



Netherlands Initiative for Education Research

Call for proposals

Open and Online Higher Education

2015



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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Netherlands Initiative for Education Research (Dutch acronym: NRO) was established to bridge the gap between academic research and educational practice.

The NRO's mission is to coordinate the programming and funding of research into education. The NRO facilitates the use of research results in educational practice and policy, thus contributing to innovations and improvements in education.

This call for proposals sets out the procedure for applying for funding, and the assessment and selection of the application, for research into open and online higher education. Applicants are invited to submit a letter of intent and a full application. This call for proposals falls under the responsibility of the Coordinating Programme Council for Educational Research (*Overkoepelende Programmaraad voor Onderwijsonderzoek*, Dutch acronym: OPRO).

1.2 Available budget

The available budget is €1,350,000.

1.3 Validity of the call for proposals

This call for proposals is valid until the closing date of **27 January 2015**.

2 Aim

In this funding round, applications may be submitted for funding research into open and online higher education. The NRO and the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Dutch acronym: OCW) provide a budget, of which € 400.000 comes from the ministry, for research into projects concerning open and online education in the framework of the incentive scheme by OCW.

The aim is to acquire a better understanding of the extent to which open and online education can contribute to improvements and innovations in higher education, based on both fundamental and accompanying research. A research proposal must therefore include both types of research, i.e. fundamental and accompanying. Only one application will be awarded funding.

Open and online education

The possibilities to participate in higher education (hereinafter: 'education') have increased as a result of communication through ICT. It is now possible to offer educational programmes or parts of these programmes in a way that allows them to be followed anywhere in the world, provided there is an online connection. This also makes it possible to organise and offer a much larger range: education can be offered to others than a provider's own students.

A specific form of this is the MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) in which an entire course, intended for participation by many students, is offered openly and online. Digital interaction, for instance through discussion forums, is possible with these courses. Other options include Distributed Open Collaborative Course (DOCC), Participatory Open Online Course (POOC), Small Private Online Course (SPOC), Big Open Online Course (BOOC), or Open Educational Resources.

Online education is defined as: education that takes place fully or predominantly online (blended learning). Open education is understood to mean at least educational material that is made available under an open license. In addition, this form of education can be offered openly in time, place, pace, access and programme, or be offered for free.

General objectives of open and online education

Generally speaking, the specific objectives for open and online education are to:

- make education accessible to new and specific groups of students;
- increase the efficiency and effectiveness of education both from the perspective of the student and of the teacher;
- promote the motivation of students and teachers;
- increase the repertoire of possibilities for education;
- contribute to the reputation of the college or university providing the education.

Fundamental research into general characteristics of open and online education

A number of research topics relating to the characteristics of open and online education present themselves in comparison with more traditional ways of providing education ('teacher and students in one classroom'). These are in the fields of:

- a. Improving the quality of education
- b. Support for students
- c. Learning analytics
- d. Scaling up
- e. Knock-on effects

This can be explained as follows.

a. Improving the quality of education

What are the effects of open and online education on the quality of higher education in general? This involves, among other things, increased efficiency and effectiveness of education but also the impact on teaching methods in higher education. In this way the elucidation required for online provision of education can give insights into the possibilities and limitations of specific teaching approaches.

b. Support for students

Different support structures and possibilities apply in the case of large student numbers and distance education; what teaching methods are suitable for this? Providing feedback, in particular, is a challenge: how do the participating students receive tailored feedback in a timely way? A related question is: for which students, with which characteristics, is open and online education particularly suited?

c. Learning analytics

Digitally observable behaviour and performance of students can be recorded. This leads to the following two opportunities. First, large amounts of data containing interesting research material become available: can useful conclusions be drawn from these data? Second, these data give the teacher the opportunity to intervene at the level of individual students' progress, course components or the course as a whole, provided the right tools can be developed for this: can the data from the course be used for interventions by the teacher through the development of a dashboard?

d. Scaling up

When implementing innovations in the field of open and online education, the providers often start with relatively straightforward pilots (e.g. a limited number of participants). Scaling up can have unexpected effects that were not reflected in the pilot phase. It is important to estimate the effects of scaling in advance: how can we make pilots that take scaling up into account?

e. Knock-on effects

As with many educational innovations, here too we may expect unintended (positive and negative) knock-on effects to occur. For example, the target groups may be broader than originally foreseen; the potential of open and online education could also be of value to students already in 'mainstream education' at university. Furthermore, the findings may result in effects that could be applied in other sectors of education (primary, secondary, vocational). Questions we can ask in this connection are:

What unintended knock-on effects can occur and what are the implications for (the arrangement of) online and open education?

Which findings are also applicable to other sectors of education?

Researchers are invited to include in their research proposal one or more of these questions, or other questions they consider relevant, concerning the general characteristics of open and online education.

Accompanying research

In addition to the fundamental research outlined above, the NRO also wants accompanying research to be carried out into projects relating to OCW's incentive scheme for open and online education (see below). The SURF Foundation is responsible for the implementation of this incentive scheme. The incentive projects carried out under this scheme, taken as a whole, form a compelling research topic. The projects are evaluated separately by the institutions that are awarded such a project.

Moreover, the accompanying research of the NRO provides the opportunity to research various incentive projects in conjunction with each other. It is up to the researchers funded by the NRO to research the incentive projects they consider suitable for this purpose. These projects are required by SURF to participate in this research through the provision of data that may be required, with due regard for intellectual property rights and the protection of personal data (see the attached flyer 'Stimuleringsregeling Open en Online Onderwijs 2015' of SURF; only available in Dutch and of specific relevance for applicants). More insight can be gained in the success of certain approaches by following these incentive projects jointly than by assessing them separately. Furthermore, the researchers are free to include in their research similar projects not covered by the incentive scheme.

The aim of the accompanying research is to gain insight into the extent to which the incentive projects meet the general objectives in the incentive scheme and as set out above (where applicable) and which aspects of these projects contribute to these objectives. Researchers are invited to submit research proposals that examine the success of the projects in the incentive scheme and that demonstrate potentially generalizable effects of these projects. As it is not yet known which incentive projects will be carried out at the time of preparing the research proposals, applicants must indicate in general terms how they intend to carry out the accompanying research based on their research questions.

It is therefore important for the researchers to identify at the start of their research those incentive projects that may provide relevant data to answer their research questions. The researchers then make agreements with the executors of the incentive projects on the delivery of the data in a uniform way that allows for comparison. Before the second generation of incentive projects begin (to be carried out in 2016), the researchers will make proposals regarding the design of these incentive projects so that any generalizable effects can be better identified. Close collaboration between the researchers and the incentive projects during the research period is important to generate as many useful results as possible. A participatory, open approach by the researchers and the incentive projects is essential.

Incentive scheme for open and online education

The Minister of Education has decided, for the period between 2015 and 2020, to promote the use of open and online education in higher education through a grant (see flyer 'Stimuleringsregeling Open en Online Onderwijs 2015' of SURF). This will be sufficient to fund, in the 2015-2019 period, four rounds of between eight and fourteen projects, each with a duration of 16 months and a budget of €50,000 to €100,000, where the institution of higher education developing the open and online education is to invest at least the same amount. Specific conditions are attached to these projects, including cooperation with researchers carrying out NRO's accompanying research. A higher education institution may apply for a grant with the NRO under this call for proposals as well as with SURF for an incentive project.

The incentive scheme for open and online education aims to contribute, through open and online higher education, to:

1. Improvement of the quality of higher education
2. Accessibility of higher education
3. Effectiveness of higher education
4. Increasing academic success

Each incentive project should contribute to at least one of these objectives.

Sharing experiences and insights is also an important goal of the incentive scheme, which is organised by SURF.

The incentive scheme applies to projects that focus on online education which involves the use of learning materials with a Creative Commons license and which is open in respect of at least one of the other aspects indicated above (also: incentive projects).

In any event the projects are to deliver:

- Newly developed open online educational materials or integration of existing online educational materials in mainstream education;
- A brief self-evaluation of how the use of open and online education contributes to the quality, accessibility and effectiveness of higher education and to increasing academic success;
- Description of the use of open and online education in practice.

3 Guidelines for applicants

3.1 Who can apply

A research proposal can only be submitted by postdoc researchers with a permanent appointment at a Dutch (para-)university or university of applied sciences.

During the period for which funding is requested, the main applicant and co-applicants must remain effectively involved in the research covered by the application. The institute must give the applicants the opportunity to take care of adequate research supervision during the course of the application process and the research.

An application in this funding round should have one main applicant and one or more co-applicants. In this funding round you may only be an applicant once: either a main applicant or a co-applicant.

Persons employed at another research institution where educational research is carried out may be co-applicants.

Incidentally, NRO-programme-councilmembers are not excluded from participation. They meet the definition given for 'applicant'. As required under the NWO Code of Conduct on Conflicts of Interest, the assessment procedure contains safeguards for possible involvement of NRO-programme-councilmembers. Members of the assessment committee may not be an applicant in the same round.

3.2 What can be applied for

A budget of €1,350,000 is available in this funding round.

Applications for research may be submitted for a maximum term of five years and a budget of at least €1,200,000 and at most €1,350,000. This may be based on a ratio of 2/3 of the budget for fundamental research and 1/3 for accompanying research. Exceptions to this division are possible, provided they are substantiated. Only one research proposal can be awarded in this round. The research may be composed of several sub-research projects.

A grant may be applied for to cover both the staffing and material costs to be incurred for the research.

The NRO, along with NWO and others, consider it important that academic knowledge and skills are disseminated and utilised outside the academic domain or in other academic disciplines, in other words: for there to be knowledge utilisation. Therefore, of the requested funding at least five percent of the budget should be earmarked for knowledge utilisation.

Staffing costs

For staffing costs a distinction is made between the following categories:

Staff with fixed rates

The remuneration for senior academic staff (such as university lecturers, postdoc researchers), junior academic staff (such as PhD students, junior researchers) and non-academic staff who are appointed at a university is based on the standard salary payments (see the document 'Salary tables VSNU' (only available in Dutch) on the grant page of this programme on the NWO website) to be agreed annually pursuant to the 'NWO/VSNU Agreement for Funding Scientific Research 2008'. It is possible to place more experienced staff in higher salary year. This higher classification must match the number of years of service or experience and should be reflected in the substantiation of the staffing costs. It is important to ensure that the staff member is not placed outside the scale: the 8th salary year is considered the highest level within a scale.

PhD student

At the time of appointment a PhD student must have obtained their PhD no more than two years earlier. A PhD student may therefore only be appointed starting from the first year. In principle the tenure is for a maximum of four years, with an FTE of 1.0.

PhD student in preliminary Master's phase

A three-year PhD grant can subsequently be requested for a researcher completing a two-year Research Master's programme. As a rule, this three-year period follows the preliminary phase; in principle the tenure is up to three years with an FTE of 1.0. A part-time appointment (four years) is possible.

Postdoc researcher

A postdoc researcher must have obtained their PhD at the time of the appointment or the date of the PhD defence should already be set and take place within six months of appointment. The tenure for a postdoc researcher is at least one and at most five years. A part-time appointment (minimum 0.5 FTE) is possible.

Non-academic staff

Non-academic staff is understood to mean staff members who support the research of the above persons with specialist non-academic tasks related to the research, such as computer programming. Grants can be applied for non-academic staff at secondary vocational, higher vocational or university level. The contribution of non-academic staff must be explicitly substantiated, both in terms of the level and of the duration. Funding for administrative support tasks cannot be requested under this grant.

Staff with variable rates

Staff of research institutes who are not affiliated to a university (this includes universities of applied sciences) may charge a daily rate based on the gross salary according to the actual salary scale and periodicity of the applicable collective bargaining agreement (if relevant) plus all the required surcharges.

This budget system also applies for staffing costs involving senior lecturers and professors who are appointed at a university, but in this case the surcharges are limited to the maximum amounts agreed under the aforementioned VSNU agreement, except for indexation and the so-called end of project fee.

These rates are binding; nonetheless, the requested budget, the scope and the nature of the staffing costs should be specified and justified.

Material costs

Material costs eligible for funding concern for instance:

- procuring special equipment and consumables needed for the research;

- costs of holding surveys, conducting experiments and test research, and conducting observations;
- acquiring databases;
- travel in connection with the research;
- costs associated with the dissemination of research results and knowledge transfer;
- student assistance.

Grants for costs associated with defence presentations and ceremonies cannot be applied for; this is covered by the bench fee (see below).

Material costs should be accounted for both financially and substantively.

The following costs are not eligible for funding, unless the research requires the use of facilities that demonstrably exceeds normal use:

- the costs of equipment, consumables or administrative or technical assistance that are part of the normal facilities package of a research institute;
- the costs of using computers in university computer centres and the costs of using laboratories.

Only costs directly resulting from the research are eligible for funding. Therefore, no housing, overhead, maintenance or depreciation costs may be funded from the awarded grant.

It is not possible to include 'unforeseen' as a cost item.

Bench fee

An individual bench fee is awarded to PhD students and postdoc researchers with an appointment of at least 0.5 FTE for at least one year. This is a fixed amount for costs relating to promoting the academic career of the researcher funded by NWO (e.g. attending conferences, publication of the dissertation, etc.). The amount of the bench fee is set at a maximum of €5,000 (based on a full-time position; four years for PhD students and five years for postdoc researchers) and, if applicable, is awarded proportionally. The bench fee will be financed from the materials budget.

Open Access

The NRO shares the belief that research results obtained with public funding should, where possible, be publicly accessible. This applies to both scientific publications (journal articles, books) and research data. Applicants should therefore set aside an amount of €8,000 for Open Access publications in the budget accompanying their application. This will allow for approximately four or five publications to be made.

Financing

Grants are allocated to the main applicant and fully paid to the main applicant's institute. The payment of staff and material costs will be according to the instalments specified in the award letter. The last instalment will be paid after approval of the final report and the financial statements.

3.3 When can applications be submitted

Submitting a letter of intent is a requirement. This means that researchers can only submit a full application if a prior letter of intent has been submitted in time. The closing date for submitting a **letter of intent** is **Tuesday 6 January 2015, 12:00 noon**.

After the closing date for submitting letters of intent, the submitter will receive confirmation of receipt and the number of letters of intent will be announced to the applicants. Applicants may then consider withdrawing their applications. Applicants who wish to withdraw their applications must notify the NRO-secretariat.

The letter of intent will not be used as a selection tool. This letter of intent can only be submitted via the electronic application system Iris (see Section 3.6)

Application forms for full grant applications must also be submitted via Iris. The closing date for submitting full **research proposals** is **Tuesday 27 January 2015, 12:00 noon**. See Section 4.1 for more information on the timetable and assessment procedure.

3.4 Preparing an application

Both the letter of intent and the full complete application consist of two parts: a fact sheet and a letter of intent/application form.

- The fact sheet must be directly completed in NWO's electronic application system, Iris.
- The letter of intent and application form can be found on the grant page of this programme on the NWO website. As soon as they are completed these forms must be attached to the Iris fact sheet in PDF format.

Letters of intent and full applications must be prepared according to the instructions in this call for proposals and the format of the forms to be used in this funding round.

Applications must be prepared in English.

3.5 Specific conditions

A main applicant is expected to be willing to assume academic, organisational and financial responsibility for the research to be funded. This means that if a grant is awarded, the main applicant will be in charge of coordinating the research, coordinating the communication about the incentive scheme for open and online education with the parties concerned, as well as preparing the progress reports, the substantive final report, the administrative research report, the financial accounts and proper and complete recording of all the research output.

A research project that has been awarded funding must start within three months after award, otherwise the grant decision may be revoked. The maximum research term is five years, with 1 August 2020 as the deadline for delivery of the substantive final report.

Where possible, the results of research covered by this programme must be freely published. The research must deliver academic as well as non-academic output.

Main applicants are obliged to set aside an amount of €8,000 for Open Access publications in the budget accompanying their application. This will allow for approximately four or five publications to be made.

The NRO requires all researchers who wish to qualify for funding to allocate five percent of the budget for the dissemination and explanation of research results to users (knowledge utilisation) of their project. This explanation will be considered in the assessment. The flyer 'Stimuleringsregeling Open en Online Onderwijs 2015' of SURF should also be included in this, in particular the coordination with SURF on knowledge utilisation.

To the extent not provided for in the call for proposals, the NWO grants scheme (1 May 2011, version of 24 July 2014) applies.

3.6 Submitting an application

An application can only be submitted to NWO via the electronic application system Iris. Applications not submitted via Iris will not be admitted to the selection procedure. A main applicant is obliged to submit his/her application via his/her own Iris account.

If the main applicant does not have an Iris account, they should create this at least one day before submitting the application. This is to that any possible registration problems can still be solved on time. If the main applicant already has an Iris account, they need not create a new account to submit a new application.

For technical questions, please contact the Iris helpdesk.

4 Assessment procedure

4.1 Procedure

The NWO Code of Conduct on Conflicts of Interest applies to all persons and NWO staff involved in the assessment and/or decision-making process.

NWO gives all full proposals a qualification. The applicant is informed of this qualification when the decision about whether or not to award funding is announced. For further information about the qualifications see:

<http://www.nwo.nl/en/funding/funding+process+explained/nwo+qualification+system>.

The procedure consists of the following steps:

- Publication of the call
- Submitting letters of intent
- Submitting applications
- Processing the application
- Assessment by the assessment committee
- Programme council decision

Because of the assessment committee's expertise on open and online higher education, and the additional guarantee of the committee's independence given that the assessors must work outside the Netherlands, it was decided to make use of the option in Article 2.2.5 of the NWO grants scheme (1 May 2011, version of 24 July 2014) to follow a different selection procedure regarding the advisory, assessment and decision components. This deviation implies that the assessment procedure will be carried out without involving referees.

Submitting the letter of intent

Researchers must submit a letter of intent in a timely manner. Submitting a letter of intent is a requirement. Receipt of this will be confirmed to the applicant. Letters of intent must be submitted via Iris no later than **6 January 2015, 12:00 noon**. Submission after this time is not possible. Applicants will be notified of receipt of the letter of intent.

Submitting applications

A standard form is available for submission of the full proposal. Applicants must adhere to the research questions and associated explanatory notes contained in this form, as well as the guidelines for the maximum number of words. Full applications must be submitted via Iris no later than **27 January 2015, 12:00 noon**. Submission after this time is not possible. Applicants will be notified of receipt of the application.

Processing the application

As soon as possible after submission the main applicant will be notified of whether or not the application will be processed. The NRO-secretariat determines this based on a number of administrative criteria. These are provided in Section 4.2.1. An application that does not meet one of these criteria will not be processed.

Assessment by the assessment committee

The programme council establishes an assessment committee to assess the applications. This committee consists of experts in the field of open and online higher education who work outside the Netherlands. Each application is submitted for comments to at least two members of the committee (the preliminary advisers). They provide substantive and substantiated comments on the proposal (preliminary advice). They formulate this on the basis of the assessment criteria in Section 4.2.2, for which they use a standardised form. The preliminary advisers may not be involved with the applicants or in the applications on which they provide advice.

Rebuttal

The applicant receives anonymised preliminary advice on his or her application and is given a week's time to formulate a rebuttal. If the tenor of the preliminary advice is mostly negative, the applicant is urged to withdraw the application. Experience has shown that the probability of a positive assessment in the case of predominantly negative preliminary advice is generally very small. If the applicant decides to withdraw the application he/she must notify the NRO-secretariat in writing as soon as possible.

Discussion by the assessment committee

The assessment committee will discuss the application, the preliminary advice and the applicant's rebuttal and will prepare a written report on the quality of the application for the programme council, on the basis of the assessment criteria.

The committee will prioritise the applications and submit their advice to the programme council. Only proposals with the qualifications 'excellent', 'very good' and 'good' are eligible for funding.

Programme council decision

The advice of the assessment committee is reviewed and discussed by the programme council. Subsequently, the programme council determines the final qualifications and decides which application will be awarded funding. Only one application may be awarded funding.

The main applicants will be informed of the result of the assessment of their application as soon as possible after the decision.

After grant award

After acceptance by the programme council the formal grant award is made by letter. The payment of staff and material costs will be according to the instalments specified in the award letter. The grant is awarded on condition that the points for consideration mentioned in the assessment will be taken into account during the research. The applicant's response to the preliminary advice is considered part of the application and therefore part of the document based on which the grant is awarded.

Start within three months

Research that has been awarded funding must start within three months after award, otherwise the grant decision may be revoked.

Monitoring research progress

The NRO monitors progress and evaluates the results of the funded research in relation to the indicated time schedule and envisaged results. The main applicant is expected to immediately report unforeseen events that may have an adverse effect on research progress or delivery of the output. Although the main applicant is responsible for finding a solution, the NRO will provide, if needed, required support.

Any changes in the composition of the research team or interim policy changes in the research project must also be reported (in accordance with the grant conditions of the NWO). The programme council must agree to such changes. Extensions of the grant period are, in principle, restricted. If the NRO observes a significant deviation of progress from the schedule, it reserves the right to apply sanctions as specified on awarding funding.

After the grant has been awarded the NRO's knowledge utilisation officer will contact the main applicant to discuss the knowledge dissemination and utilisation plan as included in the grant application. Regular discussions will also be held during the term of the project in support of the dissemination activities. A separate budget for the dissemination of research results must be set aside in the application.

The NRO believes it is important to share the results of scientific research with a wide audience and with potential users. This is done by bringing these results to the attention of the media and journals. The NRO's knowledge utilisation officer will contact the main applicant to discuss how the research results will be published. They may, for example, prepare a press release and approach journalists about the research. The knowledge utilisation officer may also be involved in non-academic dissemination activities during the term of the research. Points of interest here include dissemination and valorisation of relevant knowledge in the education sector.

Progress reports

The main applicant must report annually in February on the research carried out so far. These reports should include conclusions and partial conclusions, and it should also be clear what has been done in terms of knowledge dissemination and knowledge transfer. The main applicant must also indicate how the research will be carried out in the following year. The written report must be approved by the programme council.

Completion

The substantive final report on the results should be ready by **1 August 2020**. Eight copies of this report must be sent to the NRO-secretariat. Delivery of other materials and project results must be discussed with the NRO. This output will be determined in consultation with the knowledge utilisation officer during the course of the research.

Substantive final report is distinguished from the final report, which describes the research process and publications. At the end of the grant period the main applicant must prepare and present a final report and financial accounts, in accordance with the grant conditions of the NWO, and also register all (academic) output through Iris. The schedule for delivery of (academic) output which has yet to be produced must be mentioned in the final report. After approval of the final report the grant period is closed and the final grant is determined. Failure to submit the final report on time may result in the final grant instalment not being paid.

The programme council may only adopt the content of the research if the substantive final report of the research project is available. If submission of the substantive final report is delayed due to force majeure, the programme council will give the main applicant the opportunity to submit this within a reasonable period of time. This will postpone the adoption and financial completion of the project.

If there is no force majeure and the main applicant does not submit the substantive final report within the prescribed period, the research will be adopted on the basis of the final report. In that case the research will be considered as not having been successfully completed. This may result in the final grant instalment not being paid.

Presentation of research

The NRO will regularly hold meetings at which all the research projects that have been granted by the four programme councils will be presented. In this way the NRO aims to contribute to the improvement and innovation of educational practice, in accordance with its mission. Those carrying out this research are expected to contribute to this.

Objection and appeal

Formal objections against decisions in the context of the Open and Online Higher Education funding round can be made in accordance with the applicable objection and appeal procedures.

Timetable assessment procedure

Mid-November 2014	Publication of the call
3 December 2014 10:00 – 12:00	Information meeting on SURF incentive scheme at meeting center Regardz La Vie in Utrecht
6 January 2015	Deadline for submitting letter of intent
27 January 2015	Deadline for submitting applications
Mid-March 2015	Preliminary advice sent to applicants
End of March 2015	Deadline for rebuttal
April 2015	Meeting of the assessment committee
Beginning of May 2015	Programme council decision
Beginning of May 2015	Applicants notified of decision
19 May 2015	Kick-off meeting with SURF incentive projects in Utrecht (exact location to follow)

4.2 Criteria

4.2.1 Formal criteria for processing applications

For an application to be eligible for admission to the assessment procedure it must meet a number of formal conditions, as described below. Applications will first be reviewed against these conditions. Only applications that meet the conditions will be admitted to the assessment procedure.

An application will be processed if all the following conditions are met:

- The application was submitted by researchers who meet the set requirements;
- The main applicant is a postdoc researcher with a permanent appointment at a Dutch (para-)university or university of applied sciences;
- The application form has been, after potential request for complement or modification, completed accurately and in full, in accordance with the instructions;
- The application has been prepared in English;
- The application has been submitted through Iris;
- The application has been submitted on time;
- The grant requested is at least €1,200,000 and at most €1,350,000;
- The budget has been prepared according to the guidelines in the call for proposals;
- The period for which the grant is applied is at most 5 years and ends no later than 1 August 2020;
- The application concerns both fundamental and accompanying research into open and online education, as stated in the call for proposals.

4.2.2 Substantive assessment criteria

For specific expectations of the NRO regarding both the fundamental and the accompanying research, please refer to Section 2 of this call for proposals. This will be guiding for the assessment committee in applying the substantive assessment criteria described below.

1. Academic quality
 - a. Academic relevance
 - To what extent and in what way is the research theoretically, methodologically and descriptively relevant?
 - b. Originality
 - Do the choice and elaboration of the problem, the theoretical elaboration or the methodology deserve the qualification of original and innovative?
 - c. Elaboration of the research questions
 - Have the central research questions been clearly described, defined and elaborated?
 - Is the reference to and connection with existing (and also domain-specific) knowledge and theories adequate?
 - Have the research questions been detailed in a consistent manner in a model, assumptions, and so on?
 - d. Design and methods
 - Are the proposed methods and techniques effective and suitable to answer the research questions?
 - Is the selected methodical design consistent and is it sufficiently substantiated?
 - e. Organisation of the research
 - Is the organisation of the intended research clearly defined?
 - Is the estimate of the required human and material resources reasonable for the proposed research and has this been sufficiently substantiated?
 - Is there an action plan for consultation with the incentive projects, for researching the various incentive projects in conjunction with each other and how relevant data is to be obtained from these projects in a uniform way that allows for comparison?
 - f. Feasibility of the research
 - Is there is a well-thought-out and feasible plan of action?
 - g. Expected academic output
 - What is the scope and quality of the expected academic output?
2. Social relevance and knowledge utilisation
 - a. Relevance for education policy and practice
 - What is the relevance of the research for education policy and practice? Does it have a bearing on questions and problems faced by professionals in education policy and practice?
 - Is there interaction between the academic and the practical facets in order to deliver useful knowledge for policy and practice?
 - b. Knowledge utilisation
 - Does the research proposal include a communication plan for the (mid-term) dissemination of results to different users? Does it adequately outline how (future) users can use the results?
 - c. Expected non-academic results
 - What is the scope and quality of the expected non-academic results?

3. Quality of the research group
 - a. Does the composition of the research group inspire sufficient confidence that the project can be completed successfully?
 - b. Do the members of the research group have sufficient expertise in conducting research in the field of open and online education and promoting the use of research results in education policy and practice? How does this appear from relevant publications and presentations?

The above assessment criteria will weigh for 50%, 30% and 20% respectively in the assessment.

There must **at least a qualification 'good' for all criteria** in order to qualify for grant award. In the event of equal assessment of applications the committee will take into account the potential for social relevance and knowledge utilisation.

5 Contact details and other information

5.1 Contact

5.1.1 Specific questions

For specific questions about Open and Online Higher Education and this call for proposals please contact:

- Ms. Maya Wijnen MSc – policy officer
t: +31 (0)70 349 44 52, e: m.wijnen@nwo.nl
- OPRO Secretariat
t: +31 (0)70 344 09 11, e: opro@nro.nl

5.1.2 Technical questions about the electronic application system Iris

For technical questions about the use of Iris please contact the Iris helpdesk. Please read the Iris manual before consulting the helpdesk.

The Iris helpdesk is available from Monday to Friday from 11.00 to 17.00 hours on +31 900 696 4747. Unfortunately not all foreign phone companies allow you to phone to a 0900 number in the Netherlands. You can also send your question by e-mail to iris@nwo.nl.

5.2 Other information

On 3 December 2014 SURF organizes an information meeting on SURF incentive scheme at meeting center Regardz La Vie in Utrecht from 10:00-12:00. During this meeting it is also possible to ask questions with regard to this call for proposals.

6 Annexe

The flyer 'Stimuleringsregeling Open en Online Onderwijs 2015' of SURF can be found from the following page onwards. The flyer is only available in Dutch and of specific relevance for applicants.

STIMULERINGSREGELING OPEN EN ONLINE ONDERWIJS 2015



SURF

STIMULERINGSREGELING OPEN EN ONLINE ONDERWIJS 2015

De minister van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap stelt van 2015 t/m 2018 jaarlijks één miljoen euro beschikbaar voor het stimuleren van open en online hoger onderwijs in Nederland. Daarmee onderstreept zij het belang en de potentie van open en online onderwijs en wil zij onderwijsinstellingen uitdagen om te onderzoeken wat open en online onderwijs in hun eigen instelling kan betekenen. Dit document vormt de eerste van vier jaarlijkse oproepen voor deze stimuleringsregeling. Hogescholen en universiteiten kunnen hiermee projecten uitvoeren en actief experimenteren met vormen van open en online onderwijs.

Doelgroep

Subsidieaanvragen kunnen worden ingediend door Nederlandse instellingen voor hoger onderwijs (zowel bekostigd als niet-bekostigd) die geaccrediteerd onderwijs¹ aanbieden. Samenwerking met andere instellingen die binnen de doelgroep vallen is mogelijk, maar niet verplicht.

Doel

De regeling heeft als doel om het gebruik van open en online onderwijs te stimuleren en inzicht te krijgen hoe open en online onderwijs een bijdrage kan leveren aan:

1. kwaliteitsverbetering van het hoger onderwijs;
2. toegankelijkheid van het hoger onderwijs;
3. doelmatigheid van het hoger onderwijs; of
4. verhoging van het studiesucces.

De ervaringen dienen breed te worden gedeeld binnen het Nederlandse hoger onderwijs.

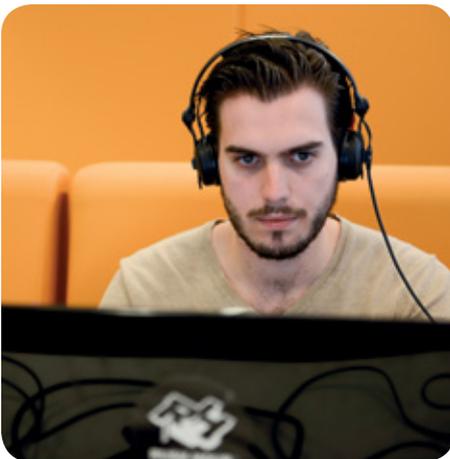
Resultaat

De projecten leveren in elk geval op:

- de eindproducten van het project zelf, passend bij de projectdoelstelling (bijvoorbeeld nieuw ontwikkeld open en online onderwijs of leermateriaal);
- een praktijkbeschrijving van de inzet van open en online onderwijs;
- een evaluatie van de manier waarop en de mate waarin de inzet van open en online onderwijs een bijdrage levert aan het verbeteren van de kwaliteit, toegankelijkheid en doelmatigheid van het hoger onderwijs en/of aan het verhogen van het studiesucces.

Alle eindproducten worden onder een open licentie (www.CreativeCommons.nl) opgeleverd.

¹ Geaccrediteerde opleidingen zijn opgenomen in het Centraal register opleidingen hoger onderwijs (Croho).



Definitie

Om voor subsidie in aanmerking te komen, moet het onderwijs(materiaal) dat in het project ontwikkeld of gebruikt wordt, **open en online** zijn. Onder **online** onderwijs wordt verstaan: onderwijs of leermateriaal dat volledig of voor een substantieel deel online wordt aangeboden. Onderwijs kan op vele manieren **open** zijn. In het project moet in elk geval gebruik worden gemaakt van een open licentie (www.CreativeCommons.nl). Daarnaast moet het onderwijs voldoen aan ten minste één van de volgende kenmerken:

- **Open in tijd**, dat wil zeggen dat de student het onderwijs op een eigen gekozen moment kan volgen;
- **Open in plaats**, dat wil zeggen dat de student het onderwijs op eigen gekozen locatie kan volgen, er is geen verplichting ergens fysiek aanwezig te zijn;
- **Open in programma**, dat wil zeggen dat de studenten verschillende routes door en in het curriculum kunnen volgen;
- **Open in toegang**, dat wil zeggen dat er geen vooropleidingseisen worden gesteld;
- **Gratis beschikbaar** voor iedereen met internettoegang, en als het onderwijs in het project deel uitmaakt van het bestaande, reguliere onderwijs wordt er geen extra collegegeld gevraagd aan de student voor dit extra ontwikkelde onderwijs.

Subsidiebedrag en matching

Voor deze stimuleringsregeling is in 2015 een bedrag van € 800.000 beschikbaar voor het uitvoeren van projecten. Elk project ontvangt maximaal € 100.000 subsidie. Deze subsidie dient door de indieners te worden gematcht met minimaal hetzelfde bedrag aan eigen middelen (50% matching).

Looptijd

De looptijd van de projecten bedraagt maximaal 16 maanden. De projecten zijn vrij om hun startdatum te kiezen; die moet liggen tussen 1 mei en 1 september 2015.

Vorbereiden subsidieaanvraag

Op woensdag 3 december 2014 vindt van 10.00 tot 12.00 uur voor belangstellenden een informatiebijeenkomst plaats in vergadercentrum Regardz la Vie Utrecht. Het programma en een aanmeldformulier zijn te vinden op www.surf.nl/agenda. Deelname aan de bijeenkomst is overigens niet verplicht. Potentiële indieners kunnen met vragen en verzoeken om advies altijd terecht bij SURF (janina.vanhees@surf.nl).

Beoordelingsprocedure en subsidiebesluit

Over de beslissing voor subsidieverlening wint de minister advies in van Stichting SURF. SURF legt de projectvoorstellen voor aan een commissie onder verantwoordelijkheid van de Wetenschappelijk Technische Raad van SURF (WTR, www.surf.nl/wtr). Deze commissie toetst de voorstellen aan de beoordelingscriteria.

Beoordelingscriteria

De beoordeling van de projectvoorstellen vindt plaats aan de hand van 21 criteria, verdeeld over vier elementen:

1. Doelstelling en doelgroep,
2. Beoogd resultaat,
3. Plan van aanpak, en
4. Planning, begroting en organisatie.

Het overzicht van alle criteria en het bijbehorende puntenaantal dat behaald kan worden is te vinden in het sjabloon voor projectvoorstellen op www.surf.nl/stimuleringsregeling-open-online-onderwijs.

De elementen worden gewogen en gescoord op een 10-puntsschaal. Op elk van de vier elementen moet minimaal een 6 gescoord worden om voor subsidie in aanmerking te komen. In totaal kan een aanvraag maximaal 4 x 10 punten behalen.

Gesprekken

De beoordelingscommissie maakt een voorselectie uit de projectvoorstellen en nodigt de indieners van de twintig best beoordeelde projectvoorstellen uit voor een toelichtend gesprek met de commissie. Deze gesprekken vinden plaats op 4, 5 en 6 maart 2015.

Besluit

De subsidieaanvragers ontvangen een conceptadvies van de Wetenschappelijk Technische Raad en worden in de gelegenheid gesteld om het conceptadvies op feitelijke onjuistheden en omissies te controleren voordat dit advies definitief wordt vastgesteld. De Wetenschappelijk Technische Raad legt zijn advies voor aan de minister. De minister beslist uiterlijk op 1 mei 2015 over de

subsidieverlening op basis van het advies van de WTR. De onderwijsinstellingen wiens subsidieaanvraag is goedgekeurd, ontvangen een subsidiebeschikking van het ministerie van OCW.

Na afloop van de beoordelingsprocedure kunnen projectindieners de procedure evalueren met de secretaris van de WTR en/of het programmamanagement.

Begeleiding en kennisdisseminatie

SURF faciliteert kennisuitwisseling tussen de deelnemende projectleiders, ondersteunt de vastlegging en ordening van de opgedane kennis uit de experimenten en stelt deze beschikbaar voor het hele hoger onderwijs. Projectuitvoerders verplichten zich tot een bijdrage van maximaal vier werkdagen aan door SURF georganiseerde activiteiten en/of het beschikbaar stellen van hun expertise voor disseminatie en/of professionalisering. Daarnaast zal SURF meewerken aan het evalueren en overdraagbaar maken van de projectresultaten en activiteiten uitvoeren om de kennis en expertise op het terrein van open en online hoger onderwijs te bundelen en breed beschikbaar te stellen.

Deadline

De subsidieaanvraag dient te worden opgesteld aan de hand van het 'sjabloon projectvoorstel' en het 'sjabloon projectbegroting' op www.surf.nl/stimuleringsregeling-open-online-onderwijs. Elke aanvraag dient vergezeld te gaan door een 'letter of intent' ondertekend door een CvB-lid van de deelnemende instelling(en).

De volledige aanvraag moet uiterlijk op **3 februari 2015 om 12.00** uur per post zijn ontvangen op het adres:

Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschappen
t.a.v. de heer drs. R. Minnée
Directie HO&S
Postbus 16375
2500 BJ Den Haag

Een digitale versie kan daarnaast verzonden worden naar openonline@minocw.nl.

Voortgangsbewaking en subsidiebetaling

SURF bewaakt de voortgang van de projecten en adviseert het ministerie hierover. De betaling van de subsidie vindt plaats per kwartaal achteraf. De projecten leveren na afloop van elk volledig kwartaal een beknopte tussenrapportage in bij SURF. Een format hierover is beschikbaar op www.surf.nl/stimuleringsregeling-open-online-onderwijs. De instellingen die subsidie ontvangen, nemen de verantwoording van de subsidie op in hun jaarverslag en/of leveren een prestatieverklaring in. SURF ondersteunt de instellingen daarbij.

Flankerend onderzoek NRO

Parallel aan deze stimuleringsregeling, laat het Nationaal Regieorgaan Onderwijsonderzoek (NRO) een onderzoek uitvoeren. Het NRO-onderzoek zal de projecten uit de stimuleringsregeling in samenhang onderzoeken en dit combineren met enkele fundamentele onderzoeksthema's rondom open en online onderwijs. Het doel is om meer inzicht te krijgen in hoeverre open en online onderwijs kan bijdragen aan verbetering en vernieuwing van het hoger onderwijs. Instellingen die een stimuleringsproject uitvoeren, verplichten zich om mee te werken aan dit onderzoek.

Planning

Datum	Activiteit	Opmerking
17 november 2014	Lancering stimuleringsregeling	Informatie op www.surf.nl/stimuleringsregeling-open-online-onderwijs . Advisering door programmamanagement
3 december 2014 10.00-12.00 uur	Informatiebijeenkomst bij Regardz La Vie in Utrecht.	Aanmelden via www.surf.nl/agenda
3 februari 2015 - 12.00 uur	Deadline indienen projectvoorstellen	Indienen per post t.a.v. Ministerie van OCW
25 februari 2015	Bericht aan indieners over voorselectie en planning gesprekken	
4, 5 en 6 maart 2015	Gesprekken WTR met de projectindieners van beste 20 projecten	Projectindieners lichten hun voorstel toe
23 maart 2015	Conceptadvies WTR naar projectindieners	Projectindieners ontvangen het conceptadvies per mail
25 maart 2015	Reactie op conceptadvies van indieners naar WTR	Projectindieners sturen een reactie op het conceptadvies per mail naar info@surf.nl
1 mei 2015	Besluit subsidiëring door minister van OCW	Na telefonisch bericht volgt schriftelijke beschikking
19 mei 2015	Startbijeenkomst projectleiders	Begeleiding van projectleiders door programmamanagement
Tussen 1 mei en 1 september 2015	Start van de projecten	

Meer informatie

www.surf.nl/stimuleringsregeling-open-online-onderwijs

- sjabloon voor projectvoorstel
- sjabloon voor projectbegroting

Contactpersoon: **Janina van Hees**
janina.vanhees@surf.nl

SURF

info@surf.nl
www.surf.nl



november 2014

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