

Updated: April 22nd, 2024

Q&A: Call for Proposals for the Competition Policy and Power Research Fund

This document will be updated on a weekly basis. If you would like to submit any questions, please send an email to competitionfund@somo.nl.

Timeline

1. Is this call open on an annual basis or is it a one-time opportunity?

It is a one-time opportunity. In case additional funding is secured and the call for proposals is a success, we may decide to open another call for proposals in the future.

2. How soon after approval must the work start?

Our expectation is that projects will start within three months of notification of the grant. If this poses any challenges, please let us know.

3. Do you expect research to be presented at a conference in 2025?

The purpose of the conference in 2025 is networking, in addition to sharing in-progress work as well as finished work. There is no expectation of finished work.

Format

4. Are references and citations allowed in the project proposal descriptions within the word limits? If so, what format is preferred?

The word limit does not include references and citations. Please try to minimize the amount of references to enhance readability. There is no preferred format for references. You can also use hyperlinks.

5. Are hyperlinks to materials specific to the proposal allowed? For example, figures or conceptual diagrams explaining proposed methodologies.

Yes, hyperlinks are allowed. Please note that the adjudicating panel will not review the additional materials, but they can serve as background material if clarification is needed.

6. Is a CV required to be submitted as a separate document? If for all, in what format should the summary of qualifications for associated investigators be submitted?

Applicants are requested to include a résumé for the lead investigator as well as summaries of the qualifications of associated investigators with the application. Preferably this is an annex of the application form (in the same document), but it can also be submitted as a separate document.

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7. In what format would you accept the budget proposal?

The budget can be included in the application form or submitted on a separate sheet (Word or Excel).

Budget

8. What is meant by "Personnel costs by person involved"?

Personnel refers to the cost of time of people working on the research, such as staff time (salary).

9. Is it possible to hire a research assistant?

Yes, it is possible to hire a research assistant

10. What are the parameters regarding utilization of grant funds? Could the grant funds be allocated towards purchasing data access, organizing workshops, facilitating travel, attending summer schools, etc.?

Activities to share and workshop the research with key stakeholders can be covered by the fund, but the expectation is the funding will primarily support research (incl. the time of researchers, purchasing data, etc.) We will assume at least 60% will be for research.

11. Can I add overhead costs to the budget? Is there a maximum?

Yes, you can add overhead costs. The overhead budget is fixed at a maximum of 10%.

12. Is the overhead budget included in the maximum grant amount of 60,000 USD?

Yes, the maximum 10% overhead amount must be included.

13. Can funding be provided for subjects participating in experiments?

Yes, but we would need to see the ethical and informed consent elements explained in the proposal.

14. If I need to hire a teaching assistant to allow me to dedicate more time to the research, can those costs be included in the budget?

No, all costs in the budget should be related to the research.

Eligibility

15. Are first year PhD students eligible?

Yes, we welcome early career researchers, including first year PhD students.

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16. To what extent do you expect an academic approach in research?

The Fund is open to civil society and academic researchers and encourages innovative approaches. We do not prefer any specific research approach. The proposals will be assessed based on the specific objectives and the credibility of proposed research approach.

17. Are individuals allowed to apply, who are not associated with a civil society or academic organisation?

Yes, if they are an expert in their field and their proposal meet the criteria.

18. Can a consulting company submit a proposal?

Yes, but we would expect that the budget submitted is for actual cost coverage only, and there is no profit element included.

19. Are individuals permitted to submit multiple projects collaborating with different teams, which address distinct topics within the ones listed in the call?

Yes, individuals can be involved in multiple proposals with different teams, meaning the composition of the teams cannot be the same. If an individual is the lead researcher for one proposal, they could still be part of a team on the second.

Research Methods

20. Are only new empirical approaches considered, or are novel conceptual or theoretical approaches also welcome?

Novel conceptual and theoretical approaches are welcome.

21. Are there any restrictions on the analytical methods used?

No, there is no restriction on the research or analytical methods used, provided the proposed method is credible.