

Programme Information

Bilateral Cooperation Programme between Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)
and Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO)

Guidelines for Proposals

Bilateral Cooperation Programme

1. Introduction

DFG and NWO consider international collaboration to be an essential feature of scientific progress and encourage exchange and cooperation between scientists from Germany and the Netherlands and their colleagues abroad. Accordingly, both organisations have for many years offered a wide range of schemes to facilitate international contacts. Nevertheless, DFG and NWO feel that it is useful and desirable to add to these existing means by creating a special focus on relations between researchers from both Germany and the Netherlands. Cooperation between neighbouring countries can offer practical and effective opportunities to combine forces, for example in relation to the study of issues of mutual interest, the development and expansion of high quality research centres and the training of future research talent. Combining forces in this way may also enable the research groups involved to perform better in the increasingly competitive European and global research environment. For example, a spin-off could be to respond more effectively to new EU programmes. Cooperation between NWO and DFG must be seen in this light.

Therefore, DFG and NWO are prepared to make resources available for programmatic cooperation between research groups in Germany and the Netherlands. In order to enhance well structured and long-term partnerships, this funding scheme will focus on:

- cooperation between research groups attached to a *Graduiertenkolleg* in Germany and Research Schools (*Onderzoekscholen*) in the Netherlands, aimed at the education and training of doctoral students in both countries;
- cooperation between German and Dutch research groups in joint research programmes, aimed at the development of German-Dutch groups of competence.

Such cooperation may be initiated by either German or Dutch research groups.

A short introduction to *Graduiertenkollegs* and *Research Schools* is available on the DFG and NWO websites (<http://www.dfg.de> and <http://www.nwo.nl>). A complete list of these institutions can also be found there.

2. Cooperation between Graduiertenkollegs and Research Schools

The DFG-NWO scheme for cooperation between Graduiertenkollegs and Research Schools is consistent with the desire of a number of European research councils to set up '*European Research Schools*'. However, neither organization advocates any heavy institutional structure. Content is to be the main focus of cooperation and institutional arrangements are to be kept at a minimum.

Aim

The aim of the scheme is to cooperate in the education and training of doctoral students in both countries, within the framework of a research programme which is jointly established and implemented by researchers in both countries and which offers doctoral students in both countries excellent opportunities to develop their talents in the context of a joint doctoral training programme.

Essentials

- a) the German and Dutch partners should jointly formulate a high quality research and training programme to be implemented by researchers on both sides of the border;
- b) the programme should provide for regular exchanges of academic staff and doctoral students for the purpose of joint research and joint training;
- c) during their PhD-project doctoral students should spend at least six months in the other country for research and training;
- d) doctoral students should have both a Dutch and a German supervisor;
- e) theses should be assessed by a joint doctoral board before the award of the doctorate proceeds in accordance with national regulations.

3. Cooperation between German and Dutch Research Groups in Bilateral Research Programmes

Whereas cooperation between *Graduiertenkollegs* and Research Schools will be distinguished particularly by the importance given to the training of researchers, the main aim of cooperation between German and Dutch research groups in joint research programmes will be the establishment or further development of German-Dutch groups of competence. Examples of cooperation might include the integration of (parts of) the research programme of a Dutch research school or research institute with (parts of) that of a *Sonderforschungsbereich* or other German research centre or vice versa. Proposals must be compatible with the following aim and essentials:

Aim

The aim is to use cooperation between a Dutch and German research group to contribute to the establishment or further development of a German-Dutch collaboration of the highest academic quality.

Essentials

- a) The research groups on both sides should possess a high international reputation;
- b) the proposed research programme in which the groups wish to cooperate should be of the highest quality;
- c) the participation of both groups should be of such significance - in terms of both content and size - that the joint programme can be expected to develop into a German-Dutch centre of competence of the highest academic quality.

4. Procedures, Criteria and Budgets

DFG and NWO will base their decisions on the result of a peer review procedure. They will endeavour to conduct this procedure jointly as far as their respective rules of procedure permit. All proposals should therefore be written in English and contain full details on the research programme (in the case of Graduiertenkollegs/Research Schools: the research and training programme) and required funding of both the Dutch and German groups. They should be submitted to DFG and NWO simultaneously.

The applications will be judged by criteria regarding the:

- research level of the teams;
- quality and feasibility of the research programme;
- the quality and added value of training (only for cooperation between Graduiertenkollegs and Research Schools);
- mobility, collaboration and coordination between the research teams.

The basic assumption is that the two partners involved will each finance their own share of the cooperation project (though not necessarily on a 50-50 basis). The German partner can apply to DFG for financial assistance and the Dutch partner to NWO. Specific details on application procedures are available in separate brochures of DFG and NWO.

NWO (for the Dutch applicants)

The following costs of cooperation will qualify for assistance:

- costs of travel and subsistence for academic staff, doctoral students, post-docs and visiting researchers;
- charges for workshops, summer schools and conferences;
- charges to cover specific additional research costs.

The maximum total amount of subsidy for each individual proposal will be limited to NLG 100,000 a year. In principle, this may be awarded for a period of three years. This period may be extended by a further three years, depending on a positive evaluation. Dutch scientists may also choose to apply for funds within the regular procedures offered by the different councils (please note that these procedures contain different criteria and requirements !).

- Earth and Life Sciences Council (ALW) <http://www.nwo.nl/english/alw/introduction/>
- Chemical Sciences Council (CW) <http://www.nwo.nl/english/cw/introduction/>
- Physical Sciences Council (EW) <http://www.nwo.nl/english/ew/introduction/>
- Humanities Council (G) <http://www.nwo.nl/english/gw/introduction/>
- Social Sciences Council (MaG) <http://www.nwo.nl/english/magw/introduction/>
- Medical Sciences Council (MW) <http://www.nwo.nl/english/mw/introduction/>
- Technical Sciences Council (TW) <http://www.nwo.nl/english/tw/introduction/>
- Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO) <http://www.nwo.nl/english/wotro/introduction/>

DFG (for the German applicants)

Funding for bilateral cooperation is available in all the DFG's major funding procedures.

Graduierntenkollegs

Graduierntenkollegs are encouraged to seek international partnerships in research training. Their budget in general includes funds for mobility of students and guest scientists.

Additional funds for enhanced co-operation in a bilateral partnership can be provided in two ways:

- Established *Graduierntenkollegs* can apply for extra funds for
 - mobility costs of doctoral students
 - costs of hosting visiting scientists from the partner university
 - joint workshops and seminars

These funds can be granted for the duration of the current funding period of the *Graduierntenkolleg*.

- Scientists not yet involved in a *Graduierntenkolleg* can propose a *European Graduierntenkolleg* (http://www.dfg.de/foerder/formulare/1_301.htm). Grants include:
 - fellowships, incl. supplements for stays abroad
 - special funding for visiting scholars
 - funding of required materials (research equipment, literature etc) for thesis work (also for foreign students in Germany)
 - coordination funds
 - all further funding provided by the *Graduierntenkolleg* programme.
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A *European Graduierntenkolleg* has a funding period of three years. This period can be extended twice on the basis of a renewed proposal and peer review.

By the time of approval by the DFG the availability of complementary funding for the respective partner universities must be assured.

Other research programmes

The DFG provides several channels of support for research cooperation, notably

- *Sonderforschungsbereiche*
- *Schwerpunktprogramme*

- *Forschergruppen*
- *Individual grants procedure*

All of these have a substantial potential for international cooperation and are able to provide grants for travel costs, meetings, etc. The procedures governing their establishment and funding can easily be expanded to allow for the participation of scientists from the Netherlands who have or apply for access to NWO funds as mentioned above.

As in the case of Graduiertenkollegs, there are two options:

- A joint proposal for a new programme, which has to pass through the DFG's standard granting procedures. In view of the substantial size of these programmes, interested groups are urged to contact the DFG and NWO Secretariats before formulating a proposal.
- Cooperation within an existing programme. Proposals for new cooperative projects or applications for additional funds for
 - mobility of researchers and research personnel
 - workshops and meetings
 - hosting guest scientists

necessary for an effective bilateral cooperation can be submitted outside the usual deadlines for the duration of the programme's current funding period.

For more information, please contact:

DFG: tel. +49 228 885-2424 or 2488 (Graduiertenkollegs)
NWO: tel. +31 70 3440 853 / 630

Guidelines for Proposals

The joint proposals in the bilateral cooperation programme should be submitted in English. In the following you will find a list of items that should minimally be addressed in the proposal. DFG and NWO will endeavour to evaluate proposals jointly as far as their respective rules of procedure permit. Otherwise, DFG will mainly focus its assessment procedure on the German part, NWO on the Dutch part, but both organisations are free to comment on the quality of the proposal components of the counterpart.

There are no deadlines for sending in the joint proposals for the cooperation between Graduiertenkollegs and Research Schools. However, DFG and NWO will have two decision moments a year (October and April). Hence, the applicants are advised to take these dates into account and the fact that it takes four to six months in general to process and evaluate the proposals. The same is applicable for NWO regarding the cooperation between research groups in bilateral research programmes.

List of items that should minimally be addressed in the proposal:

General items (please, mention the first 5 items on page 1 of the joint proposal)

1. Project title
2. Addresses of the participating German and Dutch co-ordinators (name, affiliation, address, telephone, fax, e-mail).
3. Indication of the research disciplines involved
4. Period for which funding is requested and proposed starting date
5. English summary of the proposal (not more than 30 lines; this will be used to give general information on the proposal to the deciding bodies and - once it is approved - the public)
6. Project description: outline of the aims of the proposal, methods and work plan. The contents of this section depend on the kind of proposal: for cooperation between Graduiertenkollegs and Research Schools (e.g. paragraph 2 of the joint brochure) additional information is necessary on the training programme etc. These are specified in paragraph 6.2. For cooperation between research groups in bilateral research programmes (e.g. paragraph 3 of the joint brochure) a description of the items under paragraph 6.1 is sufficient.

6.1 Cooperation between research groups in bilateral research programmes

The proposal should describe in detail the common research objectives / complementary potential of the participating research teams from both countries, such as:

- a) The research aims of the programme and expected added value of the cooperation
- b) Its components and their interconnection, methods and work-plan
- c) The state of the art of current research in the field and identification of the problems
- d) Participants' previous work in the field (including relevant publications)
- e) Details of collaboration and coordination between the partners.

The proposal should further include:

- Up to 5 previous publications of relevance to the proposed research and training programme
- Affiliation with (inter)national research projects (EU-programmes, world wide programmes, national priority programmes)
- Details of mobility: since one of the main goals of the bilateral DFG-NWO programme is to encourage the exchange between scientists across the border, details are requested on the mobility plans, such as specification of the scientists expected to travel, institutional affiliation, host institution, length of stay
- A description of the infrastructure available to both partners (staff, research facilities, space, other)
- Motivation and specification of the funds requested

6.2 Cooperation between Graduiertenkollegs and Research Schools

In addition to a description of the research programme (see paragraph 6.1) according to the above guidelines, the proposals should contain the following additional information:

- f) Proposed theses topics, if appropriate.
- g) Description of the research training programme: aims, scope, curriculum, duration. Existing PhD training programme (e.g. Graduiertenkolleg, Onderzoekscholen) participating in the proposal.
- h) Details of training and organisation of the curriculum (including methodology of research training, e.g. use of new media / technology).
 - Details of the exchange programme for participating graduate students, scientific guidance (e.g. by an Advisory Board).
 - Number of doctoral students envisaged (by counterpart).
 - Which institutions will award the doctoral degrees? Are joint degrees envisaged?
 - Relationship of the *Graduiertenkolleg* to other local research facilities, especially those participating in the proposal
 - Progress monitoring
 - Compatibility of the degree(s) to be conferred with the relevant statutes of the host university
 - Criteria for admission of fellows to the doctoral school

If the proposal is put forward by already established PhD training programmes, please append a copy of the original proposal. The description of the research and study programmes of the new joint proposal may refer to this and concentrate on additions and modifications due to the cooperation. Please give details on the individual PhD students and scientists involved in the exchange:

- name
- thesis subject
- thesis advisor(s)
- institutional affiliation,
- host institution,
- length of stay,
- is the doctoral student recipient of a fellowship or other source of funding?
- Are the theses advised by professors at both institutions?

Specific items for the German partner

- Project Co-ordinator (*Sprecher*) (name, affiliation, address, telephone, fax, e-mail)
- Further German participants (name, affiliation, address, telephone, fax, e-mail)
- German summary of the proposal (not more than 30 lines; this will be used to give general information on the proposal to the deciding bodies and - once it is approved - the German public)
- Budget / funds requested from DFG
- Signature of the German project coordinator.

If the proposal is put forward in the context of already established projects, please append a copy of the original proposal. The description of the research programme of the new joint proposal may refer to this and concentrate on additions and modifications due to the cooperation.

All proposals should follow the relevant proposal guidelines available under <http://www.dfg.de/foerder/formulare/index.html>

Specific items for the Dutch partner

- Project Co-ordinator (name, affiliation, address, telephone, fax, e-mail)
- Further Dutch participants and composition of the research group (names and titles, affiliation, address, telephone, fax, e-mail, fraction of working time to be spent on the project)
- Dutch summary of the proposal (not more than 30 lines; this will be used to give general information on the proposal to the deciding bodies and - once it is approved - the Dutch public)
- Budget / funds requested from NWO:
 - * Travel and subsistence of
 - academic staff
 - PhD students (aio's, oio's, bursalen)
 - postdocs
 - visiting scientists
 - * Workshops, summerschools, conferences
 - * Additional research costs
- Approval by relevant authorities at the university (in general the dean of Faculty) to provide the required infrastructure
- Signature of Dutch project co-ordinator.

Applicants from the Netherlands are kindly referred to NWO's general granting conditions ("Procedures en voorwaarden voor subsidieverlening NWO"), which will be applicable for the bilateral DFG-NWO programme as well.

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