

Program description

Purpose

The Dutch Diabetes Research Foundation (DDRF) works towards a world without diabetes and the worries associated with this chronic disease. That is why the DDRF funds promising scientific research towards innovative diabetes treatment and cure.

For people with diabetes and their loved ones, fear of diabetes complications is always present. Even despite optimal blood glucose regulation. This fear is not unfounded, because more than half of the people with diabetes develop diabetes complications. These complications often arise unnoticed but can evolve into severe problems: from blindness to kidney failure and the amputation of limbs.

The options to treat diabetes complications are often still limited. That is why the theme of the research grant this year is: *Overcoming diabetes complications*. With this call for proposals, we aim to increase the quality of life for people with diabetes, working towards a life free of complications.

Scope and focus

The Dutch Diabetes Research Foundation invites all scientists working on **chronic microvascular diabetes complications** to apply for a grant in the call: *Overcoming diabetes complications*. It is essential that the research project is focused on accomplishing advances in the early detection, treatment or cure of chronic microvascular diabetes complications. The call is open for both fundamental and applied research. The outcomes of the project need to benefit knowledge uses, e.g. people with diabetes, care providers, policymakers, and companies in the short term and/or in the long term.

The focus and objectives of the 'Overcoming diabetes complications' call stem from the vision and strategy of the DDRF and is complementary to our other activities¹. As a consequence, a number of curiosity-driven questions and subjects fall beyond the scope of this specific call e.g. macrovascular complications, diabetic foot problems, psychosocial problems in diabetes management and prevention of diabetes complications. The objective of the call is to stimulate scientific research with the aim of realizing scientific and/or societal breakthroughs on diabetes complications².

Available funding

The *Overcoming diabetes complications* call for proposals offers research grants for scientific research. Based on the quality of the applications, we aim to support three projects with a maximum of € 275.000 each for a maximum of 2 years.

Applicants need to be affiliated to a Dutch university, academic centre, university of applied sciences or non-profit research institute

¹ The vision and strategy is established together with people with diabetes and scientists in our 'Policy plan 2021-2024' (in Dutch: [Meerjarenvisie](#)).

² In this call, the DDRF understands 'breakthroughs' to be a change that takes place in either science or society.

Procedure and deadlines

Letter of intent

To apply for the *Overcoming diabetes complications* grant, submitting a **letter of intent is mandatory**. The deadline for the electronic version (in Word) of the letter of intent is **Monday May 23th, 2022 at 13:00 CEST**. Required information includes a general summary, a work plan of your proposed research and a list of potential international reviewers. The form can be found at <https://www.diabetesfonds.nl/speciaal-voor/onderzoekers/overcoming-diabetes-complications>

If a large number of applications is received, the DDRF is at liberty to make a pre-selection of all applications. As part of the selection procedure, members of the scientific advisory board, as well as members of the societal advisory board of the DDRF, will evaluate the letter of intent based on the review criteria (mentioned below). The members of the combined advisory board advises the executive board whether or not to invite an applicant to write a full application. The executive board of the DDRF makes the final decision on who will be invited to write a full application. We strive for a success rate of 40 to 50% in the full application phase.

Full application

To complete the application process you need to submit both a completed scientific application form and a 'samenvatting voor ervaringsdeskundigen'. The deadline for the electronic version (Word file) of the full application is **Monday August 29th, 13:00 CEST**. The DDRF will check whether the application meets the conditions of the program. If the application does not meet the conditions, your application will not be taken into consideration.

Scientific application

Several (inter)national scientists with expertise on the specific topic are invited to review the scientific application based on the review criteria listed below. All reviewers will remain anonymous at all times. The applicants are given the opportunity to write a rebuttal to issues raised by the reviewers. In addition, a statistician will review the scientific application. Issues raised by the statistician can also be addressed by the applicants in the rebuttal.

'Samenvatting voor ervaringsdeskundigen'

The 'samenvatting voor ervaringsdeskundigen' needs to be written in Dutch and will be reviewed by the societal advisory board of the DDRF based on the review criteria listed below. Similar to the scientific application, the applicants are given the opportunity to write a rebuttal on the issues raised by the societal advisory board.

Advice and decision

In November, the members of the scientific and societal advisory boards will review and discuss the applications, the (inter)national reviews and the rebuttals. Based on the reviews and discussion, they will formulate advice, which they will share with the executive board of the DDRF. Additional recommendations concerning the applications can be included in this advice such as the distribution of applications across different types of complications and/or across fundamental versus applied research. Based on the advice of the members of the advisory boards, the executive board decides which applications will be granted.

Time schedule	
Monday May 23th, 13:00 CEST	Deadline letter of intent
May/June	Review of the letter of intent by members of the scientific and societal advisory board
July	Decision by the executive board on the letter of intent
Monday August 29th, 13:00 CEST	Deadline full application (scientific application and samenvatting voor ervaringsdeskundigen)
September	Review of the application by international experts, societal advisory board and statisticians
October	Reviews to applicants
Monday October 31th, 13:00 CEST	Deadline rebuttal
December	Meeting advisory boards
December/January	Decision Executive Board

The Dutch Diabetes Research Foundation reserves the right to change timelines due to unforeseen circumstances.

Review criteria

The review criteria are aligned with the objective of the call: to stimulate scientific research with the aim of realizing scientific and/or societal breakthroughs. It is essential that the research project is focused on accomplishing advances in the early detection, treatment or cure of chronic microvascular diabetes complications.

The letter of intent will be assessed against the following two criteria:

- I. Alignment with the scope and objectives of the *Overcoming diabetes complications* call
- II. Scientific quality of the proposed project

Full applications will be assessed against the following three criteria:

- I. Rationale (problem analysis)
- II. Scientific quality
- III. Knowledge utilization (impact pathway)

Below these criteria are specified.

I. Rationale

- a. The main problem is important from a scientific and/or a societal perspective.
- b. The causes underlying the main problem and the proposed route to the solution(s) are convincingly described.
- c. It is well motivated that research into the underlying knowledge related causes is essential at this moment in time to progress towards the solution of the main problem.

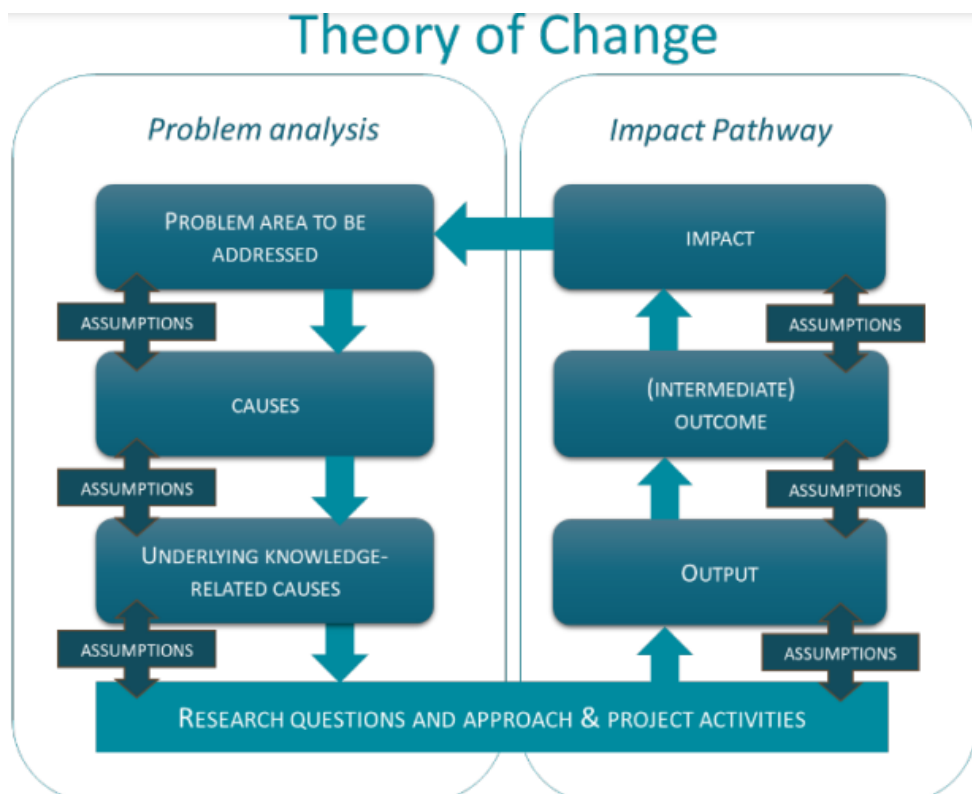
II Scientific quality

- The scientific problem is clear and concise. The objectives associated with it are clear and specific.
- The proposed approach and methodology are suitable to achieve the intended objectives and to answer the research question. The approach and methodology are coherent and well-formulated.
- The feasibility of the proposed research is convincingly described, including risk analysis and a backup plan.
- The budget is appropriate for the proposed research activities. Costs are clear and tangibly justified.

III Knowledge utilization

- The intended scientific and societal outcomes/breakthroughs are clearly defined and logically follow from the problem or question identified.
- The action plan follows logically from the problem description, breakthroughs, research plan, outputs, and outcomes as described in the previous sections.
- A detailed action plan is presented, including specific steps and actions, together leading to a plan to allow the translation of the intended outcomes of the research project towards a solution for the central (societal) problem.
- The action plan is both effective and realistic.

To select the most promising applications which have the biggest potential to contribute to the solution of a (societal) problem, the DDRF based the review criteria for the full application on the NWO Theory of Change model depicted below. Supporting information on the Theory of Change can be found on the website of the [Dutch Research Council](https://www.nwo.nl/en) (NWO)



The Dutch Diabetes Research Foundation has the right to exclude applications that do not match the objectives or conditions of this specific call according to our Policy plan 2021-2024. Applications for research projects with great resemblance to initiatives that are already funded by the Dutch Diabetes Research Foundation can also be excluded.

Conditions for writing a proposal

The Dutch Diabetes Research Foundation evaluates the applications based on the following conditions. Applications not meeting these conditions will be excluded from the procedure.

- Use of the correct application form, available at: <https://www.diabetesfonds.nl/speciaal-voor/onderzoekers/overcoming-diabetes-complications>
- The form is filled out completely and correctly and the deadline is not exceeded;
- The project focuses on chronic microvascular diabetes complications;
- The project takes place in The Netherlands for more than 50% of the duration and resources;
- If a clinical study is included, it needs to be performed under the surveillance and responsibility of an academic institute, university, or non-profit research institute;
- The main applicant is affiliated with a Dutch university, academic center, university of applied sciences, or non-profit research institute;
- Experiments using humane measurement models are preferred over similar experiments using animal models;
- The budget meets the guidelines in the document 'Regeling Subsidieverlening' and the 'Algemene Subsidievoorwaarden'. Of note, personnel costs need to be derived from the most recently updated salary tables accompanying the 'CAO-Nederlandse Universiteiten'. These personnel categories and costs can also be found in the 'Vergoedingentabel' on our website: <https://www.diabetesfonds.nl/subsidievoorwaarden>.
- Applications for the *Overcoming diabetes complications* call need to meet the conditions and requirements described in the 'Algemene Subsidievoorwaarden', which can be found at our website: <https://www.diabetesfonds.nl/subsidievoorwaarden>. Applicants need to be aware that the 'Algemene Subsidievoorwaarden' may have been liable to change in case they are invited to write a full application. The applicants will then be notified by the Dutch Diabetes Research Foundation accordingly.
- The project concerns independent research activities. Applications for additional finances will be excluded from the procedure;
- The project does not concern a pilot study or research primary based on methodology;
- The project does not entail research on the indication for use or effectiveness of a medicine;
- The maximum amount requested should not exceed € 275.000 for a period of maximum of 24 months. The duration of the project can be extended to a maximum of 48 months for scientists with clinical obligations.

Additional information is needed in case of:

- Proposals resulting from ongoing projects. Please indicate how the application differs from the current activities and whether there is an overlap or connection between the ongoing and proposed projects;
- Proposals that are simultaneously offered for funding elsewhere. Please inform us which organization the proposal is offered to, when the decision on granting is expected and what amount of funding is requested. If the research proposal is granted elsewhere, the proposal will be excluded from the procedure;
- Research proposals that have been previously denied by the Dutch Diabetes Research Foundation. Motivate why the grant is applied for again and inform us precisely how the current proposal differs from the earlier proposal;

Contact information

Send your electronic application to: research@diabetesfonds.nl

Diabetes Fonds
Kennis & Innovatie
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3818 LE Amersfoort

For further questions or remarks please contact Joya Nahon.
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