WOTRO Science for Global Development

Science for Using Research - SURe

Call for Proposals 2016

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Collaboration between the Knowledge Platforms and NWO-WOTRO

In 2011, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands acknowledged a need to improve the way knowledge and research are used for international cooperation.[1] To that end, the Ministry installed five Knowledge Platforms (KPs), each one focusing on one of the Ministry's priority policy themes:

- Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law
- Food & Business Knowledge Platform
- Knowledge Platform on Water for Development ("VIA Water")
- Knowledge Platform on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights ("Share-Net International")
- Knowledge Platform on Inclusive Development Policies ("INCLUDE")

A Knowledge Platform consists of representatives of national and international organisations – academic, private, governmental and non-governmental – that are active in the specified focus area. The platforms play a central role in i) identifying the need for knowledge in development policy and practice, ii) making existing knowledge accessible, iii) identifying knowledge gaps and articulating priority knowledge demands that feed into research programming for generating new knowledge, and iv) brokering to improve the use of both existing and new knowledge in policy and practice.

In connection with the third role mentioned above, the Knowledge Platforms can issue assignments for individual studies, but they can also develop a competitive research programme or a call for research proposals together with the division of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) known as WOTRO Science for Global Development (NWO-WOTRO). In its programming, NWO-WOTRO encourages research projects to take approaches that could improve the use of evidence in policy and practice. Both the Knowledge Platforms and NWO-WOTRO are thus actively involved in knowledge brokering, i.e. facilitating the process of the transfer, exchange and co-development of knowledge and research.

In the present call for proposals, researchers are invited to contribute to strengthening the body of scientific knowledge on what works or could work in brokering knowledge to enhance the outcome and impact of research for inclusive global development.

Knowledge brokering

Knowledge brokering can be conceptualised and operationalised in many different ways, including multi-stakeholder agenda-setting, the co-creation of knowledge by scientists and practitioners, and the use of targeted, innovative dissemination methods, to name just a few. All these forms of knowledge brokering can be valid depending on the sector, context and setting.

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[1] https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2011/11/15/kamerbrief-inzake-kennis-beleid-en-samenwerking-met-kennisinstituten-op-het-terrein-van-ontwikkelingssamenwerking

Box 1. Definition of knowledge brokering

> Here, *knowledge brokering* is defined as the set of activities and processes used to facilitate the exchange or sharing of knowledge and technology between different parties in the knowledge processes (demand and supply, generation and use), with an eye to supporting co-development and improving the innovative capability of individuals, organisations and networks.

In developing and carrying out research programmes, the Knowledge Platforms and the various NWO-WOTRO-funded research consortia each have different knowledge-brokering tasks:

Knowledge brokering by the Knowledge Platforms
The Knowledge Platforms are responsible for identifying and formulating the demands for knowledge and research. Since the knowledge demands identified by the Knowledge Platforms may vary in terms of their thematic or geographical focus, field of impact (e.g. policy contributions, capacity building, technical innovations, a better understanding of change processes) or urgency, both the resulting calls for proposals and the types of research projects funded through those calls may also differ. In every case, however, the research projects must be scientifically sound, and all resulting knowledge should be both relevant and accessible to practitioners, policymakers or other actors in development. Apart from identifying the demands for knowledge and research, the Knowledge Platforms also need to link the research projects to wider groups of stakeholders, for example by upscaling and outscaling the research results.

Knowledge brokering by the research consortia
To enhance the relevance and impact of research projects for society, NWO-WOTRO places a number of conditions on any research proposals submitted for funding. To be eligible for funding, for example, a project must be carried out by a consortium of researchers and practitioners[2] in collaboration with stakeholders from beyond the consortium[3] (e.g. to ensure co-creation). A project proposal must also specify the anticipated societal impact and define pathways to achieving that impact, making outputs and outcomes explicit (see Box 2).

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[2] In NWO-WOTRO calls for proposals, *practitioners* are defined as any organisations other than research institutes or institutions of higher education that represent a group of people actively engaged in designing and/or implementing policies (programmes). These types of organisations can include: i) private for-profit enterprises and related support organisations, ii) private non-profit organisations, such as non-governmental organisations, cooperatives, unions and civil society organisations, and iii) public organisations such as government agencies, implementing bodies or extension services on the national, regional and local levels.

[3] *Stakeholders* are defined as individuals, organisations or communities that have an interest in the process, outputs and outcomes of the research project or programme. They may be included in or excluded from making decisions, using the results, or participating in the research process.

Box 2. Definition of research outputs, outcomes and impact for society

Research outputs relate to the direct and immediate results obtained by a research project or programme.

Research outcomes relate to the changes in behaviour, relationships, actions and activities of stakeholders as a result of the sharing and uptake of research.

Research impact is defined as changes in whichever economic, environmental or social conditions a research project or programme aims to affect.

Change, and thus impact, is a complex process that depends on many different actors and factors, of which research is only one. Where outputs fall under a research project or programme's direct sphere of control, outcomes and impact belong only to its sphere of influence.

In working towards outcomes and impact, the consortia carrying out research projects or programmes managed by NWO-WOTRO also have a task as knowledge brokers. Research projects are required to include knowledge-brokering activities such as building relationships and engaging with stakeholders in designing and carrying out research, sharing knowledge and communicating throughout the research process, as well as ensuring that research results are made accessible to target audiences. Such 'research uptake' activities must be specified, planned and budgeted for. To support the knowledge-brokering role of the project consortia, NWO-WOTRO provides support to facilitate skill building in research uptake activities.

Box 3. Definition of research uptake activities[4]

Research uptake activities include all activities that facilitate and contribute to the use of research in policy and practice.[5] Research uptake activities aim to support:
- the supply of research by ensuring research questions are relevant through engagement with potential users; communicating about the research progress and results effectively; and synthesising and repackaging the research progress and results for different audiences.
- the use of research results by building the capacity and the commitment of research users to access, evaluate, synthesise and use evidence from research.

[4] Based on https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/514977/Research_uptake_guidance.pdf
[5] While researchers themselves are also users of research results, they are not the primary target group here.

1.2   Scope of the call: The scientific basis of knowledge brokering

Knowledge-brokering processes are complex, and it is not always clear how they work and what contextual factors influence them and their effectiveness. The current practice of knowledge brokering is based primarily on i) lessons learnt, ii) case-study analyses of (the obstacles to) linking research and policy & practice, and iii) ex-post impact evaluations.[6]

Approaches to enhancing research outcomes by means of knowledge brokering could benefit from systematic scientific research. Moreover, such approaches could also be improved by drawing more firmly on theories and concepts from the social sciences (including political science and the behavioural sciences).

The Alliance for Useful Evidence recently performed a review of research on the efficacy of interventions applied to increase the use of research in various decision-making arenas. They identified six categories of evidence-use mechanisms: i) Awareness: building awareness and positive attitudes towards evidence use; ii) Agree: building mutual understanding and agreement on policy-relevant questions and the kind of evidence needed to answer them; iii) Access and communication: providing both communication about and access to evidence; iv) Interact: facilitating interactions between decision-makers and researchers; v) Skills: supporting decision-makers to develop their skills in accessing and making sense of evidence; and vi) Structure and process: influencing decision-making structures and processes. Their recommendations include further research into the conceptual and casual frameworks underlying interventions to enhance the use of research.[7]

This call for proposals seeks to support research projects that will provide research-based insights that will underpin, improve or refine the knowledge-brokering approaches and activities performed by the Knowledge Platforms or by the project consortia of research projects funded by NWO-WOTRO.

1.3   Available budget

A maximum budget of EUR 700,000 is available for this call. The maximum budget for a single research project is EUR 200,000. A project can run from one to three years at maximum. The selection of project proposals to be funded will be based on their scientific quality and their relevance.

1.4   Period of validity of this call for proposals

Applications may be submitted from noon (12.00 CET) on 28 October 2016 until 2pm (14.00 CET) on 16 January 2017. The assessment period will take approximately eight weeks (please consult the timetable in Section 4.1).

In case adjustments to the call are deemed necessary, NWO-WOTRO reserves the right to publish these on the webpage of NWO-WOTRO.

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[6] E.g. ODI Briefing paper 53. Helping researchers become policy entrepreneurs
[7] http://www.alliance4usefulevidence.org/assets/Alliance-Policy-Using-evidence-v4.pdf

2 Aim

2.1 Aim and objectives

The call aims to strengthen the evidence base of knowledge-brokering approaches/activities performed by the Knowledge Platforms and/or by projects funded by NWO-WOTRO Science for Global Development.

The objectives of the call are:

- to provide new insights, based on scientific research, regarding knowledge-brokering approaches/activities in order to enhance the outcome (and impact) of research;

<u>AND</u>

- to unlock those insights in such a way that the Knowledge Platforms, NWO-WOTRO and/or projects funded by NWO-WOTRO can apply the knowledge to design (or redesign) their knowledge-brokering approaches and programming.

Each project must comprise two parts:

1. <u>A systematic review</u>:
Each proposed research project must start with a comprehensive scientific review of literature that is relevant to the research question(s). The results of this systematic review are to be presented at a workshop with representatives of the Knowledge Platforms, NWO-WOTRO and external experts in the field of systematic reviews and knowledge brokering.

2. <u>Empirical research</u>:
The systematic review is to inform and direct the course of the second part of the proposed research project: the empirical research. Projects may use a comparative approach[8] or perform participatory action research, thus engaging the Knowledge Platforms or the projects funded by NWO-WOTRO as part of their research team.[9]

Applicability of insights generated
The knowledge-brokering activities that are studied may go beyond the scope of activities carried out by the Knowledge Platforms or NWO-WOTRO-funded projects, but the insights generated must result in recommendations for improving the knowledge-brokering approaches/activities that are performed or supported by the Knowledge Platforms, NWO-WOTRO or project consortia.

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[8] These may also include projects funded by other donors. In particular, reference is made to programmes funded by DFID that aim at improving capacities and capabilities for research uptake.
[9] Applicants should be aware that they will need the consent of research consortia or Knowledge Platform representatives and they will need to agree upon the type and rules of engagement.

3 Guidelines for applicants

3.1 Who can apply

An application may be submitted by a senior researcher who i) is employed by a Dutch university or a research institute that is recognised by NWO-WOTRO,[10] ii) will be involved in the research throughout the period for which the grant is requested, and iii) will act as the main applicant. The main applicant's organisation will take responsibility for the day-to-day management, communication with NWO-WOTRO and all financial affairs of the research project.

The main applicant may collaborate with partners who participate as co-applicants in the project. Such co-applicants may be from research institutions or practitioner organisations in the Netherlands or in any other country; preferably they will include partners from low or middle income countries (LMICs).[11] Representatives of the Knowledge Platforms may be included as co-applicants as well.

The main applicant is not allowed to participate in more than one proposal.

3.2 What can be applied for

NWO-WOTRO supplies a grant for a minimum period of one year to a maximum period of three years. The maximum budget for a project amounts to EUR 200,000 and includes the reimbursements one or more postdoctoral research positions up to 140,000[12] as well as a budget for research and knowledge-sharing costs that amounts to a maximum of EUR 25,000 per full-time man year of a postdoc researcher.

Reimbursable costs
I. Personnel costs for postdoc researchers:
– The personnel costs for one or more postdoc researchers to be appointed at a Dutch university or a research institute are eligible for reimbursement in accordance with the most recent 'Agreement for Funding Scientific Research' signed by NWO, VSNU, NFU, ZonMw, KNAW and VFI. The agreement and the agreed-upon rates in the NWO-VSNU contract can be found on www.nwo.nl/approval of funding.
– Alternatively, one or more postdoc researchers affiliated at a research university or research institute in a LIMC can be provided with a net monthly allowance. The allowance is expected to cover all personal expenses, including housing, medical costs, insurance and travel to and from work. The regulations of the main applicant's institution are to be leading in determining the amount of the allowance.
– Postdoc researchers should be appointed for a minimum of one year at 0.5 FTE. At least one postdoc researcher needs to be appointed for the full project period.

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[10] An NWO-recognised grant recipient (See: NWO Regulation on Granting) or an international centre for scientific education based in the Netherlands (IHS, ISS, ITC, MSM, UNESCO-IHE).
[11] See the DAC List of ODA Recipients.
[12] This amount allows for a full-time postdoc appointment of two years at a Dutch university or a research institute. Please note that the exact amount is subject to change; see the NWO salary tables.

–   For each postdoc researcher, a bench fee of EUR 5,000 will be made available and paid directly to the main applicant's institution as a contribution towards the costs in support of the research conducted.

II. Research and knowledge-sharing costs:
–   The costs involved in carrying out the research, including the costs of supporting / supplementary experts, assistants and undergraduate students who are not affiliated to the main applicant's host institution;
–   Travel and accommodation costs for short visits by postdocs (for periods not exceeding three consecutive months);
–   The costs of using data, publications;
–   The costs of organising and participating in workshops, including the review workshops;
–   The costs involved in publishing policy briefs, review reports, manuals and other (visual/audio) forms to disseminate knowledge.

It should be noted that no funding is available for infrastructure or overhead costs.
Research and knowledge-sharing activities will be reimbursed at a maximum of EUR 25,000 per full-time man year.

Co-funding
If the total budget required for the proposed research activities exceeds the maximum amount available, the applicant will need to find additional sources of funding – for example from the host institution – that can contribute to the total grant in cash or in kind[13] in order to cover the total costs of the project. Such contributions must be directly attributable to the project and must be made explicit and valorised in the overall budget. The amount of the in-kind contribution of personnel costs should be guided by the organisation's norms and by the legal regulations of the country concerned. Please note that for reasons of transparency, cash contributions of EUR 5,000 and more must be channelled via NWO. In that connection, organisation(s) that co-fund in cash will receive an invoice from NWO, in accordance with the tailored payment scheme.

3.3   Monitoring and evaluation

Part 1 of the projects – the systematic review – must be completed within six months of the starting date. The reporting on that first part must include both i) preliminary recommendations on how to design (or redesign) the knowledge-brokering activities of the Knowledge Platforms and/or the consortia of funded projects and ii) a reflection on how the review results will feed into the second (empirical) part of the project. The review is to be evaluated and discussed during a workshop for learning purposes, and that may give rise to a further redefining of the empirical part of the project concerned. In addition, halfway the total running time of the project each project team will be requested to provide a concise progress report (according to the format that will be made available on the NWO-WOTRO website).

Each project will be evaluated at the end of the project's running time. To that end, applicants must deliver the following items within three months after the end date:

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[13] Partners can contribute 'in cash' by providing cash money to the project or 'in kind' by providing goods or services to the team.

  - Recommendations on how to improve the knowledge-brokering approaches/activities of the Knowledge Platforms and/or other NWO-WOTRO-funded projects (max. 5 pages), based on the output of the research project;
  - a project report (including a report on the systematic review) that explains the analysis that formed the basis for the recommendations, provides information on how the project progressed (with best practices and any challenges encountered) and specifies the knowledge generated. All output generated during the project should be uploaded through ISAAC, and products in preparation are to be listed (mentioning the process/mechanism/instrument used and the target);
  - a financial report (using the format provided by NWO-WOTRO).

The reports, the recommendations and any other (audio and/or visual) communication outputs should also be handed in when they become available. They will be shared with the Knowledge Platforms.

3.4   General regulations and conditions

General conditions
Project proposals must fulfil the conditions described in this call for proposals. With regard to the accountability for the projects, the General Provisions of the NWO Regulation on Granting apply.[14] With regard to the ownership of and access to results, the conditions as specified in the NWO-WOTRO Regulations[15] apply. In addition, by submitting a proposal, the organisations employing the applicants implicitly agree to the free use of the results by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, should the occasion arise. The rights to the results can only be transferred by their owner to a third party on the condition that this stipulation is included.

Open Access
All scientific publications resulting from research that is funded by grants deriving from this call for proposals are to be made freely accessible worldwide (Open Access), immediately upon being published. There are several ways for researchers to publish with Open Access. A detailed explanation regarding Open Access can be found on www.nwo.nl/openscience-en.

Data management
Responsible data management is part of good research. NWO wants research data that emerge from publicly funded research to become freely and sustainably available, as much as possible, for reuse by other researchers. Furthermore, NWO wants to raise awareness among researchers about the importance of responsible data management. Proposals should therefore satisfy the NWO data management protocol. This protocol consists of two elements:

1. Data management section
In the data management section that is part of every research proposal, applicants should answer four questions about how they will manage the data within their intended research project. This means that the researcher will be asked to think –

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[14] NWO Regulation on Granting: http://www.nwo.nl/en/documents/nwo/legal/nwo-regulation-on-granting-2015

[15] NWO-WOTRO Regulations: http://www.nwo.nl/en/documents/wotro/wotro-regulations

prior to the start of the research – about how any data collected should be ordered and categorised so that it can be made freely available. Measures will often need to be taken during the production and analysis of the data to make their later storage and dissemination possible. Applicants can state which research data they consider to be relevant for storage and reuse.

2. Data management plan
Once a proposal has been awarded funding, the researcher must elaborate the data management *section* into a data management *plan*. The plan should be submitted to NWO-WOTRO via ISAAC within no more than four months after the proposal has been awarded funding. NWO-WOTRO will assess the plan as quickly as possible. Approval of the data management plan by NWO-WOTRO is a condition for disbursement of the funding. The plan may be adjusted during the research.

Further information about the NWO data management protocol can be found at www.nwo.nl/datamanagement.

3.5   Submitting an application

The deadline for the submission of applications is **2pm** (14.00 CET) on 16 **January 2017**. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

An application can only be submitted to NWO via the online application system ISAAC (www.isaac.nwo.nl). Applications not submitted via ISAAC will not be considered. The main applicant must submit his/her application via his/her own ISAAC account. If the main applicant does not yet have an ISAAC account, he/she should create one well in advance of submitting the application to ensure that any registration problems can be resolved in time. If the main applicant already has an NWO account, he/she will not need to create a new account to submit an application.

When submitting an application through ISAAC, several additional details will need to be entered online. Be sure to allow enough time for this.

For technical questions about ISAAC, please contact the ISAAC helpdesk (see Section 5.2.1 below).

4 Assessment procedure

4.1 Procedure

The NWO Code of Conduct on Conflicts of Interests applies to all persons, including NWO personnel, who are involved in the assessment and decision-making procedure for this call for proposals. In view of the special character of this call for proposals, no external referees will be consulted. The International Advisory Committee will assess the proposals. The following steps are included:

1. Eligibility check: The NWO-WOTRO office will assess whether the proposal adheres to the aim and complies with the conditions as formulated in this call.

2. Assessment of the eligible proposals: At least two individual members of the International Advisory Committee will be asked to pre-assess the applications according to the selection criteria (Section 4.3 below). They will draw up a report indicating the strengths and weaknesses of the application. Applicants will be given the opportunity to respond within five working days to the referees' reports by means of a written rebuttal.

3. Discussion of the admissible proposals (along with the pre-assessment reports and any rebuttal) by the International Advisory Committee: The IAC will present the NWO-WOTRO Governing Body with recommendations on granting regarding those proposals that the IAC evaluates as being at least 'very good' for scientific quality and thus eligible for funding.

4. Decision and announcement of the outcome: Based on the advice of the IAC, the NWO-WOTRO Governing Body will decide whether or not to fund the proposal. All main applicants will be informed in writing about the outcome of the selection procedures and will receive an assessment and a qualification of his/her proposal.

A research project that has been awarded a grant should start within three months of the granting date.

4.2 Timelines

The assessment, ranking and selection of proposals for funding will take place according to the following time scheme:

31 January 2017, 2pm (14.00 CET)	Deadline for the submission of proposals
February 2017	Eligibility check
February – April 2017	Pre-assessment
April 2017	Receipt of pre-assessment reports, opportunity for rebuttal by applicants
May 2017	The International Advisory Committee meets to discuss the admissable proposals
June 2017	The Governing Body of NWO-WOTRO decides which proposals to fund NWO informs the applicants of the decision
August – September 2017	Last possible starting date for the projects
April 2018	Joint workshop to discuss the results of the review and to refine Part 2 of project proposals

Appeals procedure

If a main applicant objects to a decision taken by the NWO-WOTRO Governing Body, he/she can file a complaint in writing with the General Board of NWO through the NWO Appeals Committee. Any written appeal against a decision taken by the NWO-WOTRO Governing Body must be lodged within six weeks of the day on which the notice of this decision was sent.

4.3 Criteria

All proposals are evaluated according to a fixed set of sub-criteria of the two main criteria: scientific quality and relevance. Only those proposals that are evaluated as being at least 'very good' in terms of their scientific quality will be eligible for funding. In prioritising proposals, the criteria of scientific quality and relevance carry equal weight.

Evaluation criteria for proposals

I. Scientific quality:
- The scientific rigour of both the research design and the research approach, including the coherence of the objectives, research questions and methodology and the general feasibility of the project;
- The relevance and quality of the track record of the project team members;
- The probability that the proposed research would generate new knowledge and insights.

II. Relevance:
- The extent to which the project proposal fits the aim and objectives of the call;
- The significance of the insights generated in terms of improving the approaches to knowledge brokering used by the Knowledge Platform / NWO-WOTRO research projects.

When proposals qualify as being fundable and show an equal degree of quality, policy considerations such as complementarity in approaches or variation in research foci may be decisive in the final selection for funding.

4.4 Composition of the Governing Body and the International Advisory Committee

A list of the members of the Governing Body of NWO-WOTRO (the deciding body in relation to this call) can be found on the [NWO-WOTRO website](#).

The International Advisory Committee comprises experts from research universities, research institutes and think tanks. The composition of this committee will be announced on the website.

5 Contact details and other information

5.1 Contact

5.1.1 Specific questions

For specific questions about this call for proposals, please contact:
WO-WOTRO Science for Global Development
Email: SURe@nwo.nl.

Phone contact:
Coordination: Han van Dijk: 070-3440945
General information/assistance: Fanny de Vries : 070-3440763

5.1.2 Technical questions about the ISAAC electronic application system

For technical questions about the use of ISAAC, please contact the ISAAC helpdesk. Please be sure to read the manual before consulting the helpdesk, however. The ISAAC helpdesk can be contacted from Monday to Friday between 10am and 5pm (10.00 and 17.00 CET) at +31 (0)20 346 7179. You can also submit your questions by e-mail to isaac.helpdesk@nwo.nl. In that case, you will receive an answer within two working days.

6 Annexes

6.1 Knowledge brokering and the Knowledge Platforms' research programmes

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is investing in a robust knowledge base for its policy on international cooperation by supporting research and the exchange of knowledge. In that connection, the Ministry has installed five Knowledge Platforms and made funds available for research. These funds are distributed through NWO-WOTRO by means of calls for proposals. These calls are aimed at generating new knowledge through scientific research that has relevance for development and that contributes to societal impact. To optimise outcomes and contribute to impact, the Knowledge Platforms and the consortia that carry out research projects have important roles in terms of knowledge brokering. These involve co-developing research agendas, calls and projects, sharing experiences and (progress) results, and enhancing the uptake of research.

Formulating calls for proposals

The Knowledge Platforms are responsible for identifying the research needs and defining the research agenda. Once defined, the research agenda is then translated into specific calls for proposals. The formulation of the call texts is a joint effort of NWO-WOTRO and the Knowledge Platforms. It includes the specification of the objective(s), foci and conditions in terms of general eligibility criteria,[16] as well as the assessment criteria, the selection procedures and the monitoring and evaluation requirements.

Since the knowledge demands identified by the Knowledge Platforms may vary in terms of their thematic or geographical focus, field of impact (e.g. policy contributions, capacity building, technical innovations, a better understanding of change processes, etc.) or urgency, both the resulting calls for proposals and the types of projects may also differ.

All calls nevertheless share the aim of contributing to impact on policy and practice. To enhance the relevance of the research and its chances of developmental impact, the Knowledge Platforms and NWO-WOTRO apply a number of different approaches, including the following:

- <u>Working in (North-South-South) academic/non-academic partnerships</u>: By linking North–South / South–South as well as researchers and practitioners, the respective perspectives, approaches and expertise will contribute to the generation of relevant knowledge. In addition, the joint problem definition and the design and steering of the research process are expected to enhance the engagement of stakeholders and the probability that the knowledge generated will be applicable for potential users.

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[16] E.g. geographical focus, the required composition of the research teams, the background of the main applicant, the project duration and financial requirements.

- <u>Emphasising stakeholder involvement:</u> Involving stakeholders beyond the members of the project consortium may help to ground the proposal in the local context by i) linking it to demands and including realities during the inception stage (e.g. proposal-development workshops, kick-off meetings), ii) sharing intermediate and final results (mid-term and final review), and iii) including feedback to adapt the research design. The may be various ways of involving the stakeholders surrounding the consortia that are carrying out the projects.
- <u>Drawing up Impact Pathways</u>: The Impact Pathways are rooted in a theory of change that not only articulates assumptions about the process through which societal change is expected to occur but also specifies ways in which all of the required early and intermediate outcomes related to achieving a desired long-term change (i.e. impact) will be brought about. Project consortia are required to concretise their theory of change at the start of a project and adapt it throughout the project period. This is regarded as helpful in terms of learning and identifying different perspectives on change processes, focusing (or refocusing) research and uptake activities, and gradually unravelling complex realities.
- <u>Enhancing knowledge sharing and research uptake</u>: Applicants are asked to develop knowledge-sharing activities and/or research uptake strategies. Such strategies comprise the integration of complementary sets of activities:
  - Context analysis and stakeholder engagement: Project teams are expected to engage early on with relevant stakeholders and invest in building relationships with them.
  - Knowledge sharing and communication: Knowledge sharing and targeted communication are central to enhancing the availability, relevance and accessibility of research.
  - Assessing and strengthening research uptake capacities: This concerns both internal capacities (consortium/team) and the capacities of stakeholders.
  - Monitoring, learning and evaluation: Project teams are expected to integrate research uptake objectives and expected results as outcomes and outputs in the Impact Pathways (and theory of change).

Linking ongoing research to policy and practice

During the course of the research projects, the Knowledge Platforms organise knowledge-brokering activities aimed at further enhancing the uptake of research results. The specific objectives and types of activities – as well as the ways of organising them – may differ according to the Knowledge Platforms' specific foci (e.g. the specific needs for knowledge, the geographical context, the users), and the opportunities identified.

A few examples of applied knowledge-brokering approaches and practices are presented below, categorised along lines of the six mechanisms identified by the Alliance for Useful Evidence: Awareness, Agree, Access and Communication, Interact, Skills and Structure and Process.[17] In practice, these mechanisms are often used in combination with each other.

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[17] http://www.alliance4usefulevidence.org/publication/using-evidence-what-works-april-2016

Examples of knowledge brokering practices being promoted and applied by the Knowledge Platforms and NWO-WOTRO-funded projects (non-exhaustive)

Cate-gory	Description	Examples of practices applied by Knowledge Platforms	Examples of practices applied by projects funded by NWO-WOTRO
Aware-ness	Building awareness and positive attitudes towards evidence use		Identifying and mapping key stakeholders and policy processes and jointly defining the desired changes
Agree	Building mutual understanding and agreement on policy-relevant questions and the kind of evidence needed to answer them	Organising working sessions / interactive consultations with researchers and users to facilitate the formulation of knowledge and research needs	Co-creating (consortium/ stakeholders) in designing and carrying out research; monitoring outcome and including feedback as a continuous and iterative process; integrating the research uptake objectives specified in the outputs and outcomes into the Impact Pathways; adjusting those according to the emerging results, the shifting knowledge needs and the lessons learned
Access and Com-muni-cation	Providing communication of, and access to, evidence	Organising exchange meetings and creating knowledge exchange platforms (both virtual and real); sending out newsletters and policy briefings; launching websites; organising webinars; aggregating policy-relevant knowledge and research findings; synthesising newly generated knowledge into key actionable messages	Developing a communication and knowledge-sharing plan to identify the audiences and target messages with the appropriate means
Inter-act	Facilitating interactions between decision-makers and researchers	Facilitating the linkages of research projects with existing networks or intermediate organisations (e.g. think tanks); organising interaction meetings to establish policy-research learning communities	Organising multi-stakeholder meetings and workshops (kick-off, mid-term, final workshops)
Skills	Supporting decision-makers to develop skills in accessing and making sense of evidence; building the capacities of researchers and research users	Providing assistance in synthesising research findings and translating those into policy messages	Developing research uptake capacities supported by training, both internally (for the team) and for knowledge users; providing training on how to influence policy
Struc-ture and Process	Influencing decision-making structures and processes	Involving researchers in advisory or policy-consultation trajectories	

6.2   Instruction for applicants

Please take into account that the transdisciplinary International Advisory Committee will have to read and be able to understand your proposal. We would advise you to tailor your proposal to an audience consisting of experts with various backgrounds, both scientific and non-scientific.

Explanatory notes to each question on the application form are provided below (the numbers refer to the questions on the application form).

Registration

0a. Title
Please provide a concise title for the proposal.

0b. Duration
Please specify start and end dates of the project and express the duration of the project in months. Please note that the minimum and maximum project duration is 12 and 36 months, respectively.

0c. Details of the team: applicant(s)/researcher(s)
Please provide the personal details of the main applicant and the post-doc researcher(s) who will be engaged to carry out the project. If applicable, please also provide the details of any co-applicants. The contact details of the main applicant will be used for communication purposes during the selection process.

0d. Summary and key words of the research proposal
Please keep in mind that the summary is meant for a broad audience. It should refer to the five keywords and it should start with a teaser to catch the reader's attention. Please use no more than 300 words for this part.

0e. Main field of research
Please fill in one or more research fields that correspond to the subject of the research proposal. Use only the descriptions and codes found on the list of NWO research fields. That list can be found on http://www.nwo.nl/researchfields.

Research proposal

1a. Proposed research
Please describe the proposed research accurately in no more than 2000 words. The maximum word count does not include the references but does include any footnotes, figure captions and tables.

Please include information about the following:
- The aim and focus of the research
- A protocol for the systematic review, including an elaborated methodology
- An outline for the empirical part (including plans for activities, research methods to be used, etc.)
- The anticipated means of publishing the research results

1b. Literature references
Please list all relevant literature here (max. one page) and include full bibliographical details, e.g. authors, title of article, title of book/journal, eds., year of publication, page numbers.

1c. Roles and contributions of the partner institute(s)/organisation(s)/stakeholders
Please describe (in no more than 300 words) the roles and contributions of the partner institutes or organisations (applicants) involved, as well as the involvement of any external stakeholders (non-project partners), i.e. those who are intended to benefit from (as a next or end-user) or who may be affected by the research project.

Output and uptake plan
For this entire section (2a. and 2b.) please use no more than 500 words.

2a. Relevance of the results and/or insights for the knowledge-and-research-for-development sector in the Netherlands
Please describe how the expected insights and results in terms of output and outcome will be of relevance to the parties involved in the knowledge-and-research-for-development sector in the Netherlands (including researchers, knowledge platforms, NWO-WOTRO and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

2b. Timeline for outputs, including knowledge exchange and uptake events
Please provide a description and timeline for the expected output of the project, including academic and non-academic outputs (e.g. the systematic review report, manuals, and any knowledge-sharing events).

Budget
Please consult the previous sections (and Section 3.2 in particular) carefully before providing the financial details requested.

3a. Subsidy
Please specify the funds requested from NWO-WOTRO, presenting the total amount of subsidy applied for (to a maximum of EUR 200,000), including the personnel costs of any postdoc researchers, and the research and knowledge-sharing costs.

3b. Co-funding
If applicable, please specify the contribution of any co-funding, attaching a letter of support or financial guarantee if applicable.

Signatures
Signatures of the main applicant and any co-applicants (if applicable) as presented in Section 1a. of the application form must be included. No other signatures will be accepted. Electronic and/or scanned signatures are acceptable.

Appendices
No appendices other than the relevant Curriculae Vitae and letters of support will be accepted.

A1. Curriculum vitae of the main applicant, any co-applicants and the postdoc researcher(s)
None of the CVs is to exceed two pages in length and each one should include:
I Personal details
Title(s), initial(s), first name(s) (in full), surname:
Nationality:

II Master's degree
- University/College of higher education:
- Faculty:

III Doctorate degree
- University/College of higher education:
- Date and place of doctoral degree as stated on the diploma:
- Supervisor ('Promotor'):
- Title of thesis:

IV Current employment and work experience since Master's degree

V Publications

A2. Letter of support /financial guarantee (if applicable)
Provide the title(s), initial(s), first name(s) and surname of the person signing on behalf of an institute or organisation to express their support of the application.

Letters of support (of no more than two pages each) should be addressed to the project leader (not to NWO-WOTRO) and should reflect a commitment to contribute to the project in a timely manner as indicated in the application form.

In case a co-applicant provides co-funding, the amount and purpose of this co-funding must be specified in the letter of support. The amounts mentioned must correspond exactly to the amounts as put forward in the budget. Signatures of the heads of organisations/departments are required.

Please indicate if any letters are attached to the application.

Submission

Please submit the application to NWO electronically as a PDF document using the ISAAC online application system, which can be accessed via www.isaac.nwo.nl.