



## Call for proposals Living Labs in the Dutch Delta, Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek

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Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

This call for proposals is part of the NWO work programme 2018-2019 for the Topsector Water & Maritime and has been developed in close cooperation between the national research and innovation programme on water and climate ("Nationaal Kennis- en innovatieprogramma Water en Klimaat", NKWK), the Topsector Water & Maritime and NWO (including Taskforce for Applied Research, SIA).

The general topic of the call is derived from the notion that the Netherlands as a low lying delta must prepare for potential consequences of sea level rise, land subsidence, climate change and human-induced pressures. This requires a joint effort by public authorities, private partners, researchers and the society as a whole for the development of a long-term vision on climate adaptation as well as plans on measures for implementing this vision. Envisaged solutions for climate adaptation should be effective, adaptable in terms of resilience, scalable, socially acceptable and multifunctional in terms of ecology and economy. To meet the challenges of climate change in the longer run it is necessary to develop and apply integrated, novel insights from various scientific disciplines as well as knowledge and experience on a broad range of applied and implementation aspects.

Research resulting from this call for proposals is jointly funded by NWO (including SIA) and several public and private partners within NKWK. NWO contributes M€ 1.5 to this call and the public and private partners (see list below) together contribute M€ In addition, SIA contributes an amount of M€ 0.5 which enables Dutch universities of applied sciences to actively participate in this programme.

The following organizations contribute with cash co-financing to this call. Public partners:

- Delta Programme
- Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV)
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (IenW)
- Rijkswaterstaat
- STOWA

Private partners:



- Boskalis
- Van Oord
- a consortium of engineering companies composed of: Arcadis, HKV, LievenseCSO, Royal HaskoningDHV, Svasek and Witteveen+Bos

### **1.2 Available budget**

The total maximum budget available for this call for proposals is M€ 3.5. Within this total budget a maximum of M€ 0.5 is available for the funding of research by Dutch universities of applied sciences within the projects and a maximum of k€ 90 may be used for communication and network activities within the programme.

Only applications that receive the qualification excellent or very good are eligible for funding. This could mean that the available budget for this call will not be completely used.

### **1.3 Validity of the call for proposals**

This call for proposals is valid until the closing date for full proposals on **January 31, 2019, 14:00 hours CE(S)T.**

Please note: The closing date for the compulsory pre-proposals is **November 1, 2018, 14:00 hours CEST.**

## **2 Aim**

Nature-based solutions, using sediments and natural dynamics to improve flood safety and spatial quality, represent a promising approach to deal with effects of climate change in the Dutch Delta. They form the backbone of this call.

This call for proposals aims at developing and partly implementing novel knowledge on how large scale nature-based interventions can contribute to the resilience of the main water system in the Netherlands. Aspects of the physical natural system (geo), its ecological embedding (eco) and socio-economic conditions and consequences (socio) must be combined in the research projects. A living-lab approach has been chosen to ensure close interaction between different types of research as well as co-creation between public authorities, researchers and private partners at well-defined physical locations. Successful projects in this call will seamlessly integrate relevant research at academic institutions, universities of applied sciences and activities of private partners and public authorities at the living lab site. They will also ensure that activities are well embedded in the regional context by involving local stakeholders and the regional economic ecosystem.

There is a need to link academic science and evidence-based knowledge to the daily practice of professionals in the field. This program aims at strengthening existing and emerging ties between fundamental, applied and user-orientated research and at stimulating co-creation and application of knowledge with public and private organizations, including SME's. The projects resulting from this call are expected to make a contribution to the integration of shorter term applied research, aimed at the development of practical solutions for current demands, and longer term curiosity-driven research, aimed at enhanced system understanding, which will prove useful if not indispensable in future.

A full description of the scientific scope and the objectives of this call for proposals can be found in the Annex 6.1.

## **3 Guidelines for applicants**

### **3.1 Who can apply**

#### **Main applicant from NWO recognized knowledge institutions**

The main applicant has to submit the application on behalf of a project consortium and is the point of contact for NWO. The main applicant receives the funding on behalf of the entire consortium and is responsible for the scientific cohesion and the results, as well as for the financial accounting. A researcher is allowed to submit only one application as a main applicant.

Researchers from the following knowledge institutions can submit proposals as a main applicant:

- Dutch universities;
- NWO and KNAW institutes;
- the Netherlands Cancer Institute;



- the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen;
- researchers from the DUBBLE Beamline at the ESRF in Grenoble;
- NCB Naturalis;
- Advanced Research Centre for NanoLithography (ARCNL);
- Princess Máxima Center for pediatric oncology;
- KNMI2;
- IHE Institute for Water Education<sup>1</sup>.

The NWO Grant Rules 2017 and the conditions below apply to the main applicant:

- Applicants must hold a doctorate and/or be professor;
- Applicants must have a paid appointment for at least the duration of the application process and the research for which the grant is requested;
- Applicants with an appointment that ends before the completion of the proposed research can only submit a proposal if the knowledge institution confirms by means of a letter that the applicant has the prospect of a position for the entire research period;
- Applicants who have a 'zero-hours' contract (0-aanstelling) or a contract as an unpaid guest researcher cannot apply;
- Applicants cannot apply for a position for themselves.

#### **Co-applicant(s) from NWO recognized knowledge institutions (optional)**

The proposal may be submitted jointly with one or more co-applicant(s) from the above-mentioned knowledge institutions. A researcher can act as a co-applicant if he/she is a co-beneficiary, i.e. when he/she is the principle investigator of a work package and/or supervisor of a requested PhD student or postdoc. For a co-applicant the same conditions apply as for the main applicant. Researchers with a different role in the proposal can be included as a consortium partner.

A researcher from a NWO recognized knowledge institution may submit no more than two applications. This means that he/she can act as the main applicant for one application and can act as co-applicant for another application, or may act as co-applicant for two different applications.

#### **Co-applicant(s) from universities of applied sciences (mandatory)**

Each proposal must be submitted jointly with at least one co-applicant from an university of applied sciences (HBO). This co-applicant must be an experienced researcher (a professor, assistant professor, or a researcher with a similar appointment) with an appointment at an university of applied sciences funded by the Dutch Ministry of Education for the duration of the application process and the project (funded in accordance with Article 1.8 of the law on higher education and scientific research). Co-applicants from Dutch universities of applied sciences qualify for funding from the SIA budget. Participation by a university of applied sciences in a project is subject to the financial rules and provisions of SIA.

#### **Co-applicant(s) from applied knowledge institutions (optional)**

Each proposal may include one or more co-applicants from a Dutch applied knowledge institution (TO2 institution) like for example Deltares and Wageningen Research. This co-applicant must be an experienced researcher with a paid appointment at a TO2 institution. Participation in a project by staff of the applied knowledge institution qualifies for funding from the NWO budget.

A researcher from an applied knowledge institution can act as a co-applicant on no more than two applications.

### **3.2 Project consortium**

The project consortium is headed by the main applicant and his/her research institution. The consortium may include co-applicants from NWO acknowledged knowledge institutions, must include at least one co-applicant from a Dutch university of applied sciences (HBO) and may include co-applicants from applied knowledge institutions (TO2 institution). Other researchers from national or international knowledge institutions may be included as a consortium partner.

Each consortium must include at least one Dutch public authority (e.g. ministry, water board, province or municipality) and at least one Dutch private sector partner. Additional public and private organisati-

<sup>1</sup> Researchers from this knowledge institution can submit an application if they are collaborating with a Dutch university within the project, which should be clear from a personnel or material contribution to the project from this university.



ons may be included as a partner in the consortium. The support and/or contributions of the public and private partners must be confirmed by a support letter from each partner. The letter must be written in English, signed by an authorised person, printed on the partner's official paper and should be submitted with the application as a separate pdf file.

Participation of at least one private and/or public organisation is required within the applied part of the research by universities of applied sciences. Applied science should be demand-driven, and this connection with practice should be clear through a co-financing commitment of those partners (see 3.4).

Each proposal must make clear which role each consortium partner has and what their contribution to the overall research project will be. In addition it should be made clear how the research project will be managed and how coherence and progress will be safeguarded. In the proposals a specification is made in the description of the research activities between fundamental research and applied research but the integration between these components and the collaboration between the partners should also receive due attention. The consortium partners are required to sign a consortium agreement before the start of a granted research project (see 3.7).

In order to achieve the overarching aims of the programme Living Labs in the Dutch Delta, the project consortium is expected to collaborate in the programme activities; for example by participating in meetings in the context of progress monitoring and knowledge dissemination. These programme activities will also involve the funding partners of the programme.

NWO considers enterprises to be private sector partners and define an enterprise as follows: an activity carried out by an organisation or a person that is geared towards participating in the economy, using labour and capital, for the purpose of making a profit. Healthcare funds and health insurers count as private sector partners. International private sector parties may also participate. SME's are of great importance for applied sciences and are therefore encouraged to participate in project proposals.

Public and semi-public sector partners are institutions that cannot be classified as a private sector party and that are not permitted to act as (co-)applicant within this call for proposals. Institutions like for example ministries, water boards, Rijkswaterstaat, and Public Benefit Organisations (ANBIs) are considered to be public partners.

### **3.3 What can be applied for**

A maximum amount of M€ 1.165 can be applied for per application to cover direct costs associated with the research described in the proposal. The size of the requested budget should be proportionate to the research objectives. The total duration of the entire project is at least two years and no more than five years.

Within the total requested budget of an application, a maximum amount of M€ 1 can be requested for activities to be carried out by NWO recognized knowledge institutions and TO2 institutions and a maximum amount of k€ 165 can be requested for activities to be carried out by Dutch universities of applied sciences (HBO).

Please note that different rules and regulations apply to the budget allocated to Dutch universities of applied sciences. Therefore, these rules will be described separately in the following sections.

#### **Budget for NWO recognized knowledge institutions and TO2 (max. M€ 1)**

Within the total requested budget a maximum of M€ 1 can be requested for the participation of NWO recognized knowledge institutions and TO2 institutions. Costs eligible for funding are:

##### **1. Personnel**

###### **PhD/Postdoc**

Temporary scientific personnel (PhD students and postdocs); to be employed at a NWO recognized knowledge institution of one of the applicants. The personnel costs must be based on actual gross salaries and associated costs as specified in the current Dutch agreement on the funding of academic research ("Akkoord bekostiging wetenschappelijk onderzoek"; VSNU salary tables<sup>2</sup>).

For each temporary scientific position a bench fee of k€5 should be included. This is intended to provide a stimulus for the scientific career of the PhD/postdoc working on the project and can for

<sup>2</sup> If the VSNU salary tables should change during the course of the application procedure, then NWO might adjust the budget for the proposal. This will not be at the expense of other cost categories in the application. If necessary, this could mean that a higher grant is awarded than the maximum grant that can be applied for.



instance be used to pay the costs of thesis defence, travel to and attendance of conferences, and publication costs.

For PhD researchers, the appointment to the project is for a period of four years in the case of a full-time appointment. For postdocs the minimum duration of an appointment is two years for at least 50% of a full-time appointment. In the case of a full-time appointment, the maximum duration of appointment for postdocs is three years. Costs for so called “promotiestudenten/beursalen” at a Dutch university are not eligible for funding from NWO. Applicants from NWO recognized knowledge institutions cannot apply for funding for their own position.

**Salary costs TO2 institution (max. 20%)**

A maximum of 20% of the requested personnel budget may be used for salary costs of research staff (to be) employed at the TO2 institution of (one) of the applicant(s), specifically required for the proposed research project. The hourly rate based on the gross salary of the employee concerned may not exceed the cost-covering rate per hour belonging to the salary scale of the employee as indicated in table 2.2 of the manual for governmental tariffs “Handleiding Overheidstarieven 2017”. This manual formulated by the Dutch Ministry of Finance can be found on the NWO website. A maximum of three different employees may be appointed on the research project.

**2. Material costs (max. 25%)**

A maximum of 25% of the requested budget for NWO recognized knowledge institutions and TO2 may be used for material costs directly related to the execution of the research plan, such as consumables, fieldwork<sup>3</sup>, equipment, and knowledge transfer costs.

The costs for basic facilities (accommodation, standard office ICT equipment, standard laboratory equipment et cetera), maintenance and insurance costs, as well as other overheads are not for eligible funding.

**Budget for Dutch universities of applied sciences (max. k€ 165)**

Within the total requested budget a maximum of K€165 can be requested for the participation of Dutch universities of applied sciences. Costs eligible for funding are:

**1. Salary costs university of applied sciences**

The manual for governmental tariffs “Handleiding Overheidstarieven 2017” is applied by SIA regarding the allocation of subsidies in order to reduce the administrative burden at the Dutch universities of applied sciences. The hourly rate based on the gross salary of the employee concerned may not exceed the cost-covering rate per hour belonging to the salary scale of the employee as indicated in table 2.2 of the manual “Handleiding Overheidstarieven 2017”. This manual formulated by the Dutch Ministry of Finance can be found on the NWO website.

**2. Costs of students**

i. Students registered at the university of applied sciences may be deployed for the project and the costs of this may be budgeted within the project. If the deployment of the students is part of the educational programme (in that case the students should also receive study credits for the activities) then only the internship allowance that is usually paid within the institution can be declared. In this case there is a maximum hourly rate of € 25 and 1.650 hours per project year;

ii. If the students are deployed within the project on an extracurricular basis then they can be budgeted within the project for a maximum of 250 hours per person per project year. Only the actual amounts paid to the students can be budgeted as costs for the deployment of students within the project. In all cases a maximum hourly rate of € 25 applies. Hours and hourly rates above the maximum amounts stated cannot be budgeted as project costs. There is no limit to the number of students that can be deployed within the project.

**3. Material costs (max. 25%)**

A maximum of 25% of the requested budget for Dutch universities of applied sciences may be used for material costs. These are costs associated with the realisation of the project such as consumables, tools, prototypes, test set-ups and other costs such as the costs of publications and travel and subsistence costs for persons from universities of applied sciences involved in the project. The acquisition of machines and equipment cannot be budgeted as project costs. For machines and equipment only the depreciation costs or leasing costs can be budgeted as project costs.

Depreciation costs should be calculated on the basis of the historical purchase price excluding financing costs, a linear depreciation method and a lifespan of five years. Therefore costs for the use of equipment more than five years old cannot be budgeted to the project.

<sup>3</sup> Under the category fieldwork, funding can be requested for the collection of research data at a location other than that of the own institution or for visiting another research group (including groups abroad). Budget can only be applied for to cover the travel and accommodation costs of the applicant(s) and the personnel appointed to this project.





### **3.4 Conditions for matching**

For the total requested budget for Dutch universities of applied sciences a minimum co-financing of 25% is required, which can be provided in-kind and/or in cash. The universities of applied sciences and the private and/or public partner(s) must make a specific (own) co-financing contribution to the applied part of the research.

Minimal half of this co-financing requirement should be contributed for by the private and/or public partner(s).

For the rest of requested budget (i.e., budget for NWO recognized knowledge institutions and TO2), in-kind or cash co-financing by consortium partners is possible but not mandatory.

See NWO Grant rules 2017 for rules on Public-Private Partnerships. The contribution in the form of co-financing should be confirmed in the support letter of each consortium partner who is acting as co-financier. The letter must contain an explicit statement of the agreed-upon cash and/or capitalized in-kind contribution (see annex 6.2). The financial contributions stated in the letter must agree with the amounts stated in the budget of the application.

After a research proposal has been awarded funding, NWO will invoice the organisation that has pledged an in-cash contribution. After the contribution has been received, the money will be awarded to the project.

In-kind contributions should be accounted for by the applicants in retrospect. As in-kind contributions, NWO accepts personnel hours or material contributions such as the use of specific infrastructure, software and access to facilities. However a condition is that these must be capitalised and form an integral part of the project plan.

### **3.5 When can applications be submitted**

The deadline for the submission of pre-proposals is **November 1, 2018**, 14:00 hours CE(S)T.

The deadline for the submission of full proposals is **January 31, 2019**, 14:00 hours CE(S)T.

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.

### **3.6 Preparing an application**

- Download the application form for the pre-proposal and the full proposal from the electronic application system ISAAC or from NWO's website (on the grant page for this programme);
- Complete the application form;
- Save the application form as a pdf file and upload it in ISAAC;
- Upload all required supporting letters as separate pdf files in ISAAC.

### **3.7 Conditions on granting**

The NWO Grant Rules 2017 and the Agreement on the Payment of Costs for Scientific Research apply to all applications and applicants.

The NWO Grant rules include a clause that states that all research funded by NWO must be realised in accordance with the nationally and internationally accepted standards for scientific conduct as stated in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice 2012 (VSNU). Further information about the NWO policy on scientific integrity can be found on the website: <https://www.nwo.nl/en/policies/scientific+integrity+policy>

### **Intellectual Property and Publications (IP&P)**

In the knowledge transfer between researchers and co-financiers in NWO projects, it is important that research results are treated in a responsible manner with a view to making contributions to science and applying the knowledge concerned. The aim of NWO is, on the one hand, to ensure that the research results can be exploited as broadly as possible and published and, on the other hand, to encourage the collaboration between the knowledge chain and (semi-)public partners and industry. The NWO Grant Rules 2017 provide possibilities for the applicants to acquire intellectual property (IP) rights and to eventually transfer or license these to co-financiers. Open Access is the norm for publications.



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## Consortium agreement

Grant applications are approved on the condition that the consortium partners set out the arrangements in a consortium agreement. In this agreement, rights (for example copyrights, publications, intellectual property etc. on products or services that are developed within the project), knowledge transfer and other aspects including payments, progress reports, final reports and confidentiality are arranged. Furthermore, this contains agreements about the governance of the consortium (which must provide sufficient guarantees for an effective collaboration), finances, where applicable the contribution of basic knowledge, liability, the resolution of disputes and the provision of information between consortium members.

This consortium agreement is to be drawn up under the incentive of the main applicant in accordance with the NWO Grant Rules 2017. A project cannot start until NWO has approved the consortium agreement.

For the IP rights, the provisions as stated in Chapter 4 of the NWO Grant Rules 2017 are applicable in which the IP rights to the results are awarded to the knowledge institution whose employee has generated the results concerned (ownership follows inventorship). For the IP rights to the results of co-financiers, the percentages stated apply unless an appropriate reflection of the situation justifies a deviation from this.

## Start of project

The research should start within six months after the proposal has been awarded by appointing a PhD researcher or postdoc. If this cannot be realised, NWO retains the right to withdraw the grant awarded. The project can start as soon as the data management plan has been approved by NWO, the co-funding contributions have been confirmed by the consortium partners, and a signed copy of the consortium agreement has been received by NWO.

## Open Access

All scientific publications resulting from research that is funded by grants derived from this call for proposals are to be immediately (at the time of publication) freely accessible worldwide (Open Access). There are several ways for researchers to publish Open Access. A detailed explanation regarding Open Access can be found on <https://www.nwo.nl/en/policies/open+science>.

## 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 data management protocol of NWO. This protocol consists of two steps:

1. *Data management section*

The data management section is part of the research proposal. Researchers should answer four questions about data management within their intended research project. Therefore before the research starts the researcher will be asked to think about how the data collected must 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.

Researchers can state which research data they consider to be relevant for storage and reuse.

2. *Data management plan*

After a proposal has been awarded funding the researcher should elaborate the data management *section* into a data management *plan*. The data management plan is a concrete elaboration of the data management section. In the plan the researcher describes whether use will be made of existing data or a new data collection and how the data collection will be made FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable. The plan should be submitted to NWO via ISAAC within a maximum of 4 months after the proposal has been awarded funding. NWO will approve the plan as quickly as possible. Approval of the data management plan by NWO is a condition for disbursement of the funding. The plan can be adjusted during the research.

Further information about the data management protocol of NWO can be found at <https://www.nwo.nl/en/policies/open+science/data+management>.

## Nagoya Protocol

The Nagoya Protocol became effective on 12 October 2014 and ensures an honest and reasonable distribution of benefits emerging from the use of genetic resources (Access and Benefit Sharing; ABS).



Researchers who make use of genetic sources from the Netherlands or abroad for their research should familiarise themselves with the Nagoya Protocol ([www.absfocalpoint.nl](http://www.absfocalpoint.nl)). NWO assumes that researchers will take all necessary actions with respect to the Nagoya Protocol.

### **3.8 Submitting an application**

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

The main applicant must submit his/her application on behalf of the research consortium via his/her own ISAAC account. If the main applicant does not have an ISAAC account, 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 main applicant has an NWO-account, then he/she does not need to create a new account to submit an 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. The automatic time stamp on submitted proposal serves as point of reference for the exact submission time.

For technical questions please contact the ISAAC helpdesk, see Section 5.2.1.

## **4 Assessment procedure**

### **4.1 Procedure**

#### **4.1.1 General**

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 proposals a qualification. This qualification will be announced to the applicant together with the funding decision. To be eligible for funding the proposal must receive at least the qualification very good. For further information about the qualifications please refer to: [www.nwo.nl/en/funding/funding+process+explained/nwo+qualification+system](http://www.nwo.nl/en/funding/funding+process+explained/nwo+qualification+system).

#### **4.1.2 Information and matchmaking meeting**

On 18 September 2018 NWO will organize an information meeting to inform potential applicants and potential consortium partners about the aim, conditions and procedure of this call for proposals. This meeting will also facilitate the matchmaking between researchers from NWO recognized knowledge institutions, universities of applied sciences and applied knowledge institutions and public and private partners. The exact date and location will be announced on the website of this programme.

Because the collaboration with universities of applied sciences is a mandatory aspect of this call there will be specific attention for examples where fundamental and applied research successfully complement each other. The organisation of the workshop will be supported by the Delta Platform and Nationaal Lectorenplatform Delta- and Waternettechnologie.

#### **4.1.3 Pre-proposal**

Submitting a pre-proposal is required in order to submit a full proposal in a later stage of the procedure. The pre-proposal form must be used and the pre-proposal should be no longer than two A4 pages. A pre-proposal contains a short description of the research idea and must identify the minimally required consortium partners, i.e. one main applicant, one co-applicant from a university of applied sciences, one public authority and one private sector partner (support letters are not required at this stage). A pre-proposal is not part of the full proposal and will therefore not be assessed. It will be shared with all other applicants and will serve as input for a joint workshop (see 4.1.5). Through this procedure, applicants can find further collaborations and fine-tune the research plans before submitting a full proposal.

#### **4.1.4 Eligibility of the pre-proposals**

A pre-proposal is eligible if the pre-proposal has been submitted via ISAAC, the pre-proposal is administratively complete and satisfies all conditions stated in this brochure and on the pre-proposal





form. If a pre-proposal is considered ineligible, the applicant will be given the opportunity to rectify the shortcomings within a period of 48 hours so that the pre-proposal can still be admitted to the procedure.

#### *4.1.5 Workshop pre-proposals*

In November 2018 a workshop will be organized for all consortia that submitted a pre-proposal. At least one representative from each consortium must attend the workshop. Each pre-proposal will get the opportunity to briefly pitch its research idea. The aim of the workshop is to jointly strive for a coherent programme, to jointly address possible overlap between different pre-proposals and to facilitate additional collaborations. Representatives of the funding partners of this call will also be present at the workshop. The outcomes of the workshop can be used by the consortia to adjust their research idea and/or consortium composition before submitting a full proposal. Consortia can also decide not to submit a full proposal or decide to join forces.

#### *4.1.6 Eligibility of the full proposals*

The first step in the assessment procedure is to verify whether the application is eligible. A pre-proposal must have been submitted, and NWO will apply the conditions stated in this brochure and on the application form. If it is determined that an application is not administratively complete and/or does not satisfy the admissibility conditions, the applicant will be given the opportunity to rectify the shortcomings within a period of 48 hours so that the application can still be admitted to the assessment process.

#### *4.1.7 Assessment of the applications*

The assessment consists of two phases.

##### Phase 1: Referees' advice and rebuttal

All full (admissible) proposals will be submitted to at least two external referees for assessment. Referees are independent experts in the subject area of the application and/or have expertise in applied sciences and/or practice. They will write a referee's report in which they state the strong and weak aspects of the proposal based on the applicable criteria (see 4.2). The anonymised referees' reports will be sent to the applicant who then subsequently has the opportunity to submit a written response (the rebuttal). The rebuttal should be written in English and addressed to the evaluation committee. It should not be longer than two A4 pages. Applicants will be given ten working days to submit their rebuttal.

##### Phase 2: Assessment by the evaluation committee

The NWO Domain Science Board will appoint an independent evaluation committee that will deal with all proposals. The evaluation committee will consist of i) several renowned scientists with expertise on the themes of this call and sufficient experience to act as generalists for the assessment of all proposals (nominated by NWO Domain Science), ii) several representatives from the societal and private sector (nominated by the public and private funding partners) and iii) at least one representative with expertise with(in) applied sciences (nominated by SIA).

The evaluation committee will use the proposals, the comments from the referees and the rebuttals to reach an independent assessment of the proposals. The role of the evaluation committee differs from that of the referees because, unlike referees, they see all proposals, referees' comments and rebuttals. Although the referees' reports have a strong bearing on the final assessment they will not be unquestioningly adopted by the assessment committee. Members of the evaluation committee will discuss all proposals on the basis of the applicable criteria (see 4.2) during a meeting. The committee has the clear task to give due consideration to the strategic programme objectives on the basis of criterion 2 and 3. This will lead to an assessment advice for every proposal and an advice for a priority ranking of all proposals to the NWO Domain Science Board and the board of SIA.

The data management section in the application is not evaluated and therefore not included in the decision about whether to award funding. However, both the referees and the committee can 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 can use the advice from the referees and the committee when writing the data management plan. The project can start as soon as the data management plan has been approved by NWO.



#### 4.1.8 Decision making

The NWO Domain Science Board and the board of SIA will decide in joint consultation about the awarding of funding, based on the recommendations of the assessment committee and the funds available. The boards retain the right not to use all of the available budget if the minimum qualification criteria are not satisfied. After the two boards have made their decision, NWO will inform the applicants of the outcome.

#### 4.1.9 Indicative timetable

19 July 2018	Publication call for proposals
18 September 2018	Information & matchmaking meeting
1 November 2018	Deadline submission of pre-proposals
November 2018	Workshop pre-proposals
31 January 2019	Deadline submission of full proposals
January – March 2019	Consultation reviewers
April 2019	Obtaining rebuttals from applicants
May 2019	Meeting evaluation committee
June 2019	Decision of NWO Domain Science Board and Board SIA
June 2019	NWO informs the applicants about the decision

#### 4.2 Criteria

All proposals will be assessed against the following three criteria:

1. Scientific quality;
2. Relevance for the aim and theme of the call;
3. Quality of collaborations and potential for societal and economic application.

These criteria carry a weighting of 40%, 30% and 30%, respectively, in the overall assessment.

1. Scientific quality
  - Originality and innovative nature: potential for excellent, precompetitive and possible transdisciplinary scientific contributions; development of new knowledge and/or concepts, or ground breaking methods and technologies;
  - Scientific quality of the proposal: objectives, approach and methods, fitness for purpose and feasibility;
  - Scientific quality of the consortium: national and international embedding, track record, expertise, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary collaboration, and access to required equipment and facilities.
2. Relevance for the aim and theme of the call (see chapter 2 and annex 6.1)
  - Extent to which the proposed research fits with the aim and theme of this call for proposals;
  - Extent to which multiple dimensions of nature based interventions are included (a minimum of two dimensions must be included);
  - Suitability of the proposed Living Lab and its potential for impact.
3. Quality of collaborations and potential for societal and economic application
  - Quality and added value of the public-private partnership: co-creation, interaction and collaboration between researchers and private and public sector partners in the consortium;
  - Quality and added value of the collaboration between fundamental and applied research: co-creation, interaction and collaboration between the researchers from universities, Dutch universities of applied sciences and applied knowledge institutions in the consortium;
  - Quality of the regional embedding: connections with local stakeholders and regional economic ecosystems, including SME's;
  - Potential for societal and economic application and quality of the knowledge utilisation and application plan;
  - Importance and urgency of the proposed project for the application domain.



## 5 Contact details and other information

### 5.1 Contact

#### 5.1.1 Specific questions

For specific questions about Living Labs in the Dutch Delta and this call for proposals please contact:

Niels van den Berg (NWO Domain Science)  
Telephone: +31 70 349 4405  
E-mail: lidd@nwo.nl

Arjan Koeslag (SIA)  
Telephone: +31 623215792  
E-mail: arjan.koeslag@regieorgaan-sia.nl

#### 5.1.2 Technical questions about 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 hours CE(S)T on +31 (0)20 346 71 79. 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 Annexes

### 6.1 Scientific scope and objectives Living Labs in the Dutch Delta

**BACKGROUND & CHALLENGE.** The Dutch main water system (rivers, lakes and coastal zone) faces a number of complex challenges mainly resulting from climate change and from increased human pressures on ecosystem services. This calls for the development of integrated, sustainable solutions. Nature-based solutions, a relatively new and promising concept, are inspired by natural processes (see box). This call seeks proposals studying (large-scale) nature-based interventions in the Dutch main water system, already implemented or to be implemented during the envisioned project period.

**Nature-based solutions.** "There is growing re-cognition and awareness that nature can help provide viable solutions that use and deploy the properties of natural ecosystems and the services that they provide in a smart, 'engineered' way. These nature-based solutions provide sustainable, cost-effective, multi-purpose and flexible alternatives for various objectives. Working with nature, rather than against it, can further pave the way towards a more resource efficient, competitive and greener economy."  
[European Commission]

**RESILIENT WATERSYSTEMS.** Water and sediment form the basis of each delta and they are central to a number of ecosystem services that deltas can offer, such as navigation channels, dunes for flood protection and wetlands for the conservation of biodiversity. Studied interventions should aim for a significant contribution to supporting or improving the resilience of water systems in delta regions, thereby providing society with required and desired ecosystem services.

To be able to work with sediments and water, and to better understand how and to what extent interventions contribute to the resilience of water systems in the Dutch Delta, the sediment dynamics in fluvial, estuarine, lacustrine, and coastal environments should be well understood. These dynamics depend strongly on the feedbacks between flow, bed morphology and biota, over a range of scales. As a consequence, these dynamics remain notoriously difficult to understand and predict for real-life situations. Hence, this call seeks proposals that take advantage of the full-scale conditions that nature-based interventions offer. From this perspective, interventions can be viewed as full-scale experiments capturing the full complexity of natural systems that cannot be achieved in a traditional laboratory setting. Working in a real-life situation (i.e., a Living Lab) may also involve stakeholder participation and human interactions with the eco-physical system that can also influence the resilience of water systems.

**LIVING LABS APPROACH.** For the purpose of this call the term 'living lab' refers to a physical location where researchers, companies and public authorities with different backgrounds, approaches and perspectives closely interact by working on questions related to a common system. This should ideally lead to a natural combination of fundamental, applied and user-oriented research around nature-based solutions supporting the resilience of water systems in the Dutch Delta. An intensive interplay of these different forms of research seems obvious. In practice, however, it is still very rare. Large-scale interventions in the Dutch water systems by public authorities that influence the long-term developments of the water system are particularly suitable for this Living Lab approach (see



examples). This is especially true for interventions with existing monitoring programs which allow improving our understanding of sediment dynamics in deltas over a range of scales and in relation to ecological and societal processes. The collection of comprehensive field data sets is instrumental to advancing the predictive capacity of both idealized and full-complexity simulation models, which in turn can be used to optimize future nature-based interventions in large surface water systems in the Netherlands and abroad. Such needs can be met by using existing monitoring data of the intervention sites and, where necessary, complemented by dedicated data collection. Joint efforts by academic institutions and universities of applied sciences may be beneficial in data collection endeavours, but also in connecting Living Labs to local stakeholders and regional economic ecosystems. The Living Labs that are considered for this call should be located in, or be directly connected to the Dutch surface waters where measures are implemented. Virtual Living Labs, i.e. projects that lack an actual physical location where research and innovation, interaction and co-creation can happen in a real life setting, are outside the scope of this call.

**GEO-ECO-SOCIO.** This call for proposals focuses on Living Labs where public authorities, research institutions and private partners co-create nature-based solutions for increased resilience of the Dutch main water system in the light of climate change and human-induced pressures, using sediments for improving public safety and spatial quality. These solutions are effective, adaptable in terms of resilience, scalable, socially acceptable and multifunctional in terms of ecology and economy. Apart from the technical aspects underlying these solutions, the ecological carrying capacity and socio-political acceptance form important ingredients for interdisciplinary work. Those aspects form vital elements of successful proposals within this call. Therefore, the invited proposals should acknowledge these multiple dimensions of nature-based solutions and must include, or be at the interface of, at least two of the three dimensions: geosciences, ecology, social and economic aspects.

**SOME EXAMPLES.** The following examples are provided to illustrate possible Living Lab cases. They are no more than examples and invited proposals are explicitly not limited to those examples.

- The **Marker Wadden** may be used as a Living Lab to study how and to what extent eco-physical interactions are influencing the ecological resilience of the lake Marker water system, or to study how interventions like the Marker Wadden can contribute to carbon storage as an added ecosystem service in relation to lake level management.
- The predictive capacity of both idealized and full-complexity simulation models for eco-geomorphological evolution may be advanced by studying the altered system in a Living Lab situation, such as the **Sandmotor**, the **Ems-Dollard estuary**, or the **ebb-delta nourishment** near Ameland or the **Hedwige/Prosperpolder** systems at the Dutch-Belgian border. Such simulation models are needed to optimize the design of future nature-based interventions in Dutch large surface water systems and abroad.
- Another topic of interest could be the development of measures towards '**self-sustaining rivers**'. New approaches are to be explored that have the potential to counteract the growing maintenance needs related to river incision and sea level rise in a cost-efficient manner.

## **6.2 Conditions in-kind co-financing**

In-kind co-funding should be capitalised, i.e. expressed in cash terms, consisting of the number of units against cost price or hours x hourly rate, and is part of the proposed budget.

### *Determining the value of in-kind co-funding*

The hourly rate can be determined on the basis of the cost-covering rate including the associated premiums based on the integral salary costs table (table 2.2) of the *Handleiding Overheidstarieven 2017*. The maximum rate for in-kind contributions of co-financiers is € 125 per hour, VAT included.

For the use of students, a maximum rate of € 25 per hour applies.

The applicant should justify the hourly rates used and provide evidence for these. NWO will determine whether the hourly rates need to be modified.

The following are permitted as in-kind co-funding:

- The use of personnel and material contributions are accepted as co-funding on the condition that these are capitalised and are fully part of the project. This will be made clear in the description and the planning/phasing of the research. For equipment pledged, the actual current value will be used.
- It is possible that part of the research will be carried out by third parties. In the case of personnel being used, the condition is that the expertise provided in the form of man-hours is not already available at the research institution(s) and is therefore specifically deployed for the project. The



capitalisation of personnel deployed by third parties is subject to the value determination for in-kind co-funding described above.

- A condition for material contributions in the form of services provided is that these can be identified as a new effort. The service is not ready available at the research institutions that carry out the research. It might be the case that a party wishes to use services already provided (for example a database or software) as in-kind co-funding. However, this will not be automatically accepted. In such cases, the main applicant should contact NWO in advance. NWO will determine whether a concrete value can be established for the service provided.

#### *Accountability in-kind co-funding*

Private and public parties should justify the in-kind contribution by providing an overview of costs contributed. This should be provided to the project leader after the completion of the research project to which the contribution was made. The request to settle the in-kind contribution should be submitted to NWO by the project leader at the same time as the request to settle the grant and should be accompanied by a joint final report. If the in-kind contribution to be accounted for is higher than € 125,000, then an auditor's statement should also be submitted; in other cases, a written statement from the project leader in which it is recorded that the in-kind efforts contributed were actually allocated to the project will suffice.

In the event that these requirements are not met, NWO has the right to withdraw the entire grant.

#### **The following may not be contributed as co-funding** (both in cash and in-kind):

- Discounts on commercial rates, e.g. materials, equipment and services;
- Costs related to overheads, supervision, consultancy and/or participation in the user committee;
- Costs for services that are conditional. The co-funding provided may not be subject to any conditions. The provision of the co-funding does not depend on whether a certain stage in the research plan is achieved (e.g. go/no-go moment);
- Costs that are not reimbursed according to the call for proposals;
- Costs for equipment if one of the (main) objectives of the proposal is the improvement/creation of added value for this equipment.