



Science
Social Sciences and Humanities
Applied and Engineering Sciences
Health Research and Development

Call for proposals

Industrial Doctorates Pilot

2017 pilot

*(please note that the Dutch version of
this call is the leading legal document)*

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science recently made a financial boost available to benefit a programme for PhD students who partly work at knowledge institutions and partly in industry: Industrial Doctorates. This call is open to all scientific domains. A project can be from any type of company and knowledge institution and is not confined to a specific discipline.

Collaboration between companies and knowledge institutions increases the probability of the knowledge actually being implemented. Collaborations that benefit knowledge transfer in public-private partnerships (PPP) have become established types of projects in all NWO domains. This Industrial Doctorates call offers space for a different approach that is more strongly aimed at talent development and pursues a deepening of knowledge through more intensive bilateral collaboration with a single company (even if the knowledge institution and company are embedded in a larger PPP or several PPPs). Furthermore, it is a collaboration in which the PhD candidate as a talent takes centre stage.

SMEs are the acknowledged driver for innovation within industry and in an SME company in particular, an Industrial Doctorate could contribute to a transfer and direct application of scientific knowledge. This call therefore puts emphasis on SMEs by means of a lowered threshold for participation.

The PhD candidate is given the opportunity to gain his or her doctorate under the supervision of both organisations, which is a unique opportunity for talent development in both the academic world and in business. Within the project, the PhD candidate works on the basis of colocation at both the knowledge institution and the company. This strengthens the collaboration between the organisations and offers an opportunity for knowledge intensification. The knowledge created or acquired has an added value for the academic field and can also be applied or further developed relatively quickly in the industrial setting (after or parallel to the completion of the doctoral research). Of course, it is the scientific quality of this knowledge in particular that is of added value to the company. Comparable programmes elsewhere in Europe or funded from European grants underline the success of this approach, as do the programmes with the same aim that have been independently set up by universities.

The project of the PhD candidate can mean a strengthening or deepening for current or recent PPP programmes or projects (both PPPs funded in part by NWO or funded with other means). An Industrial Doctorates project can also form the start of a new relevant PPP that is likely to be continued beyond the project.

The Industrial Doctorates programme is open to both young talented candidates who have recently graduated as a master (or are about to graduate) and talented researchers who are already working at the partner company and want to obtain their doctorate.

The pilot call is intended for all scientific disciplines, but projects must be realised in collaboration with companies. This is explicitly not limited to industrial companies, but open to all business.

1.2 Available budget

The maximum NWO grant budget available for this programme is at most 3.4 million euros. The grant is available for projects in which a PhD student obtains his or her doctorate based on research that is carried out within the knowledge institution as well as the participating company (colocation). By requesting contributions from the participating knowledge institutions and companies, the aim is to jointly realise a programme with a budget of about 10 million euros. See Section 3.2 for the requirements concerning co-funding.

In the budget, a distinction is drawn between two types of candidate:

- Compartment I: graduating or graduated master's students;
- Compartment II: employees who are already employed by the participating company.

In allocating the funding the available NWO grant budget is intended to be split equally across the two compartments

1.3 Validity of the call for proposals

This call for proposals is valid until the date on which the executive board of NWO has taken a decision about which proposals to award funding.

This call for proposals is valid until the closing date **16 January 2018**, 14:00 hours CE(S)T.

2 Aim

The aim of this Industrial Doctorates call is to make intensive collaboration possible in PhD projects within both a knowledge institution and a company in every scientific area. This will strengthen or create the scientific knowledge acquired and the collaboration in a PPP, contribute to talent development in research, and provide the opportunity to apply or further develop the scientific knowledge acquired relatively quickly (parallel to or after the doctoral research) and to make optimal use of the knowledge from a company in the research.

3 Guidelines for applicants

3.1 Who can apply

The call is open to all NWO domains. Researchers from the following knowledge institutions can submit proposals:

- Dutch universities;
- University Medical Centers;
- KNAW and NWO institutes;
- the Netherlands Cancer Institute;
- the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen;
- the DUBBLE Beamline at ESRF in Grenoble;
- NCB Naturalis;
- Advanced Research Centre for NanoLithography (ARCNL);
- Princess Maxima Center.

Applications are submitted by a main applicant on behalf of the project consortium. The main applicant is a full professor, an associate professor or an assistant professor. If an associate or assistant professor submits the application, then the application must state the professor who has indicated his or her willingness to act as the promotor. When the application is submitted, the professor must be authorised to act as a promotor for PhD candidates (*ius promovendi*)¹. Main applicants should have a tenured or tenure-track appointment at one of the knowledge institution stated above.

The intended PhD candidate is the person who, in the context of the NWO selection procedure, will defend the proposal during the interview and whose CV will count towards the assessment (see Section 4.2).

On behalf of the consortium, the principal applicant is responsible for the scientific coherency, the results and the financial accountability.

Conditions for submission:

- The proposal may concern any scientific domain but must fit within the focus of the programme in terms of collaboration, as described in Chapters 1 and 2;
- The proposal may not be submitted for positions that are currently vacant. The intended candidate must be known at the time of submission, be referred to in the application and, where applicable, be involved in the assessment process by means of an interview;
- A candidate within Compartment I has either obtained a master's degree or will do so within three months after the application is awarded funding (in this case, a statement including the expected completion date must be provided by the knowledge institution where the master's degree will be obtained, see Section 3.4);
- A candidate within Compartment II has obtained a master's degree and is already working at the company that supports the project proposal;
- The PhD candidate cannot already be appointed as a PhD student;

¹ At the time that this call was published, the expected legislation (see (in Dutch) *kamerstukken II, 2015-2016 34 355*) about the expansion of the *ius promovendi* had not yet been enacted – and is therefore not yet applicable. If during the validity of this call, but before the deadline for submitting applications, the legislation is enacted, then the expansions to the *ius promovendi* included in that legislation will be permitted in this call.

- Each main applicant may only submit one application in this round;
- A promotor may only act as such for one candidate in this round;
- The main applicant and/or promotor may not work for the participating company;
- The proposal must either address a subject that relates to existing public-private partnerships and the Industrial Doctorates project consortium must collaborate with the consortium from the PPP concerned, or further build upon the results that have emerged from this. An alternative is to start a new PPP for which it is plausible that it will be continued beyond the project;
- The principal applicant bears primary responsibility for monitoring the scientific quality in the collaboration with a company oriented nature (to prevent premature (public) claims or use). Scientific quality without any concessions should be how added value is created.

Project consortium

- Each project is supported by a project consortium. That consortium consists of a knowledge institute, at which the principal applicant is employed and where the candidate is required to obtain his or her doctorate for the project awarded funding, together with one private partner from the business sector. Collaboration with other organisations is permitted. However, there must be a single knowledge institution and a single company that directly support and host the PhD candidate.
- If researchers, PhD candidates or companies are interested in collaboration but do not have a partner, they can contact the NWO-wide Industrial Doctorates digital contact point via: www.nwo.nl/industrialdoctorates

Private project partners

- Only businesses are considered to be private partners. Public organisations cannot participate in this pilot as a private partner. For NWO's purposes, enterprise means: 'an association or person focused on long-term economic participation with the aid of labour and capital and with a profit-making objective.' Institutions that are not classed as NWO-recognised research institutions (i.e. institutions that are not permitted to submit proposals to NWO, such as TNO, DLO, ECN, RIKILT, NFI, heritage institutions and municipalities) and do not fall within the category of private parties are regarded as public partners.
- The business must be a Dutch company or a Dutch legal entity of an international company with a location in the Netherlands where the intended PhD candidate can carry out the project.
- Each company may be awarded a maximum of one project of a graduating or graduated master's student who is not yet working for the company and a maximum of one project for an employee who is already working for the company.
- Companies that are connected to each other (either directly due to being a subsidiary/parent company of each other or indirectly by shared subsidiary/parent companies at another level in an organisation that consists of multiple legal entities) are regarded as one company.
- Companies where the main applicant, or the knowledge institution where the main applicant is employed, is a shareholder for > 25% are not permitted to act as the private partner for the project. If the main applicant is not the promotor of the PhD candidate, then this rule also applies to the promotor and his or her knowledge institution.
- A participating company is responsible for assessing whether it is an SME. The result of this questionnaire is a compulsory annex for a proposal with a participating SME (of course with a status as SME in accordance with the definition). Without this annex to the proposal, a company cannot be considered to be an SME. The questionnaire and the information about the

SME definition can be found via: <http://www.rvo.nl/subsidies-regelingen/subsidiespelregels/standaardformulieren/mkb-toets> (in Dutch, the text itself is in English.)

3.2 What can be applied for

The maximum grant from NWO that can be applied for per project is 222,563 euros. This budget is primarily intended for the personnel costs (amount of 217,563 euros²) and the associated bench fee (5,000 euros): a PhD project for a period of maximum four years on the basis of a full-time appointment at a knowledge institution recognised by NWO. Personnel costs are fundable in accordance with the most recent version '[Agreement for Funding Scientific Research 2008](#)'.

The travel and other costs for a congress visit fall under the bench fee for a project and therefore cannot be budgeted as material costs. Additional travel budget can of course be obtained via co-funding.

The direct project costs must be budgeted for in the proposal. These consists of the personnel costs for the PhD candidate and additional expenditure for the project/the PhD graduation, which can be allocated as 'material expenditure' and 'investments'. 'Investments' are understood to be the funding of specific equipment required for the research that is not yet available within the consortium and/or the depreciation of this equipment.

Flexibility regarding conducting research within the programme can be achieved, for example, by means of a faster PhD track, part-time appointments or by means of smaller projects that request a smaller NWO grant. Such alternatives must be justified in the proposal and, in the case of a non-standard appointment period or size of project, prior contact must be sought with the NWO Industrial Doctorates contact point. The maximum NWO grant is always based on a full-time appointment of four years. In the case of non-standard appointments and associated costs (shorter, smaller, longer due to part-time appointment), the amounts stated in the proposal must be calculated in proportion to a full-time appointment. In the case of a part-time appointment, the maximum period to complete the doctoral research is five years.

The intended PhD candidate may be employed by both the knowledge institution and the company. The NWO grants will only be disbursed to the knowledge institution for the purpose of the doctoral research project. In relation to this, it should be noted that in accordance with the applicable NWO Grant Rules 2017, all research results must be published in open access form as soon as possible and with this serve the public interest. Research carried out with NWO funding is therefore not subject to Dutch VAT. In the case of an employment contract at the company, the letter of support from the company must confirm that the PhD candidate is employed by this company for the duration of the project.

Required co-funding

In each project consortium, a contribution from the knowledge institution and co-funding by the company is required (private co-funding).

² Determined in accordance with the Agreement for Funding Scientific Research, see <https://www.nwo.nl/en/funding/funding+process+explained/salary+tables>

The institution contributes co-funding in the form of the necessary indirect project costs. These consists of the basic infrastructure for the candidate at the institution, specific research facilities in university laboratories, supervision and limited material expenditure if applicable. These indirect costs do not need to be budgeted or specified in the proposal and subsequent reports. It is, however, expected that the knowledge institution will contribute resources of a comparable size to the NWO grant for the project and that the plausibility of this is apparent from the setup of the research proposal. In the event of doubts, NWO is allowed to request a specification during the application process or while the project is being carried out.

The participating company contributes to the direct project costs through co-funding and should match the NWO grant with an equivalent amount in co-funding to spend on direct project costs. These may be salary costs and/or other costs. In any case, at least 20% of the total co-funding should be contributed in cash. A higher cash contribution is also possible.

The co-funding by the company is therefore 50% of the direct project costs (and 33% of the total project costs including the indirect contribution of the knowledge institution). At least 10% of the direct costs, which corresponds with 20% of the co-funding, are to be provided by the company in cash.

For SME companies, lower requirements apply (see Section 3.1 for the requirements a company must satisfy to be categorised as SME). An SME company should contribute at least 30% of the direct costs (equivalent to 17% of the total project costs including the contribution from knowledge institution) to the project. This may consist entirely of in-kind co-funding; a cash contribution is not obligatory for SMEs. An SME company may of course provide co-funding in cash if it wishes to.

Examples (the amounts are rounded off in thousands of euros (k euros); the exact amounts should be stated in applications):

In a project with a large company for which the maximum NWO contribution is applied for, the contributions to be made could be as follows:

NWO grant for the PhD candidate	223 k euros
Cash contribution by company for additional expenditure by knowledge institution	45 k euros
In-kind contributions by the company	178 k euros
Total contributions to direct costs	446 k euros
Contribution to indirect costs by the knowledge institution	223 k euros
Total project costs	669 k euros

In case of a smaller, less capital-intensive project, a company may for example also choose to contribute a greater amount in cash to the salary costs of the PhD candidate:

NWO grant for the PhD candidate	130 k euros
Cash contribution by company for the salary costs of the PhD candidate	93 k euros
In-kind contributions by the company	45 k euros
Total contributions to direct costs	268 k euros
Contribution to indirect costs by the knowledge institution	130 k euros
Total project costs	398 k euros

For an SME company, a project for which the maximum NWO grant is applied for could involve the following contributions:

NWO contribution for the PhD candidate	223 k euros
In-kind contributions by the company	97 k euros
Total contributions to direct costs	320 k euros
Contribution to indirect costs by the knowledge institution	223 k euros
Total project costs	543 k euros

The requirements stated for the obligatory co-funding are minimum requirements. The amount of co-funding (one could think for example of special constructions such as a contribution that largely consists of cash, or the funding of a complete second PhD position in the project by the company, et cetera) counts as a subcriterion of the criterion 'utilisation' (see Section 4.2).

NWO accepts the following as private co-funding:

- Man-hours of personnel;
- Material contributions;
- Use of specific infrastructure;
- Software and software licences;
- Access to facilities;
- Own funding for a second research position;
- Use of own R&D employees;
- Salary supplement for a candidate employed by the company;
- Cash contributions from the participating company.

A condition for this is that in-kind contributions must be capitalised and that they are an integral part of the project plan. Man-hours of personnel and the salary supplement of a PhD candidate employed by the company are bound to maximum rates (see Section 3.5).

NWO does not accept the following as private co-funding:

- Co-funding as contributions to the direct project costs that originates from the research institution of the main applicant or co-applicants of a project or other institutions as stated in Section 3.1;
- Discounts on commercial rates on for example materials, equipment and services;
- Costs with respect to overheads, supervision, consultancy and/or participation in the user committee;
- Costs for services that are conditional. No conditions may be imposed for the provision of co-funding. The provision of the co-funding is not dependent upon whether a certain stage is reached in the research plan (e.g. go/no-go moment);
- Costs that are not reimbursed according to this call for proposals;
- Costs for equipment if one of the (main) objectives of the research proposal is improvement of/creating added value for this equipment.

Cash contributions will be transferred to NWO. At the initiative of NWO, an initial confirmation of the agreements by the company will take place after the project has been awarded funding. Following this, the cash contributions will be invoiced. In-kind contributions should be accounted for in retrospect.

When the proposal is submitted, the agreed upon financial or capitalised personnel and/or material contributions must be explicitly confirmed in the letter of support.

3.3 When can applications be submitted

The deadline for submitting applications is **Tuesday 16 January 2018**, 14:00 CET.

Applications that are submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.

3.4 Preparing an application

Your grant application consists of at least three parts:

- You should complete the online part directly in NWO's electronic application system ISAAC.
- The application form can be found on the Industrial Doctorates digital contact point on the NWO website or in the electronic application system. After you have completed this form, you save it as a PDF file and subsequently upload it in the online system. Applicants are required to adhere to the requirements stated in the template with respect to length, font and layout.
- The compulsory letter of support from the company concerning the co-funding should be uploaded as an annex (as a PDF file, see Section 3.6).
- If a candidate has not yet obtained his or her master's degree, then a statement of support from the knowledge institution where the master's degree will be obtained is required, which states the expected end date and provides a quantitative assessment of the candidate.
- If a candidate is working at a company, then a statement of support from the company is needed in which it is confirmed that the candidate has an employment contract for the duration of the project.

Other annexes are not permitted.

All documents should be written in **English**.

When writing your application, please take the information in this call for proposals and its annexes into consideration, as well as information on the application form. If you have any doubts or if you have any questions to which the text of the call does not provide an adequate or sufficient answer, then please contact one of the employees of the NWO Industrial Doctorates digital contact point.

3.5 Conditions on granting

The [NWO Grant Rules 2017](#) and the [Agreement on Payment for Costs of for Scientific Research](#) apply to all applications.

Determining the value of in-kind support from the participating company

The NWO Guideline for Co-funding Projects applies when determining the value of in-kind support (see also Section 3.2). Specifically for in-kind support in the form of personnel man-hours or a supplement to the PhD candidate's salary, the support provided is bound on the basis of the actual costs (gross salary + social security costs) to a maximum of 111 euros/hour for personnel with a university education and 78 euros per hour for personnel without a university education, with a maximum number of hours worked of 1920/year for the candidate and 1400/year for other personnel contributing to the project). NWO can request arguments and documentary evidence for the rates adopted and can also request an adjustment to these.

Letter of support from the participating company

The consortium must have been formalised by the time the application is submitted. A letter in which the participating company expresses support for the project and the candidate, and in which the co-funding and intellectual property and publication agreements as stated in the application are explained and confirmed, is a

compulsory annex of the application. If the candidate is employed by the company or will become employed by the company, then the letter of support must contain the confirmation that the candidate will be employed and available for the entire duration of the project in accordance with the appointment period and size of appointment applied for. The letter must be signed by an authorised person and be printed on the partner's letter paper. If the project is awarded funding, then NWO will ask the company to confirm the amounts (amongst other things for invoicing purposes).

Intellectual Property & Publications (IP&P)

The provisions from articles 3 and 4 of the NWO Grant Rules 2017 apply with respect to IP&P. With respect to provision 4.2.4.1, both the project leader and NWO can take the lead. This depends, amongst other things, on a possible harmonisation with agreements made in the PPP that the project is a part of or further builds upon. The choice made with respect to this should be stated on the application form.

Consortium agreement

In accordance with provision 4.2.4.3 of the NWO Grant Rules 2017, project partners should draw up a consortium agreement before the start of the project. The project partners are free to choose between the two models stated in provision 4.2.4.3 with respect to the allocation of IP rights. NWO will make a model agreement available via the Industrial Doctorates digital contact point before the deadline. This model agreement may be deviated from. In all cases, the agreement will be assessed on the basis of the NWO Grant Rules 2017 and the EU directives for state support. If NWO takes the lead or the IP rights are attributed to the institution where the research results are generated, then the categories stated under 4.2.4.5 apply as well as the associated rights of access to these results for the private co-funder(s).

3.6 Submitting an application

An application can only be submitted via the online application system ISAAC. Applications not submitted via ISAAC will not be taken into consideration.

A principal applicant must submit his/her application via his/her own ISAAC account. If the principal applicant does not have an ISAAC account yet, then this should be created at least one day before the application is submitted to ensure that any registration problems can be resolved on time. If the principal applicant already has an NWO-account, then he/she does not need to create a new account to submit a new application.

When you submit your application to ISAAC, you will also need to enter additional details online. You should therefore start submitting your application at least one day before the deadline of this call for proposals. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.

For technical questions, please contact the ISAAC helpdesk, see Section 5.1.2.

4 Assessment procedure

4.1 Procedure

4.1.1 Admissibility of the applications

The first step in the assessment procedure is to determine the admissibility of the application. This is done using the conditions stated in Chapter 3 of this call for proposals.

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 will not consider any applications to which one or more the following aspects applies:

- The application has not been correctly or fully completed and the applicant has not satisfied the request to submit a corrected application or has not done so on time;
- the application has not been written in English;
- the main applicant does not satisfy the description as stated in Section 3.1;
- the application does not satisfy the conditions for submission as stated in Chapter 3;
- the application does not fit the aim and themes of this call as stated in Sections 1.1 and 2;
- the application was not submitted via ISAAC;
- the application was submitted after the deadline.

If a correction of the application is possible, then the applicant will be given the opportunity to modify his/her application within 48 hours. If the application is not corrected within the set time, then NWO will not consider the application. Corrected applications will still be taken into consideration.

4.1.2 Assessment of the applications

The application will be assessed on an NWO-wide basis. A selection committee will be appointed, which consists of representatives (researchers and people from business) from the four NWO domains. These researchers will preferably have experience in collaborating with companies. An NWO employee will act as the secretary to the committee. Separate rankings will apply to the compartments (see the paragraph on ranking below and Section 1.2).

Option to pre-selection

In accordance with Article 2.2.3 of the NWO Grant Rules 2017, NWO retains the right to implement a pre-selection if the total grant amount applied for exceeds the total available budget by more than four times.

The assessment in the pre-selection process will be done by the Assessment committee according to the assessment criteria as formulated in Section 4.2. In the case of pre-selection, the committee will assess all applications comparatively and rank these according to their chance of being awarded funding, without making use of external referees. Applicants whose applications have the least chance of being awarded funding will be informed that the committee does not intend to select their applications for further consideration. If applicants have a motivated reason to object to the opinion of the committee, they may send a reasoned response to the NWO office. In response to this, the committee might eventually still select a

proposal. If the proposal concerned is not selected, then the applicant will receive a formal rejection decision about the application.

Assessment by referees

All proposals – or, if applicable, the proposals that have passed the preselection – will be submitted to international experts (referees). Each proposal will be assessed by at least 2 referees. The total number of referees can differ per proposal depending on how fast referees respond and the quality of the referee's reports. The referees will assess the proposal using the same three assessment criteria as the committee (see Section 4.2). Referees reports will be made anonymous and sent to the applicant for a written rebuttal.

Interview (selection)

Subsequently, the committee members will individually assess the proposals according to the assessment criteria with due consideration to the referees' reports and the rebuttal. They will provide a provisional assessment and note for themselves which parts need to be clarified, explained or elaborated on during a presentation and the subsequent interview.

The committee may decide not to invite all candidates for an interview. In that case, a provisional ranking will be made by the selection committee based on the referees' reports and the written assessment of the committee. Subsequently, the highest-ranking candidates who have received a qualification of at least 'very good' will be invited for an interview.

During the interview, the intended PhD candidate will be asked to explain his/her proposal to the selection committee. The committee members will have the opportunity to pose questions about the project, the candidate's curriculum vitae and his/her motivation. The committee may also ask new questions that have not been posed by the referees. The candidate can respond to these during the interview. Accordingly, the principle of hearing and rebuttal is once again applied.

Once all the interviews have taken place, the committee members will discuss all the proposals according to the assessment criteria (see Section 4.2), which will lead to an assessment advice for each proposal and a ranking of the proposals in both compartments (see below). The interview is an integral part of the assessment and can result in the recalibration of the written assessment of the proposals.

In the assessment meeting, the committee discusses the proposals in comparison with each other, based on the referees' reports and the rebuttals. Although the committee members will be obliged to act as 'generalists' with respect to virtually all applications, the committee as a whole is also expected to include an assessment of the content and quality of the referees' reports in its considerations.

The committee will make use of the referees' arguments, the applicant's rebuttals and interview to reach its own independent assessment of the proposal. The role of the committee therefore deviates from that of the referees because:

- the committee takes the rebuttal and the interview with the candidate into account, whereas a referee has no knowledge of these and therefore cannot consider them;
- the committee has all proposals, reports, rebuttals and interviews at its disposal, whereas in general the referee never sees more than one proposal and the referees do not calibrate their assessments with each other.
- The committee might therefore reach a different assessment than that of the referees.

Ranking

In view of the allocation of the available grant budget between Compartments I and II (see Section 1.2), two rankings will be used for – in? - the assessment. If insufficient proposals of satisfactory quality (minimum qualification 'very good', see Section 4.2) are available in one of these two compartments, then the executive board of NWO may decide to use (a part of) the remaining funds for the other compartment.

Each company may be awarded a maximum of one project of a graduating or graduated master's student who is not yet working for the company and a maximum of one project for an employee who is already working for the company.

Companies that are connected to each other (either directly due to being a subsidiary/parent company of each other or indirectly by shared subsidiary/parent companies at another level in an organisation that consists of multiple legal entities) are regarded as one company. Due to this, large enterprises are asked specifically to consult within their organisation on their potential participations. In case multiple applications from the same company (as defined above) are submitted to the same compartment and pre-selection takes place, the assessment committee retains the right to rank these applications and only select the application(s) considered most likely to be awarded funding for assessment by referees.

Decision

The executive board of NWO takes a decision based upon the advice of the assessment committee. The executive board retains the right to refrain from using the entire available budget depending on the quality of the proposals. In addition, the executive board retains the right to allocate budgets per compartment (see the paragraph above and Section 1.2) differently depending on the quality of the proposals.

The data management section in the application is not evaluated and hence not included in the decision about whether or not to award funding. However both the referees and the committee may issue advice with respect to the data management section. After a proposal has been awarded funding, the applicant should elaborate the data management section into a data management plan. Applicants may use of the advice of the referees and committee when writing the data management plan. The project can start as soon as the data management plan has been approved by NWO.

Qualifications

NWO gives all full proposals a qualification. The applicant is informed of this qualification when the decision about whether to award funding is announced.

Only proposals that receive at least the qualification 'very good' will be eligible for funding.

For further information about the qualifications, see <https://www.nwo.nl/en/funding/funding+process+explained/nwo+qualification+system>.

4.1.3 Timetable

NWO aims to complete the assessment procedure within a maximum period of six months. The *provisional* timetable is as follows:

16 January 2018, 14:00	Deadline submission of proposals via ISAAC
Feb 2018 - Apr 2018	Consulting referees
Apr 2018	Obtaining rebuttals from applicants

Apr 2018	Interview selection meeting assessment committee (if needed)
May - Jun 2018	Interviews
Jun - Jul 2018	Decision NWO executive board

The procedure may take longer if a preselection round is held. Applicants will be informed about this, where relevant.

4.2 Criteria

The proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- I. Quality of the candidate and the research group;
- II. Scientific quality of the research proposal;
- III. Utilisation.

For the assessment, the committee will work with scores on a 9-point scale on which 1 is highest/best score and 9 is the lowest/least. Scores will be awarded for each criterion.

The three criteria will receive equal weighting when calculating the final score for the proposal. The final score will determine the position of the proposal in the ranking per compartment.

Criterion I: quality of candidate & supervision and embedding at knowledge institution

The assessment of the PhD candidate weighs heavily within this criterion. Points of attention for the assessment are:

- What is the quality of the PhD candidate, with respect to education, extracurricular activities, motivation, as well as presentation and persuasiveness and the suitability for collaboration with the business sector?

The quality of the supervision and embedding within the institution will also be considered for this criterion:

- What is the quality of the supervision within the knowledge institution in view of the experience of supervising PhD candidates and the expertise available.
- What is the quality of the institutional embedding in view of the access to necessary expertise, reputation of the research group or the institutional environment?

Criterion II: Scientific quality

This covers:

- Challenging content and substantive depth;
- Scientifically innovative elements;
- Potential to make an important contribution to science;
- Clarity and effectiveness of the research question;
- Safeguarding of scientific quality in business-based application/context (preventing premature public claims or use of the knowledge);
- Effectiveness of the method proposed.

Criterion III: Utilisation

This covers:

- Contribution to society and/or other scientific areas, i.e. impact/utilisation;
- Involvement and suitability of the private party in the project, including the quality of the supervision and embedding within the company;

- The timeframe in which impact and utilisation are expected to occur;
- The effectiveness and feasibility of the approach for utilisation;

Additional co-funding on top of the required co-funding (a distinction is made between requirements for a large company and an SME) may count as an advantage.

5 Contact details and other information

5.1 Contact

5.1.1 Specific questions

For specific questions about this call for proposals, please contact us via the NWO-wide Industrial Doctorate contact point: www.nwo.nl/industrialdoctorates.

5.1.2 Technical questions about the use of the electronic application system 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 CE(S)T on +31 20 346 7179. However, you can also submit your question by e-mail to isaac.helpdesk@nwo.nl. You will then receive an answer within two working days.

6 Annexe(s)

- Template application form (see www.nwo.nl/financiering/industrialdoctorates)

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Visiting address:
Laan van Nieuw Oost-Indië 300
2593 CE The Hague
The Netherlands

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