;
- there is at least one lecturer and one researcher involved in the consortium who meet the conditions set out in Section 3.1;
- the proposal complies with the DORA guidelines as described in Section 4.1;
- the application form is, after a possible request to make additions or changes, complete and filled out according to the instructions;
- the proposal is submitted via the main applicant’s ISAAC account;
- the proposal is received before the deadline;
- the proposal is written in Dutch or English;
- the proposal budget is drawn up in accordance with the conditions for this Call for proposals;
- the proposed project has a duration of at least 2 and at most 3 years;
- all of the required annexes are, after a possible request to make additions or changes, complete and filled out according to the instructions and conditions of this Call for proposals.

3.5 Conditions on granting

The NWO Grant Rules 2017 and the Agreement on the Payment of Costs for Scientific Research are applicable to all proposals.

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 a proposal, the applicant commits to the recommendations stipulated in these Guidelines. In the event of a suspected breach of the Guidelines in a proposal 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 based on the data management section in the proposal and the data management plan that is drawn up after funding is awarded.

Data management Section

The data management section is part of the proposal. Researchers are asked before the start of the research to consider how the data collected will be ordered and categorised so that this can be made publicly available. Measures will often already need to be taken, both during data generation and as part of analysing the data, to make its subsequent storage and dissemination possible. If it is not possible to make all data from the project publicly available, for example due to reasons of privacy, ethics, or valorisation, then the applicant is obliged to list the reasons for this in the data management section.

The data management section in the proposal is not evaluated and will therefore not be weighed in the decision whether to award funding. However, the committee can issue advice with respect to the data management section.

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 proposal. 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 Co-funding

The NRO values public and/or private co-financing and/or matching (personal contribution) in the form of personnel and material contributions, in cash or in kind. Clearly explain in the application form the role and the guarantee of this public and/or private co-financing / matching (personal contribution). In addition, you must submit a ‘Letter of commitment and Declaration co-funding’ when making your proposal. This document can be found at the bottom of the funding page for this round on www.nro.nl. The co-financing / matching may not exceed the budget requested from the NRO. You can read more about the conditions for private co-funding in Article 1.5 of the NWO Grant Rules 2017. This Call for proposals is subject to the NWO policy on intellectual property, whereby the project leader is in charge of the distribution of IP rights to the project results (art. 4.2.4 third paragraph NWO Grant Rules 2017).
Chapter 4: Assessment procedure / Insight into educational innovation 2024

4 Assessment procedure

This chapter first describes the assessment according to the DORA principles (Section 4.1) and the course of the assessment procedure (Section 4.2). Second, it states the criteria that the assessment committee will use to assess your proposal (Section 4.3).

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 members of an assessment committee 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 a proposal.

4.1 The San Francisco Declaration (DORA)

NWO is a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). DORA is a worldwide initiative that aims to improve the way research and researchers are assessed. DORA contains recommendations for research funders, research institutions, scientific journals and other parties.

DORA aims to reduce the uncritical use of bibliometric indicators and obviate unconscious bias in the assessment of research and researchers. DORA’s overarching philosophy is that research should be evaluated on its own merits rather than on the basis of surrogate measures, such as the journal in which the research is published.

When assessing the scientific track record of applicants, NWO makes use of a broad definition of scientific output.

NWO requests committee members not to rely on indicators such as the Journal Impact Factor or the h-index when assessing proposals. Applicants are not allowed to mention these in their proposals. You are, however, allowed to list other scientific products besides publications, such as datasets, patents, software and code, et cetera.

For more information on how NWO is implementing the principles of DORA, see DORA | NWO.

4.2 Procedure

The application procedure consists of the following steps:
− submission of the statement of intent;
− submission of the proposal;
− admissibility of the proposal;
− pre-advice from the assessment committee;
− rebuttal;
− assessment committee meeting;
− decision-making.

An external, independent assessment committee will be assigned for this Call for proposals, consisting of representatives from science and practice with knowledge of the field. The task of the assessment committee is to assess the proposals and the relevant documents that are submitted, in conjunction with each other and regarding both the respective merits of each proposal and the assessment criteria outlined in this Call for proposals.
Due to the expertise present in the assessment committee, NWO has decided with regard to the assessment of these proposals to exercise the option outlined in Article 2.2.4, paragraph 2, of the NWO Grant Rules 2017, to assess all proposals without involving referees.

4.2.1 Submission of the statement of intent

With a statement of intent, you indicate that you intend to submit a proposal for this Call for proposals. You must submit your statement of intent before the deadline via ISAAC (see Section 1.3).

The name of the main applicant cannot be changed once the statement of intent has been submitted.

The statement of intent is completed directly in ISAAC. There are two input fields in a statement of intent: the title and the summary. Enter the title of the proposal in the first input field. This can be changed when the proposal is submitted. Enter the following details in the summary field:

- A brief summary of the project proposal of up to 250 words and the theme for which you are submitting a proposal. Both items can be changed when the proposal is submitted;
- The proposed co-applicant(s). The co-applicant(s) can be changed when the proposal is submitted.

Statements of intent that do not name the theme in the summary, cannot be considered and you will be given a single opportunity to modify this.

As the main applicant, you are required to submit the statement of intent via your own personal ISAAC account. After receiving the statement of intent, the main applicant will receive a confirmation of receipt by email, via the email address registered in their ISAAC account.

The statement of intent allows NWO to establish the research topics, persons involved and (maximum) expected number of proposals. After the submission deadline for the statements of intent, the main applicants will receive notification of the total number of statements of intent submitted. The content of the statements of intent will not be reviewed by the assessment committee.

4.2.2 Submission of a proposal

Follow these steps when writing your proposal:

- download the application form web application ISAAC or from the NRO website (on the website of the funding scheme in question);
- complete the application form;
- save the application form as a PDF file and upload it with any required annex(es) in ISAAC;
- complete the requested information online in ISAAC.

Required annex:

- budget.

Optional annexe(s):

- Statement appointment and project supervision;
- Letter of Commitment and Declaration Co-funding.

Your complete application form and the required and optional annex(es) must have been received before the deadline via ISAAC (see Section 1.3). After this deadline, you can no longer submit a proposal. As the main applicant, you are required to submit a proposal via your own personal ISAAC account. After receiving the proposal, the main applicant will receive a confirmation of receipt by email, via the email address registered in their ISAAC account. Co-applicants must be registered in ISAAC.
Chapter 4: Assessment procedure / Insight into educational innovation 2024

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. All annexes, with the exception of the budget, must be submitted as PDF files (without encryption). The budget form must be submitted as an Excel file in ISAAC. Annexes other than those listed above are not permitted.

You must enter at least one discipline code in ISAAC that is applicable to the proposed research. You must only use Dutch Research Council discipline codes for this purpose, details of which can be found at Discipline codes | Dutch Research Council. Enter these codes in the ‘General’ tab under ‘Disciplines’. If multiple discipline codes apply to the proposed research, you will be asked to enter these in ISAAC. Entering additional discipline codes is not a requirement.

4.2.3 Admissibility of the proposal

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

4.2.4 Pre-advice assessment committee

After this, your proposal will be submitted for comments to several members of the assessment committee (the pre-advisers). The pre-advisers will provide a written substantive and reasoned response to the proposal. They will formulate these comments based on the substantive assessment criteria (see Section 4.3.1) and will give the proposal a numerical score per assessment criterion. For this, the NWO score table will be used (on a scale of 1 to 9, where “1” is excellent and “9” unsatisfactory).

4.2.5 Rebuttal

The main applicant subsequently receives the anonymised pre-advices. You will then have five working days to draw up a written response of up to 1,000 words using a standard form and sending this by email to echo@nro.nl. The response must be written in English or Dutch. The main applicant will receive a confirmation of receipt after submitting the written response. If the NWO receives your written response after the submission deadline, it will not be considered in the subsequent process. Bear in mind that NWO may contact you after the submission deadline to ask you to make administrative corrections so as to still be able to meet the conditions. You will be given one opportunity to make the corrections. You will have 24 hours to do so.

If you decide to withdraw the proposal, you must notify the bureau by email as soon as possible and withdraw the application in ISAAC.

4.2.6 Meeting of the assessment committee

The committee will make its own assessment based on the available material. Although the pre-advices will ‘guide’ the final assessment to a large extent, it will not be blindly accepted without question by the committee. The committee will consider and compare the arguments of the pre-advisers (also amongst each other) and examine whether the rebuttal contains a well-formulated response to the critical comments from the pre-advices. In addition, unlike the pre-advisers, the assessment committee are knowledgeable about the quality of the other proposals and written responses that have been submitted. This means that the assessment committee may reach a different assessment than the pre-advisers.
Chapter 4: Assessment procedure / Insight into educational innovation 2024

The assessment committee will prioritise each theme. The proposal must receive an overall qualification of at least “good” to be eligible for funding. The proposal must also receive at least the qualification “good” for each of the individual assessment criteria. For more information about the qualifications, see Applying for funding, how does it work? | NWO.

Following the discussion, the committee draws up a written recommendation addressed to the PCHO about the quality and ranking of the proposals. This recommendation is based on the assessment criteria.

If, after the discussion of the full proposals, two or more of the full proposals cannot be distinguished from each other based on their weighted total score, then this will result in an ex aequo situation (see the paragraph about ex aequo).

4.2.7 Ex aequo

NWO understands ex aequo to be a situation in which two or more proposals based on their weighted score cannot be distinguished from each other. An ex aequo situation is relevant with respect to the borders of the available budget or the selection borders. The existence of an ex aequo situation is determined as follows. The starting point in this process is the ranking per theme drawn up by the assessment committee, with the final scores rounded down to two decimal points. The reference score here is the score of the lowest-ranked proposal within the borders of the available budget or the selection borders within a theme. All proposals with a score that is within 0.05 or less of the reference score within a theme will be considered. In this way, the proposals that are equal within a score of 0.1 within a theme will be selected. If an ex aequo situation occurs at the borders of the available budget or the selection borders within a theme, then the proposal with a higher score pertaining to the criterion “Scientific quality” will end as the highest. If the ex aequo situation is not resolved via this procedure, then the proposal with the highest score for the criterion “Relevance, knowledge sharing and knowledge utilisation” will be ranked highest. If the proposals subsequently still remain tied, then the assessment committee, with the help of an (anonymous) majority vote, will determine the ranking within the theme (in accordance with Article 2.2.7, third paragraph, sub a, part iv of the NWO Grant Rules 2017). If this vote also fails to provide a resolution, or if it is deemed to be undesirable to vote, then the ex aequo situation will be sent onto the decision-making body.

4.2.8 Decision-making

Finally, the PCHO will assess the procedure followed as well as the advice from the assessment committee. They will subsequently determine the final qualifications and make a decision over awarding or rejecting the proposals.
4.2.9 Timetable

Below, you will find the timetable for this Call for proposals. During the current procedure, NWO might find it necessary to make further changes to the timetable for this Call for proposals. You will be informed about this in time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements of intent</th>
<th>Deadline statements of intent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 13, 2024, before 14:00:00 hours CEST</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposals</th>
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<tr>
<td>September 10, 2024, before 14:00:00 hours CEST</td>
<td>Deadline proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2024</td>
<td>Pre-advisers consulted</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2024</td>
<td>Applicants can submit a rebuttal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2024/ January 2025</td>
<td>Assessment committee meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February/ March 2025</td>
<td>Decision by the PCHO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Criteria

4.3.1 Substantive assessment criteria

The proposals submitted within this Call for proposals will be substantially assessed based on the following criteria:

1. Scientific quality (40%)
2. Relevance, knowledge sharing and knowledge utilisation (40%)
3. Consortium quality (20%)

1. **Scientific quality (40%)**
   a. To what extent have the central problem statement and the research questions been clearly described, demarcated, and developed?
   b. How adequate is the reference to and connection with existing knowledge and theories of the research?
   c. Are the proposed methods and techniques effective and appropriate to answer the research questions?
   d. To what extent is the project plan, including the described activities, planning and budget, clearly defined and feasible?

2. **Relevance, knowledge sharing and knowledge utilisation (40%)**
   **Relevance**
   a. To what extent does the proposal make it clear on which educational innovation(s) research will be conducted and that the research focuses only on existing educational innovation(s)?
   b. Does the proposal make it clear why it is relevant to conduct research into the chosen educational innovation?
   c. Does the proposal make it clear in which educational contexts (at least two) the research will take place and why this is appropriate to the purpose of the research? Is it sufficiently clear what the relevance of the research on the educational innovation in the chosen contexts is and the added value outside these educational contexts?
   d. To what extent is the research relevant to the chosen theme as defined in the 2023-2026 Knowledge Agenda for Higher Education? Is the relevance of the research for higher education sufficiently clear?

   **Knowledge sharing**
e. To what extent is there a structured approach to knowledge sharing? Are the plans feasible and appropriate for the research?

f. To what extent do the intended scientific and non-scientific knowledge-sharing products meet the needs of potential users from educational practice?

Knowledge utilisation

g. To what extent is there an awareness for how insights and results from research can be used in practice or in policy and particularly outside the educational contexts being investigated? To what extent do activities take place during the research that increase the likelihood of actual use by educational practice?

h. To what extent are the intended end-users of the insights and products and any other stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of the research?

3. Quality consortium (20%)

a. Does the proposal clearly describe the members of the consortium and why they are members? Are the different roles and division of tasks clear and appropriate? Are at least one lecturer and one researcher involved in the research in a meaningful way?

b. To what extent has it been made clear that the researcher(s) involved possess sufficient substantive and methodological expertise in the relevant field, as evidenced in part by publications\(^2\)/\(^3\), presentations and achievements in terms of knowledge utilisation?

c. To what extent does the composition of the consortium inspire confidence that the research can be completed successfully?

All criteria must be rated as ‘good’ or better for the proposal to be eligible for funding. The proposal as a whole must also be rated as ‘good’.

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\(^2\) For the assessment of publications, one of the tools used is the Publication Cultures for the Social Sciences and Humanities. The Journal Impact Factor and H index may not be included as indicators in accordance with the DORA statement.

\(^3\) Publication is broadly understood to mean public dissemination of research findings, for example, in a professional or scholarly journal, on an online platform or presented as a conference paper.
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 Additional terms and conditions

**Latest starting date**
A project that has been awarded funding must start no later than 6 months after the grant has been awarded. If the project starts too late, NRO may revoke the decision to award funding.

Before the start of the project, you must submit the following starting documents via ISAAC:
- A fully completed and signed project notification form (PMF).

Furthermore, you should register each appointment to the project of a postdoc in ISAAC for the duration of the project. You can download all the required documents from www.nro.nl/projectbeheer.

**Reporting interim changes**
As the main applicant, you are required to report any changes in the planning or execution of the research immediately. You should provide NRO with a substantiated motivation for the changes in your research project.

Any budget shifts between staff costs and material costs and budget shifts within staff costs must always be discussed with NRO. You only have to discuss a shift in the material budget if:
- The shift has consequences for the content, schedule and/or intended research results;
- The budget shift exceeds 20% of the total material budget.

**Research progress**
Halfway through the duration of the project, the main applicant must report on the research carried out so far and indicate how the project will be carried out in the remaining term.

NRO monitors and supports progress and evaluates the results of the research. We base this on the planning and intended output as specified in your proposal. In case of a substantial deviation from the proposal without NRO’s prior consent, NRO may (temporarily or permanently) stop the payment of instalments and withdraw the grant in part, or in full, and recover it where necessary.

Furthermore, NRO asks that you register any publication or other form of output in ISAAC during the term of the project and for up to two years after the project has been completed. You are expected to follow the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP) in this regard. You can find a comprehensive description of the steps to take when registering products in ISAAC at www.isaac.nwo.nl.

**Knowledge utilisation**
It is important to NRO that the knowledge generated by NRO-funded research is also available to and can be used by educational professionals. To enhance the potential for social impact of the research, demonstrable involvement of key users is required from the formation of the consortium up to and including project completion.

During the research, NRO asks consortia to reflect on the impact of the research and to consider how its output can be used, disseminated, and maintained amongst end users and other stakeholders. This is also reflected in the monitoring of the research progress.
Educational knowledge (Onderwijskennis)
In the framework of knowledge dissemination and utilisation, the researchers may be invited to contribute to a theme page on the national knowledge hub, onderwijskennis.nl, during the term of the project. This platform is powered by NRO and displays scientifically substantiated sources from various partners with the aim of making knowledge accessible and connecting education research and educational practice. The hub offers thematic pages on relevant educational topics, including thematic overviews, practical tools, and in-depth resources.

A contribution can be requested in the form of provision of a suitable source, but also in the form of reviewing a thematic overview or sources relating to the research topic of the proposal that had already been selected. So regardless of the educational sector or the perspective of the research, a contribution is possible. If a contribution in relation to the theme of the proposal for Onderwijskennis.nl is desired, the bureau will contact the project leader. If you yourself would like to make a contribution, you can also get in touch via the contact page at Onderwijskennis.nl.

Final report and fact sheet
Two months before the end date of the research, the PCHO expects you to submit a digital draft version of the final report and a fact sheet. The fact sheet is intended to provide a concise, point-by-point description of the main features of the publication. This information helps knowledge users to determine whether the publication meets their information needs. The main applicant should submit both documents in ISAAC.

The PCHO reviews the draft version of the final report and fact sheet in isolation, as well as against the background of the original proposal and other relevant documents during the course of the research project. They may engage independent assessors in this process. Within thirty days, the main applicant will receive a response from the PCHO either approving or rejecting the draft version and substantive comments. If:
− the report is rejected, the researcher must modify the report on the basis of the comments until the Programme Council approves it;
− the report is approved, the researcher must incorporate the (final) comments in the report, after which they must submit the final version in ISAAC within the set deadline.

The final report must include at least the following elements:
− The publication is aimed at the intended end users, who may be professionals from educational practice, researchers, or policy makers;
− The final report should be written in Dutch or English;
− It should have a comprehensible Dutch summary of the main results of no more than two pages, preferably at the front of the report;
− The text must be clear, and the reader should be able to quickly get an idea of the content and its relevance to their own practice;
− The report should set out the methodological and scientific justification for the procedure used. This information must be presented in a clear and accessible way.
− A description of the research design, the sample, recruitment, and response (including substantiation for the response/representativeness);
− The design and execution of fieldwork and data collection (including a description and justification of the quality of the data file);
− A description and justification of the instruments used (including data such as scaling, if applicable, and reliability and validity of the instruments used);
− The results of the analyses to answer the research questions.

Assessment of output
The research will only be considered successfully completed if the output specified in the proposal has been delivered and peer-reviewed by the PCHO. After your project has been successfully completed, NRO will publish the final report and fact sheet on its website.
Chapter 5: Obligations for grant recipients / Insight into educational innovation 2024

Presentation of projects
NRO will regularly hold meetings for the presentation of research projects that have been awarded funding. With these meetings, NRO aims to contribute to improvements and innovations in education. NRO can invite researchers carrying out this project to contribute to the meetings. In addition, the researchers are asked to present their research at other meetings in the context of educational innovation and to include this in the knowledge utilisation plan and the budget.

Final report and financial accountability
Within three months after completing the research, the main applicant must submit a final report in ISAAC.

In addition, you are expected to register separately in ISAAC all output generated so far in the project and set out in the proposal. Once the Programme Council has approved the final report, NRO closes the funding period and establishes the final grant.

DANS
All products, and intermediate products, must be uploaded in EASY within 3 months after publication. This is the online filing system of Data Archiving and Networked Services (DANS) of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW, i.c. Home - EASY (knaw.nl)). This mainly concerns the data files with research data that are suitable for reuse. Of course, you have to ensure that confidential data, classified information and information which may not be disclosed by virtue of laws and regulations are removed. The OND-number is unique to and should accompany the submission of data files. Moreover, databases must be accompanied by documentation in accordance with the DANS guidelines. After the databases have been included in EASY, a Persistent Identifier of the database is assigned by DANS.

5.1.2 Data management
After a proposal has been awarded funding, the researcher should elaborate the data management section into a data management plan. For this, applicants can make use of the advice from the referees and committee. The applicant must describe in the plan whether existing data will be used, or whether new data will be collected or generated, and how this 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 organisation where the project will be realised. The plan should be submitted to NWO via ISAAC within 4 months after the proposal has been 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: Research data management | NWO.

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.

**Books**
Different requirements apply to scholarly books, book chapters and edited collections. See the Open Access Policy Framework at [Open Science | NWO](https://open-science.nwo.nl).

**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.

**Other types of publications**
NWO encourages that non-scientific publications are also made available in open access as early as possible and under an open licence. This concerns, for example, reports, working papers, posters, protocols, prototypes, presentations and project websites. To guarantee findability, reuse and long-term availability, the advice is:

- Apply a DOI (Digital Object Identifier) or other persistent identifier;
- To use an open license, preferably a Creative Commons License;
- Store the material in a trusted repository that ensures long-term accessibility.

NWO recommends using Zenodo.org, which offers free storage and automated services in these three areas.

For more detailed information about NWO’s Open Access policy, see [Open Science | NWO](https://open-science.nwo.nl).
6 Contact and other information

6.1 Contact

6.1.1 Specific questions

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

Tamara Hussein and Laura Toron
T: +31 (0)70 344 05 51
E: pcho@nro.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 of budget modules

It is possible to apply for the funding of the salary costs of personnel who make a substantial contribution to the research. Funding of these salary costs depends on the type of appointment and the organisation where the personnel are/will be appointed.

- For the appointment of a postdoc or non-academic staff at a university institution, the salary costs are funded in accordance with the UNL salary tables applicable at the moment the grant is awarded (Salary tables | NWO).
- For university medical centres, the salary costs are funded in accordance with the NFU salary tables applicable at the moment the grant is awarded (Salary tables | NWO).
- For personnel from universities (with the exception of a postdoc or non-academic staff) and universities of applied sciences, salary costs will be funded based on the collective labour agreement pay scale of the employee concerned in accordance with the applicable rate at the time of awarding the grant as taken from Table 2.2, column ‘Hourly rate productive hours, excl. Dutch VAT’ from the Handleiding Overheidstarieven [HOT- Manual Dutch Government Rates] (Salary tables | NWO).
- For the Caribbean Netherlands, the Dutch government employs civil servants on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba under different conditions than in the European part of the Netherlands Employment terms and conditions | Working at the Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland | Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland (rijksdienstcn.com).

NWO will apply a mandatory one-off indexing of the salary costs with respect to:

- UNL rates: for proposals submitted before 1 July and that are awarded funding after 1 July;
- NFU rates: for proposals submitted before 1 August that are awarded funding after 1 August;
- HOT rates: for proposals submitted before 1 January that are awarded funding after 1 January.

The mandatory one-off indexing does not affect the level of the grant ceiling, or the maximum amount of the grant awarded for each proposal. Both the level of the grant ceiling and the maximum amount of the grant awarded will remain unchanged during the assessment procedure. The mandatory one-off indexing will be applied after the decision-making process about awarding or rejecting proposals is completed.

If co-funding is required or permitted, then the one-off mandatory indexing will have no consequences for the co-funding requirement or the IP rights that can emerge from the co-funding.

The rates for all budget modules are incorporated in the budget template that accompanies the application form. For the budget module “Postdoc”, a one-off individual bench fee of €5,000 is added on top of the salary costs to encourage the scientific career of the project employee funded by NWO. Remunerations for PhD scholarship students (‘bursalen’) at a Dutch university are not eligible for funding from NWO.

The available budget modules are explained below.

Postdoc at universities

The size and duration of the postdoc appointment is at least 6 full-time months and at most 36 full-time months. The size and duration of the appointment is at the applicant’s discretion, but the appointment is always for at least 0.5 FTE or for a duration of at least 12 months. The product of FTE x duration of appointment should always be a minimum of 6 full-time months.

The material budget is available to cover the costs of a more limited appointment of a postdoc.

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4 1 July, 1 August and 1 January are the dates on which the relevant rates are generally adjusted, in the case of indexation the date of actual annual adjustment will be taken into account.
Non-scientific staff (NSS) at universities

Funding for the appointment of NSS required to realise the research project can only be applied for if funding for a PhD student or postdoc is also applied for. A maximum of €100,000 can be requested for NSS. This includes personnel such as student assistants, programmers, technical assistants or analysts. Depending on the level of the position, the appropriate salary table for NSS at MBO, HBO or university level applies.

The size of the appointment is at least 6 full-time months and at most 36 full-time months. The size and duration of the appointment is at the applicant’s discretion, but the appointment is always for at least 0.5 FTE or for a duration of at least 12 months. The product of FTE x duration of appointment should always be a minimum of 6 full-time months.

The material budget is available to cover the costs of a more limited appointment of NSS.

Personnel universities of applied sciences and universities

With the exception of personnel that fall under UNL or NFU rates, costs for the funding of personnel employed at a university of applied sciences or at universities will be remunerated in accordance with Table 2.2, column ‘Hourly rate productive hours, excl. Dutch VAT’ from the Handleiding Overheidstarieven [HOT- Manual Dutch Government Rates] (Salary tables | NWO).

For the calculation you should use the number of productive hours stated in the valid volume of the Handleiding Overheidstarieven.

Explanation of budget module Material

For each FTE scientific position (PhD student and postdoc) applied for, a maximum of €15,000 material budget can be applied for per year of the appointment. Material budget for smaller appointments can be applied for on a proportionate basis and will be made available by NWO accordingly. Per 0.2 FTE scientific employee applied for at a university of applied sciences, educational institution or other organisation (with a minimum appointment of 0.2 FTE for 12 months) a maximum of €15,000 in material budget can be applied for per year.

The applicant is responsible for distributing the total amount of material budget across the NWO-funded personnel positions. The material budget that can be applied for is specified according to the three categories below:

Project-related goods/services

− consumables (e.g., glassware, chemicals, cryogenic fluids, etc.);
− measurement and calculation time (e.g., access to supercomputer, etc.);
− costs for acquiring or using data collections (e.g., from Statistics Netherlands [CBS]), for which the total amount may not be more than €25,000 per proposal;
− access to large national and international facilities (e.g., cleanroom, synchrotron, etc.);
− work by third parties (e.g., laboratory analyses, data collection, citizen science, etc.);
− personnel costs for the appointment of a postdoc and/or non-scientific personnel for a smaller appointment size than those offered in the personnel budget modules.

Travel and accommodation costs for the personnel positions applied for

− travel and accommodation costs;
− conference attendance (maximum of two per year per scientific position applied for);
− fieldwork;
− work visit.

Implementation costs

− national symposium/conference/workshop organised by the project researchers;
− costs for Open Access publishing (solely in full gold Open Access journals, registered in the “Directory of Open Access Journals” https://doaj.org/);
− costs data management;
costs involved in applying for licences (e.g., for animal experiments);  
- audit costs (only for institutions that are not subject to the education accountants protocol of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science), maximum €5,000 per proposal; for projects with a duration of three years or less, a maximum of €2,500 per proposal applies.

Costs that cannot be applied for are:
- basic facilities within the institution (e.g., laptops, office furniture, etc.);
- maintenance and insurance costs.

If the maximum amount is not sufficient for realising the research, then this amount may be deviated from if a clear justification is provided in the proposal.

**Explanation of budget module Knowledge utilisation**

The aim of this budget module is to facilitate the use of the knowledge that emerges from the research. The budget applied for may not exceed € 25,000. As knowledge utilisation takes many different forms in different scientific fields, the applicant needs to specify the required costs, e.g., costs of producing a teaching package, conducting a feasibility study into potential applications, or filing a patent application.

The budget applied for should be adequately specified in the proposal.

**Explanation of budget module Internationalisation**

The budget for internationalisation is intended to encourage international collaboration. The budget applied for may not exceed €25,000. The amount requested must be specified. If the maximum amount is not sufficient for realising the research, then it may be deviated from if an adequate justification is provided in the proposal.

Funding can be requested for:
- travel and accommodation costs in so far as these concern direct research costs emerging from the international collaboration and additional costs for internationalisation that cannot be covered in another manner, for example from the bench fee;
- travel and accommodation costs for foreign guest researchers;
- costs for organising international workshops/symposia/scientific meetings.

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5 In this budget module, the definition for “knowledge transfer” as used by the European Commission in the Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (PbEU, 2014, C198) applies.