

Public Service of Wallonia (SPW) Economy Employment Research

TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH DEPARTMENT
RESEARCH PROGRAMMES DEPARTMENT

BEWARE FELLOWSHIPS 2

Call for proposals

Important dates call 2023_2(#7)

15 September 2023
8 January 2024 at 12 am
February 2024
End of March 2024

Launch of the call
Closing date for submissions of detailed proposals
Selection committee
Agreement on selected projects

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Please read this document carefully and in its entirety before submitting a research project.

Only the French version of this document is authentic. The translation is provided for information purposes only.

1. Context

This call is made, on the one hand, in the context of the introduction of an integrated research policy that is more than ever an essential tool for providing a change that will enable the creation of sustainable jobs and the economic redeployment of Wallonia.

As far as possible, it is a response to the Regional Policy Declaration, in particular Chapter 7.5, which stipulates,

"(The Government) will increase support for the mobility programmes of international researchers within Walloon research and innovation stakeholders."

On the other hand, the European and international dimensions of researcher mobility fit within the framework of the European Research Area (ERA). Based on the observation that European excellence in research and innovation is too often dispersed (80% of public research in Europe is carried out at national level, primarily as part of national or regional research programmes) and as a result poorly exploited, in January 2000 the European Commission proposed the creation of a European Research Area.

Its main goals are cooperation and the coordination of national research activities to improve the European competitiveness. One way to achieve it is through the circulation of knowledge, which involves the geographical (transnational) and/or sector-based mobility (partnerships and gateways between the public and private sectors) of researchers.

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2. General description

This call for proposals aims to promote the mobility of researchers (a) who are highly qualified towards companies (b) and approved research centres, universities or research centres backed by colleges in Wallonia/Wallonia-Brussels Federation (c).

In fact, the proposal must be structured around the trio (a) + (b) + (c).

The stay of these researchers must lead to an increase in scientific and technological potential in Wallonia through, such as:

- the development and validation of new products, processes or services intended to be promoted industrially in the short term, or
- the acquisition and development of a new technology, and
- the development of the skills of the researcher.

The researcher's stay in Wallonia will be balanced between supervisors (b) and (c). This stay must last at least 18 months and no longer than three years. It can only be interrupted

by a stay of maximum two weeks a year (can be combined) outside Wallonia, to be agreed between the parties.

The research deliverable must be unique, quantifiable, clearly identified, exhaustively described, and justified in relation to its usage potential and its innovative nature.

3. Who can submit a proposal?

The researcher (the word is used in a gender-neutral form)

The researcher (a) must be identified when the proposal is submitted.

He must hold a doctorate or demonstrate equivalent research experience (with a minimum of four years). On the closing date for the call for proposals, the researcher must be in a situation of transnational mobility, i.e. have spent less than 12 months in Belgium over the last 36 months on a professional basis and with an employment contract.

For the researcher who will need a visa and/or work permit, the host may use a "[scientific visa](#)" which exempts the researcher from requiring a work permit and offers a faster process for the granting of the residence permit.

The researcher may not be replaced in the event of withdrawal or abandonment.

The co-supervisors

It is essential to distinguish two types of supervisor: the business (b) and the approved research centres, universities or research centres backed by the colleges in Wallonia/Wallonia-Brussels Federation (c).

(b) is defined in Article 7 of the Decree of 3 July 2008 on support for research, development and innovation in Wallonia:

- "small business": any business established as a commercial company that, unless otherwise stated, has at least one place of business in Wallonia and meets the definition of small businesses or micro-businesses contained in the Appendix of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty;
- "medium-sized business": any business established as a company that, unless otherwise stated, has at least one place of business in Wallonia and meets the definition of medium-sized businesses contained in the Appendix of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty;

- "large business": any business established as a commercial company that, unless otherwise stated, has at least one place of business in Wallonia and is neither a small business nor a medium-sized business;
- "non-autonomous business of limited size": any large business that would meet the definition of small business or medium-sized business if it were autonomous within the meaning of the Appendix to Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty;

The business must have already been created when the call was launched.

It is strongly recommended that the business contacts the Financial Management Department of the SPW Research in the event of any doubt as to its eligibility.

(c) is either:

(c1) an **accredited research centre**, i.e. a body whose main aim is to carry out research and offer services that contribute to the technological and economic development of Wallonia, and that meets the definition contained in Article 10, 2° of the Decree of 3 July 2008 on support for research, development and innovation in Wallonia. The category (c1) includes the Walloon Centre for Agronomic Research (CRA-W) in Gembloux, the Public Service Scientific Institute (ISSeP) in Liège, the Royal Military Academy (RMA), in Brussels and the Von Karman Institute (VKI), in Rhode-Saint-Genèse.

(c2) a **university unit** is any service, laboratory, team or other entity that reports to one or more university institutions organised or subsidised by the French Community and that does not have a separate legal status from this institution or these institutions.

(c3) a **university college unit** or **research centre associated with a university college**, i.e. any service, laboratory, team or other entity that depends on one or more higher education institutions referred to in the decree of the Council of the French-speaking Community of 5 August 1995 establishing the general organisation of higher education in higher education institutions or in the decree of the Council of the German-speaking Community of 27 June 2005 establishing an autonomous higher education institution.

In the case where (b) is a spin-off, a spin-out, a subsidiary or has an organic link with (c), it will be necessary to justify the roles and contributions of each (tasks in the work plan must be assigned according to the quality of the partners).

4. Collaboration agreements

The co-supervisors (b) and (c) are the owners of the research results.

The way in which the results are used will be set out in a collaboration agreement that will be annexed at submission stage (see point 6).

This agreement covers the current respective rights, confidentiality, publications, the protection, ownership and use of future results and the modalities for the scientific and functional support of the researcher.

At the end of the BEWARE Fellowship 2 mandate, the parties (a), (b) and (c) will be authorised to continue their research for scientific purposes.

5. Legal basis and budget

The modalities for the granting of the aid, as well as the extent and definition of the admissible expenditure, are those of the Decree of 3 July 2008 on support for research, development and innovation in Wallonia and its implementation decrees. The text of this decree can be found [here](#). Particular attention will be paid to the concepts of "experimental development" and "industrial research" and to the execution of these by the co-sponsors. Partners (c2) and (c3) cannot be funded to carry out experimental development tasks.

The Walloon Government decrees applicable to this call for proposals can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

The text on the European framework for State aid for research, development and innovation is available [here](#).

Financing is available for the performance of the research. It involves the granting of subsidies relating exclusively to:

- (1) the remuneration of the researcher using the postdoctoral researcher scale
- (2) a fixed annual amount of €6,000 as operating costs
- (3) a fixed annual amount of €3,000 to cover the researcher's mobility costs; to be paid to them in full.

The funding (as a %) is granted as follows:

	SPW contribution	Contribution of (b)	Contribution of (c1)	Contribution of (c2)	Contribution of (c3)
(c1)	75	15	10	-	-
(c2)	85	15	-	0	-
(c3)	85	15	-	-	0

The partners may not claim any share of the overheads.

The grant agreement will not authorise any budget increase after the signature of the agreement.

The aim is to grant 75 mandates lasting 18 to 36 months.

6. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, all proposals must meet the following conditions:

The full application must:

- be submitted online before midday on (see the date on the front page) by the partner (c) in collaboration with the partner (b) and the identified researcher, who will meet the conditions set out in point 3 of this call for proposals and
- be accompanied by a formal commitment between these partners, i.e. (b) and (c1), (c2) or (c3), regarding the performance of the research

The research:

- aims to develop a single project, single process or a single new service or to acquire and use new knowledge likely to contribute to the development of the SME or the industrial fabric of Wallonia
- includes a credible plan for the use of the results
- cannot have already received public funding, and
- fits within the powers of the Walloon Region

Any proposals that do not meet these criteria will be rejected.

An appeal can be made against this decision (by return email addressed to the programme managers) within seven days of notification.

7a. Criteria for the evaluation and selection of projects

The dossiers will only be assessed based on the documents submitted by the call closure date and in accordance with the following criteria:

Selection criteria	Thres hold	Points
Candidate	60%	30
- professional merits of the researcher (including academic and industrial achievements, sense of innovation, publications, etc.) - ability to achieve a leadership position - synergy of the researcher's expertise with the research project		
Research	60%	25
- innovative nature of the research (originality and relevance of the research objectives)	60%	15
	60%	10

- quality, feasibility and relevance of the research (appropriateness of the approach and methodology, soundness of the work plan within the given time frame (respect of timing) ...)		
Host institution:	60%	25
- scientific excellence of the partner (c) - clarity of the respective roles of the two partners (b) and (c) - suitability of partners with the expertise required by the research project - setting up the conditions for carrying out the research project - quality of mentoring and supervision of the candidate - technical assistance and training provided by both partners (b) and (c)		
Impact	60%	20
- valorisation of innovation - researcher's career, including international networking, and the candidate's career perspectives after the BEWARE fellowship - quality of the knowledge transfer plan (between the three partners, (a), (b) and (c)) - potential impact of the research project (scientific, economic and social) and valorisation of innovation - for both co-sponsors - at EU level - suggested dissemination activities (presentations in Belgium and internationally) and communication (plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results, data management plan)	60%	15
- sustainable development	60%	5
Total threshold	60%	100

The final score (/100) is the arithmetic mean of the scores given by the SPW research evaluator and the two international experts. It is validated by the three evaluators. In the case of a difference of opinion, a consensus is established under the authority of the SPW research.

At the end of the evaluation, the proposals will be divided into four categories:

category	comments	condition
A priority	Excellent quality proposal selected for funding	The proposal is above the threshold for each criterion (and therefore for the overall valuation). The budget is available.
B reserve list	Excellent or very high-quality proposal that will be funded if the budget is available	The proposal is above the threshold for each criterion (and therefore for the overall valuation). The budget is not available.
C no budget available	Excellent or very high-quality proposal that will not be funded due to a lack of budget	The proposal is above the threshold for each criterion (and therefore for the overall valuation) and is on the reserve list. The budget is not available.

D not selected	Proposal of insufficient quality not selected for funding	At least one of the project's selection criteria does not meet the threshold.
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In addition to this *ex-ante* evaluation, which is decisive for the selection of projects, an *ex-post* evaluation will be carried out at the end of the project to determine its anticipated or unexpected economic, social and environmental impacts.

7b. Specific questions about the researcher

In addition to the proposal, the researcher must also attach a Personal Career Plan Project (PCPP). The PCPP is redrafted by the researcher and the co-sponsors. Its goal is to put in place a research training programme and scientific objectives that best meet the researcher's personal needs. This plan can be used as a reference by the researcher or for each half-yearly report, to monitor progress and where necessary take corrective measures to achieve the professional development objective.

The elements below may be useful when drafting the PCPP:

1. In terms of career resumption:

- focus on (1) the continuation of an interrupted scientific career (obstacles to the reintegration of entrepreneur scientists in university careers, search for new opportunities, continuation of an interrupted career, etc.); (2) development in the chosen area, whether in the academic sector or not, and (3) the gaining of an independent position with better career prospects.

2. In terms of a career plan:

- acquire, diversify and consolidate scientific, technical (advanced, experimental, etc.) knowledge that is transferable, complementary and personal
- demonstrate that previous experience and that acquired during the mandate form the perfect combination for the rest of their career
- be offered new career possibilities and maximise their employability and/or work in a stimulating multidisciplinary environment
- obtain an independent research position
- extend their personal research networks (national, European and international), increase their collaboration and cooperation to gain greater visibility
- receive exposure in the non-academic sector
- make use of an emerging laboratory or research area: contribute to progress in the area or within the infrastructure
- draft a credible career plan

3. In terms of a reintegration plan:

- have new career opportunities
- develop an international network

- achieve a position of professional maturity

7b. Salary grid

The salary grid for researchers can be found at www.bewarejobs.be

8. Selection procedure and right of appeal

Each eligible proposal is evaluated by three experts: one from the SPW Economy Employment Research and two other independent external experts.

The projects are ranked based on the criteria listed in point 7a.

This ranking is then submitted to a validation committee. This committee is made up of:

- the Director General of the SPW Economy Employment Research (or their representative)
- the manager of the Research Department of the Walloon Business Union (or their representative)
- four representatives from the Economic, Social and Environmental Council of Wallonia (scientific policy unit), in particular from:
 - o the Walloon Union of Enterprises
 - o university sector
 - o university colleges sector
 - o accredited research centres sector
- a representative of the SPW 'sustainable development and ethics' department
- a representative of the Walloon Minister for research and innovation
- a representative of the Walloon Minister for economics

The managers of the call for proposals act as secretaries for the committee.

The committee members meet free of charge.

The committee may be supported by an ethics committee if necessary.

The managers of the call for proposals inform the beneficiaries of the ranking results without delay. They make public the ranking and the evaluation, which may be contested based only on their procedural aspects, within 30 calendar days, by means of a [notification](#) to the managers.

9. Agreement

The selected projects are the subject of agreements setting out the modalities according to which the Walloon Region will grant a subsidy to the beneficiaries.

10. Submission of a proposal

At the request of the supervisor(s), an information meeting may be organised between the managers of the call for proposals and the project partners before the final submission of a proposal.

The final detailed proposal is submitted [online](#) at the latest on the date stated at the top of this document (see “guide for applicants”)

11. Useful links

The BEWARE programme has its own [website](#).

12. Important remark

Even if topic of the research is totally free, in order to ensure that the project is in line with the needs of Walloon companies, it is advisable that the project is in line with the regional strategy of the sector in terms of technological innovation and priority investments, or in promising themes for Wallonia: [the Strategic Innovation Domains of the Intelligent Specialisation Strategy \(S3\)](#) (website in French only) or the domains that are specifically highlighted in the Regional Policy Declaration, such as the space domain or cyber security.