Computing Time at National Computer Facilities

2026

Call for Proposals

NWO

2026

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1 Introduction

In this Call for Proposals, information is provided about the proposal procedure for access to national computing facilities and expertise in the '2026 Computing Time at National Computer Facilities' round of proposals.
This Call for Proposals falls under the responsibility of the Dutch Research Council (NWO).

It includes information about the aim of the programme (Chapter 2), conditions to apply for computing time (Chapter 3) and how proposals are assessed (Chapter 4). You will need this information to be able to submit a proposal for computing time. Chapter 5 describes the obligations that apply if you are allocated computing time. Chapter 6 contains contact information.

1.1 Background

NWO Domain Science is responsible for the allocation of access rights (computing time) for the national computer facilities managed and performed by SURF. This round of proposals is concerned with proposals for access to national computer facilities and the associated data services and expertise for research in cases where institutions' own facilities and expertise are not sufficient. Services covered by this call: The Snellius supercomputer, Data Processing (Grid/Spider), HPC Cloud (via SURF Research Cloud), storage and any support by SURF. This call also covers the Netherlands' allocation of the LUMI pre-exascale supercomputer[1]. This brochure provides information about the procedure and possibilities to request access to these national computer facilities (and LUMI). The conditions for this Call for Proposals apply to proposals for both large and small amounts of computing time. Under this Call for Proposals, storage is not intended as a long-term solution and will only be available for the allocated period.

Large computing time proposals

This call is intended for large computing time proposals at national computer facilities. A researcher cannot submit more than one such proposal per service in a calendar year. These are proposals for more than 1,000,000 SBU (System Billing Units, Subsection 3.2.1) on the Snellius supercomputer, more than 1,000,000 CPU core hours or 10,000 GPU hours on Data Processing (Grid/Spider) and more than 50,000 CPU core hours or 5,000 GPU hours on HPC Cloud (via SURF Research Cloud). This call also covers computing time proposals that require many terabytes of storage. There are limits on the amounts of storage and support provided. For more information on storage, see Subsection 3.2.1. Large computing time allocations provide a maximum of two years of access to the services requested per proposal.

[1] The LUMI pre-exascale supercomputer is a European Tier-0 system owned by the European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking (EuroHPC JU). The system is managed by CSC - IT Center for Science and the LUMI consortium and is located in Kajaani, Finland. The Netherlands has an allocation for the LUMI system, which this call covers. Besides the Dutch allocation, it is also possible to apply for access to EuroHPC JU's allocation for the LUMI pre-exascale supercomputer via EuroHPC JU's Access Calls.

LUMI proposals

For large computing time proposals for e.g. artificial intelligence (AI) and Large Language Models, it is also possible to apply for capacity on the LUMI pre-exascale supercomputer. Large computing time allocations provide a maximum of one year of access to LUMI. Applicants for LUMI computing time are asked to first gain experience working with LUMI and to prepare their project for a large computing time proposal via NWO. This can be accomplished using a pilot proposal via SURF or one of the EuroHPC JU calls. LUMI pilot proposals are limited to 500,000 CPU core hours, 14,000 GPU hours and 100,000 TB hours of storage[2]. Allocations for pilot proposals also provide a maximum of one year of access to LUMI.

Small computing time proposals

For proposals for amounts of computing time less than or equal to the described limits for large computing time proposals, you can apply for access directly **via SURF** at: https://www.surf.nl/en/services (under 'Compute'). Small computing time proposals are mainly intended as short pilots to get to know the system or to support small-scale studies, for example as part of a transition from local to national computer facilities.
A researcher cannot submit more than one computing time proposal per service directly via SURF in a calendar year. Furthermore, research groups are encouraged to combine computing tasks into a single larger proposal wherever possible. There are also limits on the amounts of storage and support provided. For a more detailed explanation, see Subsection 3.2.1.
Small computing time allocations provide a maximum of one year of access to the national computer facilities per proposal.

1.1.1 Changes compared to the previous Call for Proposals

A number of changes have been implemented since the previous Call for Proposals for Computing Time. This is a summary of the most important changes.

- In Subsection 1.1, 'Background':
  - Clarification that storage is not intended as a long-term solution.
  - Clarification of maximum number of small computing time proposals allowed.
  - Request to combine small computing time proposals into one larger proposal where possible.
- In Subsection 1.2, 'Available computing time and data storage', some of the totals have changed and Cloud Research Consultancy is no longer included in the call.
- 'Focus on sustainability' has been added to Subsection 2.2.1, replacing 'Tailor-made impact'.
- Subsection 5.1.2, 'Data management plan', now includes the instruction to submit a data management plan in advance along with the computing time proposal.

1.2 Available computing time and data storage

Total computing time and data storage available for computing time proposals in 2026, both large and small:

- Snellius supercomputer: 1,902 million SBU (1,283 million SBU CPU thin nodes, 426 million SBU GPU nodes, 184 million SBU CPU fat nodes, 9 million SBU CPU high-memory nodes), with 9,896 TB of Snellius project space
- LUMI pre-exascale supercomputer: 24.44 million CPU core hours and 1.09 million GPU hours, with 10.1 million TB hours of storage

[2] For the LUMI pre-exascale supercomputer, data storage is measured in TB hours. An hour's storage of 1 TB of data is equal to 1 TB hour. You can use 100,000 TB hours to store 11,4 TB of data for a year, for example, but you can also choose to store a larger amount of data for less time. For more information, see the LUMI billing policy: https://docs.lumi-supercomputer.eu/runjobs/lumi_env/billing/

- HPC Cloud (via SURF Research Cloud): 26.28 million CPU core hours and 1.33 million GPU hours, with 846 TB of online storage
- 15,000 TB of Data Archive offline tape storage
- Data Processing (Grid and/or Spider): 150 million CPU core hours and 0.28 million GPU hours, with 28,000 TB of online storage and 14,000 TB of Grid offline tape storage
- 200 TB of Research Drive storage

1.3 Submission deadlines

The deadline for submitting a proposal under this Call for Proposals is Thursday 31 December 2026, before 14:00:00 CET. Proposals can be submitted at any time. There are no intermediate deadlines. If applicable: A request for assessment of an organisation based in the Netherlands (see Subsection 3.1.1) prior to submitting a computing time proposal will take approximately three weeks to process.

2 Aim

This chapter describes the aim of the programme and its societal impact.

2.1 Programme objective

The aim of this programme is to make national computer facilities accessible to researchers for high-quality scientific research projects that would benefit significantly from the use of these advanced computer systems (including LUMI) and expertise.
Researchers are invited to submit proposals for computing time at national computer facilities, along with the associated data services and expertise.

NWO is explicitly seeking to stimulate several aspects:
- Efficient scientific use of the national computer facilities, including LUMI
- Support for high-level scientific research using the national computer facilities
- Optimal access to the national computer facilities for researchers

2.2 Societal impact

Fresh knowledge and insights derived from academic research can play vital roles in finding solutions to present and future societal issues. Examples include the energy transition, climate change, health and care. Through interaction and alignment between researchers and potential knowledge users, the chance of knowledge utilisation increases and with it the chance of societal impact. Societal impact in this sense refers to changes resulting partly or entirely from knowledge and skills gained through research. These are changes that contribute to the health of people, animals, the planet and society, both now and for future generations. Through its policy on impact, NWO promotes the potential contribution of research to societal issues by encouraging productive interactions with societal stakeholders. This applies to both the development and implementation of research. It does so in a manner appropriate to the aim of the funding scheme. NWO encourages researchers to adopt a broad perspective when considering the potential desirable and undesirable effects of their research.

2.2.1 Focus on sustainability

With regard to sustainability, we would like to emphasise the importance of effective and efficient use of computing capacity in science. Sustainability is a responsibility shared by all. While scientific research has many positive effects, we should remain aware of the environmental impact of large-scale computing infrastructure. Computing time and storage come at a cost; both financially and environmentally. We therefore encourage applicants to be deliberate in their use of these resources. In 2024, researchers' use of Snellius consumed approximately 2.3 GWh of energy. As an average Dutch household consumes approximately 2.8 MWh annually, Snellius's consumption is comparable to that of 820 households. SURF is committed to energy efficiency, but users also need to take their responsibility regarding the efficient use of computing capacity and storage.

Researchers should consciously consider computing capacity and storage at all stages of their proposal submission and research. For example:
1) In a proposal's design phase: pay attention to aspects such as data re-use and consider combining several smaller computing time proposals into one group proposal. This also reduces the proposal processing workload and supports more efficient processing. Because the committee on the Scientific Use of Supercomputers (WGS) has better insight, it can provide more targeted advice (see Subsection 3.2.2, Types of proposals).

2) Design your proposal for efficiency and optimise computing tasks wherever possible. Critically review computing time requirements and include these deliberations in your proposal.
3) This Call for Proposals is not intended for long-term storage. Make a plan for data management and storage beforehand, including for after the research is complete, and coordinate these plans with SURF. Allocation of storage space depends on the nationally available capacity (see Subsection 5.1.2, Data management).

3 Conditions for applicants

This chapter sets out the conditions computing time proposals must meet. It starts by describing who may apply for computing time (Subsection 3.1) and for which purposes (Subsection 3.2). This is followed by a description of the conditions for preparation and submission of a proposal (Subsections 3.3 and 3.4) and the specific allocation conditions (Subsection 3.5).

3.1 Who can apply

To be eligible to submit a proposal, researchers must have either a tenured appointment (and therefore hold a paid position for an indefinite period) or a tenure track appointment at one of the research organisations listed below. For proposals for small amounts of computing time only, a main applicant with a temporary appointment may also submit a proposal under the following conditions:

- The applicant's appointment will continue for at least as long as the project for which computing time is being requested; and
- The research organisation guarantees the computing time project's duration and completion.

- Research universities, universities of applied sciences , as referred to in Article 1.8(1) of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act, and the universities referred to in the Policy Rules for Universities in the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- University medical centres, by which is meant teaching hospitals as referred to in Article 1.13(1) of the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act
- Institutes affiliated with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) or NWO
- Netherlands Cancer Institute
- Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen
- Naturalis Biodiversity Center
- Advanced Research Centre for NanoLithography (ARCNL)
- Princess Máxima Centre
- TO2, the federation of Dutch knowledge institutes for applied research: Deltares, Maritime Research Institute Netherlands (Marin), Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO), Netherlands Aerospace Centre (NLR) and Wageningen University & Research (WUR)
- National Institute of Public Health and the Environment (RIVM)
- Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI)
- IHE Delft Institute for Water Education

People with zero-hours contracts are excluded from submitting proposals.

It may be that an applicant's tenure track employment contract ends before the intended completion date of the project for which computing time is being requested, or that the applicant's tenured contract ends before this date due to their reaching retirement age. In that case, the applicant must attach an employer's statement in which the research organisation concerned guarantees that the project and all project members for whom computing time is being requested will be adequately supervised for the full duration of the project.

Applicants with a part-time contract must be able to guarantee adequate supervision of the project and all project members for whom computing time is being requested.

In science, women are seriously under-represented and disadvantaged in terms of career advancement. Accordingly, proposals by women are explicitly encouraged.

Additional conditions (applicable to both the main applicant and co-applicants):

Applicants and co-applicants may be affiliated with the research organisations named in this subsection or other research organisations as referred to in Article 1.1, Subsection 4 of the NWO Grant Rules 2024, that comply with the following cumulative conditions:

The organisation must:
- Be based in the Netherlands;
- Be a foundation (*stichting*), association (*vereniging*) or public legal entity (*publiekrechtelijke rechtspersoon*). All other legal entities, including private and public limited companies, are excluded;
- Primarily conduct fundamental or industrial research or experimental development independently;
- Be able to confirm the maintenance of separate accounts for economic and non-economic activities by the organisation and deny the receipt of preferential access to the organisation's research results by enterprises with a decisive influence on the organisation.

Please note: Prior to submission of a large or small computing time proposal, NWO will assess whether the organisation complies with Article 1.1, subsection 4 of the NWO Grant Rules and is thus eligible to participate as an applicant or co-applicant based on the above conditions. This assessment will take approximately three weeks. It also helps NWO ensure compliance with regulations prohibiting state aid.

To enable the assessment to be carried out, the intended applicant or co-applicant's organisation must submit the following documents by email to rekentijd@nwo.nl:
- A recent extract from the Chamber of Commerce
- A deed of establishment and/or current articles of association
- The most recently available annual accounts, including an audit report[3]
- A completed Research Organisation Statement, which is available on the allocation page of this Call for Proposals

Documents must be in English or Dutch. Other relevant documents may be included as well. NWO may also request additional information if the above documents do not adequately demonstrate that the organisation is permitted to apply as an applicant or co-applicant.

If the intended applicant or co-applicant's organisation has been assessed and found to be compliant with these conditions as part of another NWO programme, please contact NWO at the above email address as early as possible to discuss whether the organisation must be assessed again.

If the intended applicant or co-applicant's organisation fails to submit the documents required for this assessment on time, NWO cannot accept the organisation as a co-applicant.

[3] No audit report is necessary for organisations not legally required to have their annual accounts audited. However, such organisations must be able to provide proof of exemption from this legal requirement.

3.1.1 Main and co-applicants

The main applicant must submit the proposal through ISAAC, NWO's online application system. During the assessment procedure, NWO will communicate with the main applicant.
Once a proposal has been selected for allocation, the main applicant becomes the project manager and contact person for NWO. The main applicant's research organisation is designated as the main beneficiary and becomes the grant administrator.
Co-applicants play an active role in a project's implementation. Project managers, sub-project managers and beneficiaries share responsibility for the implementation of the entire project.

3.2 What can be applied for

Proposals for allocation of computing time at advanced national computer facilities can be submitted to NWO.
This call is intended for large computing time proposals:

- More than 1,000,000 SBU on the **Snellius** supercomputer (CPU and/or GPU), possibly in combination with terabytes of project space and/or Data Archive offline tape storage
- More than 500,000 CPU core hours and/or 14,000 GPU hours and/or 100,000 TB hours of storage on the **LUMI** pre-exascale supercomputer, possibly in combination with terabytes of online and/or offline storage
- More than 1,000,000 CPU core hours or 10,000 GPU hours of **Data Processing (Grid and/or Spider)** and/or more than 200 TB of online data storage and/or more than 300 TB of Grid offline tape storage
- More than 50,000 CPU core hours of 5,000 GPU hours on the **HPC Cloud (via SURF Research Cloud)**, possibly in combination with terabytes of online storage and/or Data Archive offline tape storage

For small computing time proposals, you can apply for access directly via SURF's request portal at https://www.surf.nl/en/small-compute-applications-nwo as long as the proposal meets the following conditions:

- Up to 1,000,000 SBU on the **Snellius** supercomputer (CPU and/or GPU), possibly in combination with up to 10 TB of project space and/or up to 50 TB of Data Archive
- Up to 500,000 CPU core hours and/or 14,000 GPU hours for pilot proposals for the **LUMI** pre-exascale supercomputer, possibly in combination with up to 100,000 TB hours of storage
- Up to 1,000,000 CPU core hours or 10,000 GPU hours of **Data Processing (Grid and/or Spider)**, possibly in combination with up to 200 TB of online data storage and/or up to 300 TB of Grid offline tape storage
- Up to 50,000 CPU core hours or 5,000 GPU hours on the **HPC Cloud (via SURF Research Cloud),** possibly in combination with up to 2 TB of online storage and/or up to 50 TB of Data Archive offline tape storage

3.2.1 Accounting units

Snellius supercomputer

Snellius allocations of computing time are measured in CPU core hours and GPU hours. Storage is measured in terabytes. A proposal should include specifications of the resources required in the appropriate units, where the number of core hours or *System Billing Units (SBU)* is most relevant. One hour of use of one thin node core is billed at 1 SBU. (For more information, go to: https://servicedesk.surf.nl/wiki/display/WIKI/Snellius+partitions+and+accounting)

The proposal form can be used to request various data storage services at the computing facility. These data services must be directly necessary for the computing tasks and are only available for the duration of the project. The maximum amount of storage that can be allocated is determined in consultation with SURF and depends on the capacity available at the time.

LUMI pre-exascale supercomputer

LUMI allocations of computing time are measured in CPU core hours and GPU hours. Storage is measured in TB hours.
(For more information, go to: https://docs.lumi-supercomputer.eu/runjobs/lumi_env/billing/)

Grid Data Processing

For Grid projects, CPU and GPU allocations are converted into priority configurations using a so-called 'fair share' mechanism. These priority configurations ensure continuous availability of a certain number of cores, provided there is also a continuing supply of new computing tasks
(for more information about the fair share mechanism used, see:
https://servicedesk.surf.nl/wiki/display/WIKI/Usage+and+Service+Model).
As the cores are continuously available, the allocated capacity is automatically reached at the end of the computing time allocation. The same applies to storage. Although more cores may be available at times due to underuse by other projects, this will not affect the configured fair share. To ensure continuity of consecutive proposals for Grid computing time, applicants should make sure the start date for a subsequent computing time proposal aligns with the previous allocation's end date.

Data facilities

In practice, amounts of storage may be measured in either TiB/PiB or TB/PB depending on the system. 1 TiB (tebibyte) is 2^{40} bytes, 1 TB (terabyte) is 10^{12} bytes. 1 tebibyte is approximately 10% more than 1 terabyte. The difference becomes greater as the amounts increase.

Expertise and visualisation

Besides computing and data facilities, additional hours of technical expertise may also be required. There may be a need for visualisation or software optimisation, for example. You can enter the required hours of expertise in the proposal form. Hours of expertise are allocated in consultation with SURF depending on available capacity, see: https://www.surf.nl/en/surf-consultancy.

3.2.2 Types of proposals

The 'Computing Time at National Computer Facilities' programme distinguishes the following types of proposals:

Individual proposals

Individual computing time proposals are proposals for the use of one or more of the computer facilities for a single project.

Group proposals

Group computing time proposals are proposals by a research group for the use of one or more of the computer facilities for several projects, submitted in combination. For applicants, a group proposal has the advantage of requiring less effort than multiple individual proposals. It also improves the WGS assessment committee's insight into the links between the various projects being carried out by a research group. Finally, the research group in question gains the flexibility to swap computing time on the same system between different subprojects as needed for the project's full duration.

Follow-up proposals

Follow-up computing time proposals are proposals to extend an existing project with the same name. These can be individual or group proposals. For large computing time proposals only, a follow-up proposal should always include a report on the previously allocated computing time project. If NWO handled the previous computing time project's allocation, this project report must be submitted in ISAAC within three months of this allocation's end. If allocation did not take place via NWO, for example if an earlier small computing time project was requested directly via SURF, the report should be included as an annex to the large follow-up computing time proposal. Reports on previous projects provide the assessment committee with additional information for their assessment of the follow-up proposal.

3.3 Preparing and submitting the proposal

Follow these steps when preparing your computing time proposal:

- Download the proposal form through NWO's ISAAC web application or from the grant page for the funding scheme on the NWO website. Always use the most current proposal form for 2026. Proposal forms from previous years are no longer valid and will not be considered. The 2026 proposal form can be found on the NWO website funding page for this programme.
- Consult SURF's advisors about the technical aspects of your computing time proposal beforehand via servicedesk@surf.nl.
- Complete the proposal form.
- Select and complete the associated technical annexes to the proposal form, removing any irrelevant annexes for computer facilities that won't be used. Save the proposal form as a PDF file and upload it in ISAAC, along with any mandatory annexes.
- Fill in the requested information online in ISAAC.
- Mandatory annex(es):
  i. If a large computing time proposal is a **follow-up proposal**, you must also include a report of the preceding project. The assessment committee will use this report as supplementary information to inform its assessment of the follow-up proposal. The report form can be found on the NWO website's funding page for this programme.
  ii. For large computing time proposals, a **data management plan** must be included as well.

The computing time proposal and annexes must be drawn up according to the templates provided by NWO. Annexes must be uploaded in ISAAC separately from the proposal. All annexes should be submitted as unencrypted PDF files. Annexes other than those listed above are not permitted.

Your computing time proposal must be written in English.

The use of generative AI when preparing a proposal is not explicitly prohibited, as long as this happens responsibly. For guidance, see the NWO policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) | NWO on the website.

Proposals can only be submitted through the ISAAC online application system. Proposals not submitted via ISAAC will not be taken into consideration.
As the main applicant, you are required to submit the proposal through your own personal ISAAC account.

It is important to start preparing your proposal in ISAAC in good time:

- If you do not yet have an ISAAC account, obtain one in plenty of time to prevent any registration problems.
- New research organisations may need to be added to ISAAC by NWO.

- You will also need to enter information online.

Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration by NWO.
If you have any technical questions, please contact the ISAAC help desk, see contact (Chapter 6).

NWO assumes that applicants have informed the research organisations where they are employed about the proposal's submission, and that these organisations have accepted the grant conditions pertaining to this Call for Proposals.

3.4 Conditions for submission

3.4.1 Formal conditions for submission

NWO will check your computing time proposal's compliance with all the conditions that apply under this Call for Proposals, including those listed below. Your proposal will only be admitted to the assessment procedure if it meets these conditions. After submitting your proposal, NWO asks that you remain available to make any administrative corrections necessary for the conditions for submission to be met.
Conditions for submission:

- The main applicant and co-applicant(s) meet the conditions set out in Subsection 3.1
- The computing time proposal complies with the DORA guidelines as described in Subsection 4.1
- The computing time proposal is, possibly following requests for additions or changes, complete and has been filled out according to the instructions
- The computing time proposal has been submitted via the main applicant's ISAAC account
- The computing time proposal was received before the deadline
- The computing time proposal is written in English
- The proposed computing time project has a maximum duration of two years in case of a large project or one year for a small project
- The proposed computing time project for the LUMI pre-exascale supercomputer has a maximum duration of one year; all required annexes are, possibly following requests for additions or changes, complete and have been filled out according to the instructions and prepared and submitted according to the conditions of this Call for Proposals

3.5 Conditions for allocation

All proposals are subject to the NWO Grant Rules and the Approval of funding for scientific research, with the provision that this Call for Proposals is not about granting funds, but about the allocation of limited resources (computing time). That means that wherever the NWO Grant Rules use the terms 'grant' or 'funding', these should be replaced by 'computing time'.

3.5.1 Knowledge security

Together, the Dutch knowledge sector, including NWO, and various branches of government, have created the National Knowledge Security Guidelines as guidance on how to weigh opportunities and security risks for anyone involved in international collaboration at research organisations. The approach to knowledge security in the Netherlands relies heavily on self-regulation by the knowledge sector.

NWO expects applicants to adhere to their research organisation's knowledge security policy. If there are signs that a proposal or awarded project may present risks to knowledge security, NWO can ask the applicant or project manager to provide insight into risk mitigation measures. Additionally, NWO may impose further conditions to protect knowledge security in the allocation letter.

The National Knowledge Security Guidelines can be found on the central government website at: Home | National Contact Point for Knowledge Security.

3.5.2 Data management

The results of scientific research must be replicable, verifiable and falsifiable. In the digital age, this means that, in addition to publications, research data must also be freely accessible insofar possible. NWO expects that research data resulting from NWO-funded projects will be made publicly available, as much as possible, for re-use by other researchers. In this respect, the principle adopted by NWO is 'as open as possible, protected where necessary'. Researchers are expected to make at least the data and/or non-numerical results underpinning the conclusions of any work published within the project publicly available at the time of the work's publication. Researchers must include a data management section explaining how data generated by the project will be handled. For large computing time proposals, this should be combined with a data management plan and submitted along with the proposal.

Data management section

The data management section is part of the computing time proposal. Researchers are asked to consider how to order and categorise the data collected to enable this data's public availability before the research starts. Often, measures will need to be taken even before the data's creation and analysis to support later storage and dissemination. If it is not possible to make all data from the project publicly available, for example due to reasons of privacy, ethics or valorisation, the applicant must explain these reasons in the data management section.

Data management plan

When submitting a large computing time proposal, a data management plan is mandatory. This is mainly important to be able to ensure storage and archiving of data after the computing project has ended. After the computing time project has finished, the archives must be cleaned up and either moved to a local facility or managed by SURF as a paid service. Long-term storage is not covered by this Call for Proposals for computing time.

3.5.3 Research integrity

In accordance with the NWO Grant Rules 2024, NWO-funded projects must be carried out in accordance with the nationally and internationally accepted standards for scientific conduct as stated in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. By submitting the proposal, the applicant commits to this code. In the event of an actual or possible violation of these standards during a project funded by NWO, the applicant should immediately inform NWO and submit all relevant documents to NWO. More information about the Code of Conduct and the policy regarding research integrity can be found on the website: Research integrity | NWO.

3.5.4 Ethical statement or licence

The applicant is responsible for determining whether execution of the proposed project requires an ethical statement or licence. The applicant should ensure that this is obtained from the relevant institution or ethics committee in good time. The presence or absence of an ethical statement or licence at the time of application will not impact the proposal's assessment.If an ethical statement or licence does prove necessary for all or part of the research, the project manager must provide NWO with a copy of this statement or licence once the project has been allocated and before starting work on the relevant project components. Naturally, the statement or licence must have been issued to be able to work on these components.

3.5.5 Nagoya Protocol

The Nagoya Protocol ensures an honest and reasonable distribution of benefits emerging from the use of genetic resources (Access and Benefit Sharing; ABS). Researchers making use of genetic resources in or from other countries for the purposes of their research should familiarise themselves with the Nagoya Protocol (Home - ABS Focal Point). NWO assumes that they are taking whatever measures are necessary to ensure compliance with the Nagoya Protocol.

3.5.6 Specific conditions

Specific conditions applicable to the allocation of access to SURF's national computer facilities:

Start time and duration

If a computing time proposal is successful, research must begin within two months of the computing time's allocation.
Large allocations of access to computing time at the national computer facilities have a maximum duration of two years.
For smaller allocations, the maximum duration is one year.
For access to the LUMI pre-exascale supercomputer, allocations have a maximum duration of one year.

Provisions

Allocation is further subject to the following conditions:

The 'system' is understood to mean the computer system to which access has been granted, along with any associated front-end machines, peripheral devices, data communication equipment and the accompanying software, first-line support, etc.

The 'user' is the person who has been allocated computing time or anyone else granted access to the system under their authority. In case of staff contributors to the computing project with ties to one of the research organisations listed in Subsection 3.1, these can be national or international students or researchers.

Users must sign SURF's user agreement to confirm their acceptance of the conditions of use for the system in question. These conditions of use include the following:

- Users cannot use the system for any purposes unrelated to the project for which access was granted.
- Users shall not attempt to access or use programmes or files that do not belong to them or to which they have not been granted access.
- Users shall act in accordance with the rules and procedures of the computing centre providing services on the system.

- Users shall immediately notify the relevant computing centre of any errors in system software, compilers, data communication, etc., or malfunctions detected.
- Users are accountable for misuse of their user and account numbers by others and shall protect passwords against such misuse to the best of their ability.
- Users are responsible for any consequences due to the allocated computing time being exceeded.
- NWO Domain Science and the computing centre involved cannot be held liable for damage due to use of the system or any errors in the system.

For the LUMI pre-exascale supercomputer, applicants must also accept the associated terms and conditions, see: LUMI General Terms of Use.

Information provision

Information you provide as part of your computing time proposal will be shared with SURF to enable optimal provision of the services requested.

4 Assessment Procedure

This chapter starts by describing the assessment according to the DORA principles (Subsection 4.1) and the course of the assessment procedure (Subsection 4.2). It then states the criteria the assessment committee will use to assess your proposal (Subsection 4.3).

The NWO Code for Dealing with Personal Interests applies to all individuals and NWO employees involved in the assessment and/or decision-making process (Code for Dealing with Personal Interests | NWO).

The use of generative AI to assess proposals is completely prohibited. More information about NWO's policy on the use of generative AI can be found on the website (NWO policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) | NWO).

NWO strives to achieve an inclusive culture in which there is no place for conscious or unconscious barriers based on cultural, ethnic, or religious background, gender, sexual orientation, health or age (Diversity and inclusion | NWO). NWO actively encourages referees and assessment committee members to be aware of implicit associations and to try to minimise them. NWO will provide them with information on practical ways to improve the assessment of a proposal.

4.1 The San Francisco Declaration (DORA)

NWO is a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). DORA is a worldwide initiative that aims to improve the ways in which research and researchers are assessed. DORA contains recommendations for research funders, research organisations, scientific journals and other parties.

DORA is aimed at reducing the uncritical use of bibliometric indicators and obviating unconscious bias in the assessment of research and researchers. DORA's overarching philosophy is that research should be evaluated on its own merits rather than on the basis of surrogate measures, such as the journal in which the research is published.

When assessing the scientific track record of applicants, NWO applies a broad definition of scientific output.

NWO asks committee members and referees not to rely on indicators such as the Journal Impact Factor or the h-index when assessing proposals. Proposals should not include any mention of such indicators. You are, however, encouraged to list other scientific products besides publications such as datasets, patents, software and code, and so on.

For more information on how NWO is implementing the DORA principles, see: DORA | NWO.

4.2 Procedure

The proposal procedure consists of the following steps:

- Submission of the proposal
- Review of the proposal
- Provisional (partial) allocation by WGS assessment committee

- Preliminary recommendations by WGS assessment committee member and SURF's technical advisor(s)
- Rebuttal (written response)
- Meeting of the WGS assessment committee
- Decision-making

Proposals submitted for the 'Computing Time at National Computer Facilities' Call for Proposals will be assessed by the WGS assessment committee. This committee is composed of representatives from science with knowledge of the field, who are also experienced users of the national computer facilities and represent the most important user groups for these facilities. The WGS assessment committee is tasked with assessing the submitted proposals and associated documents, both in relation to one another and on their own merits, based on the assessment criteria set out in this Call for Proposals (see Subsection 4.3.1).

The WGS assessment committee will first decide whether the proposed computing tasks could also be carried out at locally available facilities. If the WGS committee believes this to be the case, it will recommend that the director of the NWO Domain Science reject the computing time proposal. If the director of the NWO Domain Science decides to reject the computing time proposal based on the WGS committee's recommendation, the proposal will not go through the rest of the assessment procedure.

Given the expertise within the WGS assessment committee regarding large-scale computing tasks, NWO has opted to use the provision in Article 2.2.4(2) of the NWO Grant Rules to assess the computing time proposals without involving referees.

The composition of the WGS committee is posted on the NWO website. Computing Time at National Computer Facilities | NWO

4.2.1 Submission of a proposal

A standard form for submitting proposals is available on the allocation page of this Call for Proposals on the NWO website. When writing your proposal, you must adhere to the questions on this form and the procedure described in the explanatory notes. You must also adhere to the conditions regarding the maximum number of words and pages.

Your fully completed proposal form must be received via ISAAC before the deadline (see Subsection 1.3). Once this deadline has passed, it is no longer possible to submit proposals. After submitting the proposal, the main applicant will receive a confirmation of receipt.

4.2.2 Review of the proposal

Once you have submitted your proposal, you will be informed of whether NWO is taking it under consideration as soon as possible. NWO will determine this based on several administrative-technical criteria (see the formal conditions for submission, Subsection 3.4). NWO can only take your proposal into consideration if it meets these conditions.
Please bear in mind that NWO may approach you about making any administrative corrections necessary for your proposal to meet the conditions for submission in the two weeks after the submission deadline. You will be given one opportunity to make these corrections, and you will be given five working days to do so.

4.2.3 Provisional partial allocation by WGS assessment committee

The Scientific Use of Supercomputers (WGS) assessment committee will be asked to provide the director of the NWO Domain Science with a preliminary recommendation. If a computing time proposal is accepted for consideration, the WGS assessment committee will be asked to quickly check the proposal against the criteria listed in Subsection 4.3 to determine its suitability for a provisional partial allocation. A provisional partial allocation refers to an allocation of up to 10% of the total computing capacity requested. For the Grid Data Processing component, this concerns the full amount of computing capacity requested. Provisional partial allocation precedes the decision regarding acceptance or rejection of the entire proposal. If the WGS committee issues a positive recommendation, NWO strives to grant a partial allocation within one month of the proposal's submission.

4.2.4 Preliminary recommendations by WGS assessment committee member and SURF's technical advisor(s)

After the provisional partial allocation, a WGS committee member and a technical advisor from SURF are asked for their preliminary recommendations regarding the computing time proposal for the remaining capacity requested. The WGS member assesses the proposal based on the criteria listed in Subsection 4.3. The technical advisor will only consider criteria 1 and 3.

In case of doubt due to insufficient knowledge of a specific scientific field, the WGS assessment committee reserves the right to have the proposal reviewed by one or more independent referees. For very large computing time proposals above 50 million SBUs, one or more independent referees will always be invited to review the proposal as well. The WGS committee may also formulate questions for the referee on its own initiative.

4.2.5 Rebuttal (written response)

The main applicant subsequently receives the anonymised preliminary recommendations and anonymised referee reports, if applicable. You will then have the opportunity to formulate a written response (rebuttal). You will be given five working days to submit your written response via ISAAC. If you decide to withdraw the proposal, you must notify the Bureau by email as soon as possible and withdraw the proposal in ISAAC. If NWO receives your written response after the deadline, it will not be included in the rest of the assessment procedure.

4.2.6 Meeting of the WGS assessment committee

The WGS assessment committee will make its own assessment based on the available material during its next committee meeting. Although the final assessment is guided by the preliminary recommendations and any additional referee reports to an important degree, these will not necessarily be adopted in full by the assessment committee. The committee will consider the arguments of the preliminary advisors/referees, weigh them against one another and examine whether the written response contains well-formulated responses to the critical comments in the preliminary recommendations/referee reports. Moreover, unlike the referees, the committee has insight into the relative quality compared to the other proposals and written responses submitted. Consequently, the committee may reach a different conclusion than the referees.

Following their deliberations, the committee will prepare written recommendations for the director of the NWO Domain Science regarding the quality and prioritisation of the proposals. These recommendations are based on the assessment criteria. To be eligible for computing time, a computing time proposal must meet all the criteria listed in Subsection 4.3 and receive positive assessments from both the technical advisor and the WGS assessment committee.

4.2.7 Decision-making

Finally, the director of the NWO Domain Science will review the procedure followed and the assessment committee's recommendations. The director will then decide whether to award or reject the proposals.

4.2.8 Timeline

Below is a timeline for this Call for Proposals. NWO reserves the right to adjust the timeline for this Call for Proposals in the course of the procedure if necessary. You will, of course, receive timely notification in such an eventuality.

NWO strives to issue a full or partial allocation within one month of the date of receipt of the computing time proposal, and to complete the assessment procedure within four months of that date. In the event of procedural delays, it is also possible to apply for an additional provisional partial allocation.

Proposals with fully complete files, including SURF's technical advice, any referee reports and the written response, will be reviewed at the next upcoming WGS committee meeting. To be eligible for review at the upcoming meeting, however, the fully completed files for the proposal must have been received by NWO at least one week before the date of the meeting. Proposals with files that are only complete and ready for the WGS committee to review after this time will be submitted for review at the following committee meeting.

Dates of WGS committee meetings in 2026

Mid-February 2026	217th WGS committee meeting
Late March 2026	218th WGS committee meeting
Mid-June 2026	219th WGS committee meeting
Mid-September 2026	220th WGS committee meeting
Mid-October 2026	221st WGS committee meeting
Mid-December 2026	222nd WGS committee meeting

NWO strives to issue a final decision to applicants about whether a proposal has been accepted or rejected within two weeks of the WGS committee meeting at which the proposal is reviewed.

4.3 Criteria

4.3.1 Substantive assessment criteria

Computing time proposals submitted within this Call for Proposals will be substantively assessed based on the following criteria:

1. Project organisation
   - The feasibility of the research, given the available human research capacity, e.g. the involved researchers' ability to handle the amounts of processing, anticipated runs and results analysis.
   - The expertise of the research group in using computer facilities is in line with the scope of the proposal.

2. Scientific aspects of the project
   - The scientific quality of the project, whether fundamental or applied, to which use of computer infrastructure can make a contribution.
   - Assessment of the applicability of the numerical methods and implementation aspects in relation to the scientific objectives of the project.

3. Need to access computer facilities and technical expertise
   - The request for computing time, data facilities and the accompanying services, such as storage and expertise, is justified given the project goals.
   - The amounts of computing time, storage and expertise requested are proportional to the described volume of work for the project.
   - Evaluating the feasibility of using local computing facilities, their availability and their suitability for the computing tasks required.
   - The feasibility of the project.
   - The anticipated use of (parallel) processing justifies the need for access to national computer facilities.
   - The optimised use of calculating power and other national computing services (e.g. improved parallel coding, if applicable).

5 Obligations

This chapter describes the various obligations that apply once you are actually allocated computing time, in addition to the conditions specified in Subsection 3.5.

5.1 Additional terms and conditions

5.1.1 Reports

Allocation of computing time at a computer facility carries the condition that the applicant submits a report on the project to the NWO Domain Science within three months of the end of the project. The report must be prepared using the 'Report Template for Granted Computing Time' form. The form can be found on the NWO website's allocation page for this programme. This report and the publications resulting from the allocated research time can only be submitted for the project using ISAAC, NWO's electronic application system.

5.1.2 Data management

Before submitting the proposal, the applicant must prepare a data management plan. This plan specifies whether existing data or a new dataset will be used, and indicates how the dataset will be made FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable. It should also describe what will happen to the data after the computing time project's completion. This Call for Proposals is not intended to cover long-term storage. The data management plan should be checked by a data steward or similar officer of the research organisation where the project will be realised before its submission. The WGS committee will review the plan along with the proposal. Allocation of computing time is conditional upon NWO's approval of the data management plan. The plan may be modified once research has started.
More information about NWO's data management protocol can be found at: Research data management | NWO.

5.1.3 Intellectual property

With respect to intellectual property (IP), the NWO IP policy applies. NWO's IP policy is described in Chapter 4 of the NWO Grant Rules.

Applicants must execute a project funded by NWO during their period of employment with the research organisation. If an applicant or researcher funded by NWO has multiple employers, the other employers must waive any IP rights arising from the project in favour of the applicant.

5.1.4 Socially responsible licensing

A project may generate knowledge that is applicable in society. When entering into licensing or transfer agreements for research results developed under this Call for Proposals, due consideration must be given to the ten principles of socially responsible licensing as described in the UMCNL fact sheet 'Ten-Principles-for-Socially-Responsible-Licensing-2019.pdf'.

5.1.5 Open Access

As a signatory to the Berlin Declaration (2003) and a member of cOAlition S (2018), NWO is committed to making the results of the research it funds openly accessible via the internet (Open Access). In this way, NWO helps to fulfil the Dutch government's ambition to make all publicly funded research available in an Open Access format. Scholarly publications arising from research funded by grants on the basis of this Call for Proposals must, therefore, be made available in an Open Access format, in accordance with NWO's Open Access Policy Framework.

Scientific articles

Scientific articles must be made available in Open Access form immediately at the time of publication (without embargo) via one of the following routes:

- Publication in a fully Open Access journal or platform registered in the DOAJ.
- Publication in a subscription journal and the immediate deposition of at least the author accepted manuscript of the article in an Open Access repository registered in OpenDOAR.
- Publication in a journal for which a transformative Open Access agreement exists between the Universities of the Netherlands and a publisher. See also: Home | Open Access.

Books

Different requirements apply to books, book chapters, and edited collections. See the Open Access Policy Framework at Open Science | NWO.

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To ensure the widest possible dissemination of publications, use of a Creative Commons (CC BY) licence is the minimum requirement. Alternatively, if there are compelling reasons, the author may seek permission to publish under a CC BY-ND licence. For books, book chapters, and edited collections, the decision to use a CC BY licence is at the author's discretion.

For a more detailed explanation of NWO's Open Access policy, see: Open Science | NWO.

6 Contact Details and Other Information

6.1 Contact

6.1.1 Specific questions

For specific questions about this Call for Proposals, please contact:
Naomi Messing-Klopstra, tel. +31 (0)70 34 40 526, email: rekentijd@nwo.nl

6.1.2 Technical questions concerning the ISAAC online application system

If you have any technical questions regarding the use of ISAAC, you can contact the ISAAC help desk. Please read the manual first before seeking advice from the helpdesk. The ISAAC helpdesk can be reached Monday to Friday between 10:00 and 17:00 at +31 (0) 70 34 40 600. You can also ask your question by sending an email to isaac.helpdesk@nwo.nl. You will receive a reply within two working days.

6.2 Other information

NWO processes the personal data it receives in the context of this round in accordance with the NWO Privacy Statement (Privacy Statement | NWO.

NWO may approach applicants for an evaluation of the procedure or research programme.

Links to partner websites
SURF website:
https://surf.nl/

Small computing time proposals may be submitted directly to SURF:
https://www.surf.nl/en/small-compute-applications-nwo

Technical information for users:
https://servicedesk.surf.nl/wiki/

Information about Snellius:
https://www.surf.nl/en/services/compute/snellius-the-national-supercomputer

Information about LUMI:
https://www.lumi-supercomputer.eu/

Information about Data Processing (Grid/Spider):
https://www.surf.nl/en/services/compute/high-performance-data-processing

Information about HPC Cloud (via SURF Research Cloud):
https://www.surf.nl/en/services/compute/hpc-cloud

Information about EuroHPC:
https://eurohpc-ju.europa.eu/index_en

Published: January 2026

Dutch Research Council

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Cover image: SURF

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