

About the Applied Research Fund

ARF is one of two Food & Business Research funding instruments, the other being the Food & Business Global Challenges Programme. Both instruments are funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and managed by NWO-WOTRO Science for Global Development.

Food & Business Research was developed in alignment with the knowledge agenda of the Food & Business Knowledge Platform. Set up by the ministry, this platform aims to strengthen knowledge sharing, and research and innovation in the field of food and nutrition security. Together with WOTRO, the platform was closely involved in designing both ARF and the Global Challenges Programme.

Funding decisions are made by a Programme Committee that represents the funders, the scientific community, the Dutch agri-food and horticulture sectors, and the Knowledge Platform's Steering Committee. A pool of international experts from research institutes, the corporate sector, development practice and policy advises the committee.

As the managing party of ARF, WOTRO is responsible for the secretariat of the Programme Committee and organises the assessment procedures and monitors research progress. In addition, WOTRO handles the ongoing communication of research results with practitioners together with the Knowledge Platform, also during the execution of the research projects.

Publication:
Netherlands Organisation for
Scientific Research (NWO)
WOTRO Science for
Global Development

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March 2014



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands



Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research
WOTRO Science for Global Development



Food & Business Applied Research Fund

1st call for proposals (2013–2014)

An initiative in collaboration with the Food & Business Knowledge Platform

Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research
WOTRO Science for Global Development

Food &



The Food & Business Applied Research Fund (ARF) provides grants for applied research on innovations for food security and private sector development in partner countries of Dutch development cooperation. Research funded by ARF is driven by the knowledge demands of local practitioner organisations (private companies, NGOs and governmental organisations) and is executed by these same practitioners, together with one or more research organisations. ARF is an initiative of the Food & Business Knowledge Platform. NWO-WOTRO Science for Global Development manages the fund.

ARF, food security and the private sector

Decades of falling food prices led developing countries invest less in food production, nutrition security and related research. But population growth, changing diets, climate change and resource scarcity, and the realisation that self-reliance depends on productive economic sectors, have put food security firmly back on the agenda. The development of local and regional food chains can increase food security and boost economic growth. However, the investment climate for business needs to be improved and institutions need to function more efficiently.

Projects funded by ARF aim to show the applicability of newly developed or refined knowledge, insights, technologies, tools, products or services. Indeed, these projects are expected to contribute to improving sustainable access to sufficient and healthy food for the most vulnerable people. More specifically, ARF-funded research must contribute to one or more of the following objectives of the Netherlands' food security policy:

- Increase sustainable agricultural production
- Ensure equitable access to better nutrition
- Improve inclusive access to markets
- Enable a better business climate

ARF-funded research must also be aligned with the Netherlands Embassy's Multi Annual Strategic Plan in the country in question.

Applying for ARF funding

The first call for proposals for ARF funding was launched in May 2013 and will close on 15 April 2014. Applications can be submitted continuously and will be collected and assessed in three rounds:

Call 2013–2014	Starting date assessment procedure	Formal approval of the projects
First round	18 September 2013	December 2013
Second round	15 January 2014	April 2014
Third round	15 April 2014	July 2014

Proposals may be submitted by consortia consisting of private or public practitioner organisations from one of the partner countries of Dutch development cooperation, together with a research organisation from a partner country or from the Netherlands. At least one researcher from a partner country must be involved in the execution of the project. The involvement of additional partners is encouraged.

The grants provided by ARF vary between 50,000 euros for a project of six months, up to 300,000 euros for a three-year research project. Private consortium partners are required to provide cash and/or in kind co-funding of at least 20% of the grant.