

# Funding opportunities at NWO TTW

Merlijn Jakobs | Math4NL Community | 05-12-2025

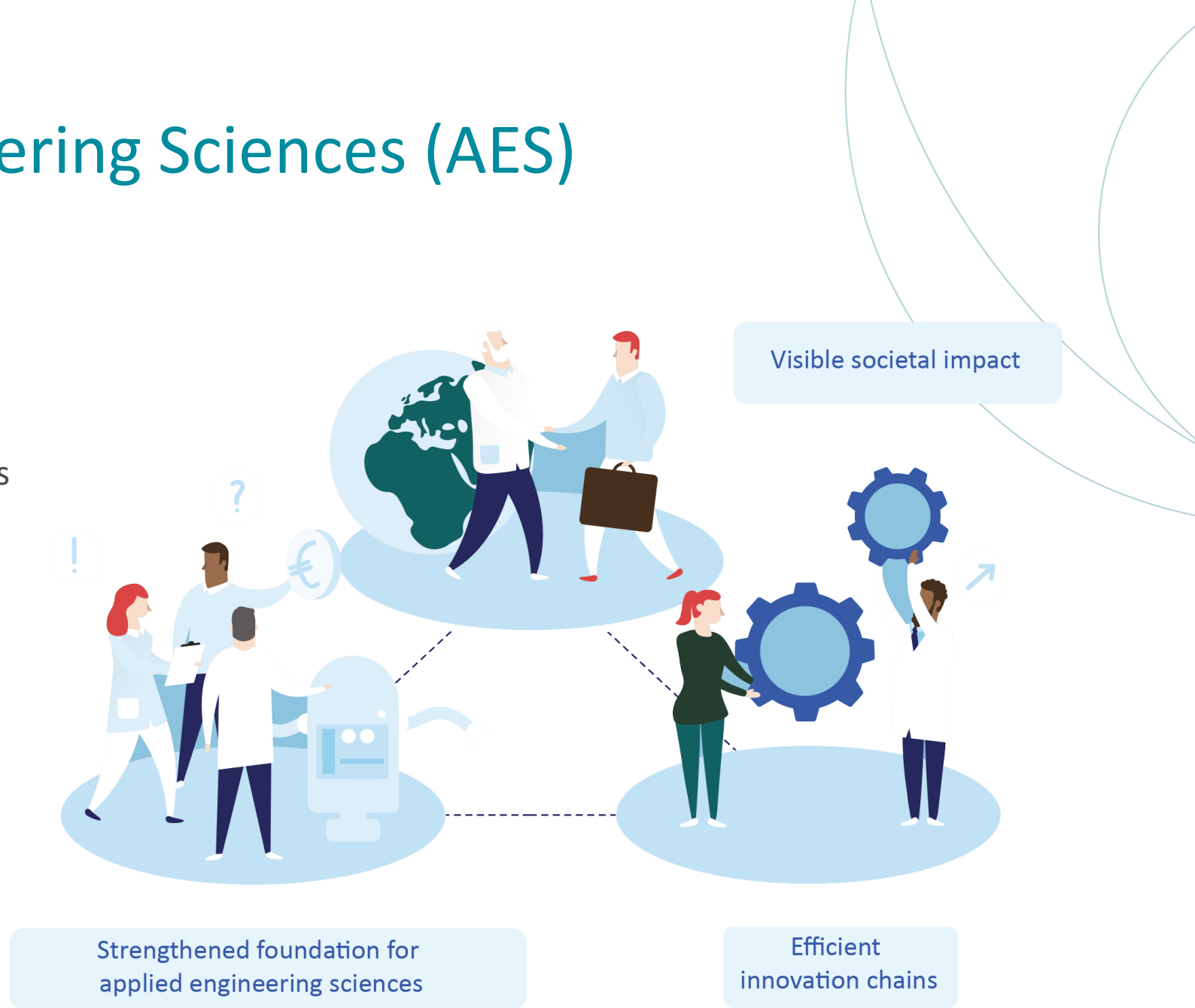
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# Applied and Engineering Sciences (AES)

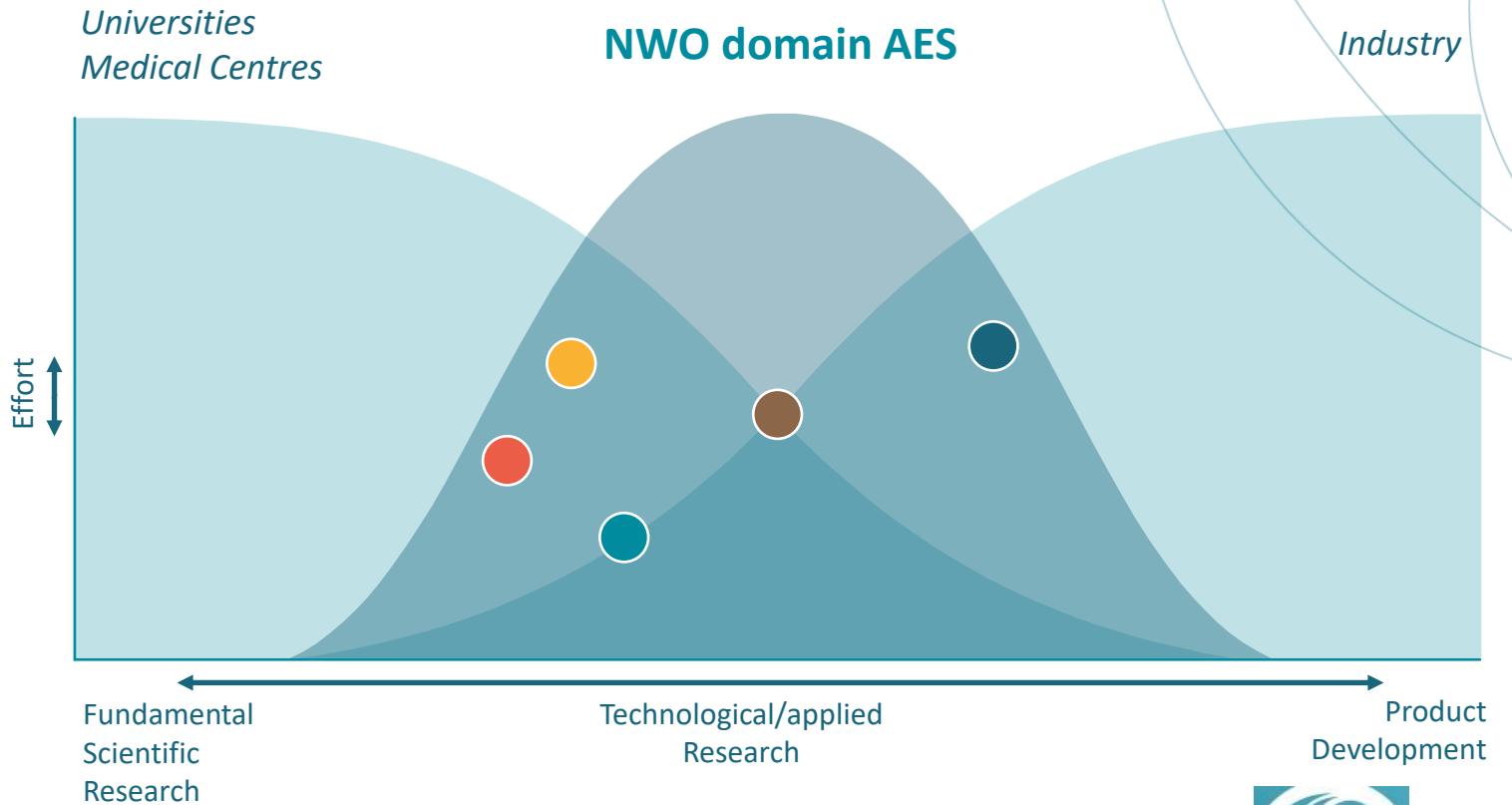
## Technology for people and society

Facilitate applied and engineering sciences research that yields applications and impact for people and society.



# Funding approaches translated to programmes

- Demonstrator, Perspectief (public-private partnerships)
- Open technology programme (application oriented research)
- Take off (Phase 1 or 2) (stimulating activity and entrepreneurship within research facilities)
- Veni/Vidi/Vici
- KIC/NWA programmes



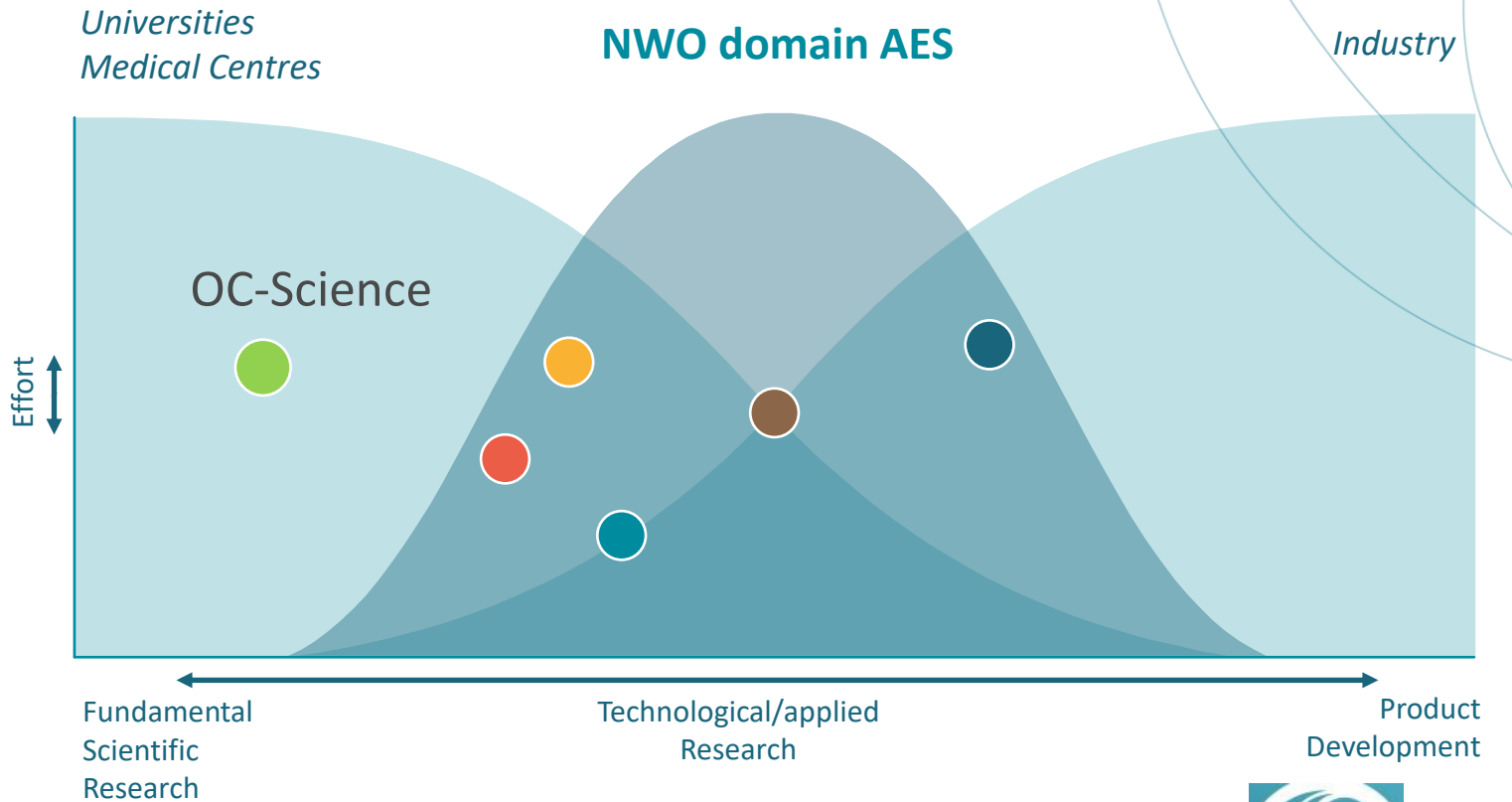
**Each AES project is monitored by a User Committee (UC)**

Creating optimum opportunities for transfer of knowledge



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# Background and aim of Open Technology Programme



# Background and aim of OTP

- OTP is part of the NWO funding line **Open Competition** within NWO Domain **Applied and Engineering Sciences (AES)**
- **Aim:** stimulate **free** and **unrestricted applied** and **technical-scientific research**
- **Scientific scope of NWO Domain AES:** (All disciplines of) the engineering sciences and the application-oriented practice of **mathematics**, natural sciences, medical sciences and life sciences
- **Collaboration with relevant knowledge users from public and/or private sectors** is mandatory and a key feature to achieve impact (*scientific and/or societal impact*)



# Scope of OTP

- Absence of disciplinary boundaries
- Multidisciplinary research is allowed
- OTP is specifically intended for research activities and is not intended for applications mainly focused on other activities, such as: investments, contract research or clinical trials
- Typical Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) within an OTP project\*:
  - Before: ~ 2 – 3 (discovery phase)
  - After: ~ 3 – 4 (discovery/ development phase)

*\* There are no restrictions in the minimum or maximum TRL of the research within OTP.*



# Conditions for submission



# Who can apply? (1/2)

Applicable for both **main applicant** and **co-applicant(s)**:

- Researchers
- Employed at one of the research organisations\* with a:
  - Tenured/permanent position (a **paid position for an indefinite period**)
  - OR a tenure track agreement (*statement required*)

\* See a list of eligible research organisations at OTP 2026 Call for Proposals, section 3.1 *Who can apply*

- Who cannot apply?:
  - Researchers with a zero-hour contract or a temporary position
  - Researchers from *universities of applied sciences* (HBO) - they can be a user
  - Researchers from foreign universities (only as co-applicant under specific conditions)



# Budget OTP

- OTP is **continuously open** between January 12<sup>th</sup> and December 11<sup>th</sup> **until grant ceiling is achieved** (in 2025 this happened October 31<sup>st</sup>)
  - Award rate of **33%** (6 highest ranked applications per jury)
- The **maximum NWO contribution is € 950,000**
  - € 1,050,000 for projects with an investment character (> € 150,000 investments)
- **Co-funding mandatory if the total project costs > € 700.000**
  - Minimum required co-funding is **25% of the project costs above € 700.000** (cash/in-kind)



# Co-funding

- Definitions of co-funding:
  - In-kind: **capitalised personnel** and/or **material** contributions from users
    - Hourly rates: based on Guide to Government Rates (HOT) maximum € 171 euro/hr
  - In-cash: net amount paid by co-funder and used to cover part(s) of the total project costs
- In case co-funding is provided by a participating co-funder:
  - A mandatory “**co-funding declaration**” needs to be completed by the co-funder to **express the financial support** for the project and **confirm the promised co-funding**
  - NWO Co-funding rules apply: <https://www.nwo.nl/en/nwo-co-funding-rules>



# Impact & User committee



# Research with impact

- Impact Outlook approach:
  - Choose which type of impact will be leading (**scientific, societal or a combination of both**)
  - Think about foreseen and unforeseen opportunities for impact
- Describe a **strategy** and **phased** plan on how to reach impact
- **Involve users** from the whole knowledge chain
  - Maximize the foreseen and unforeseen opportunities for impact
  - Follow the Impact Outlook workshop: <https://impact.nwo.nl/en>

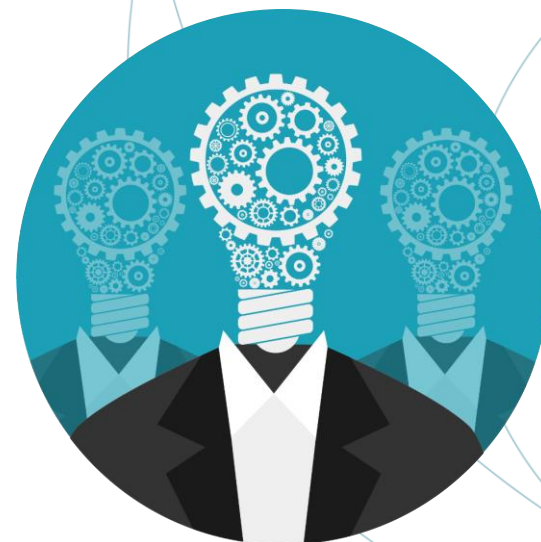


# User committee (1/2)

- **Aim of user committee:** stimulation of productive interactions
  - **Actively involved, advise** the project leader on the direction of the project with the aim of **maximising** the **application** of results and **foreseen & unforeseen opportunities for impact**
  - **Connecting** relevant parties, **strengthening** networks & ecosystems
- **Definition of user:**
  - Member of the user committee
  - Natural or legal person (not being applicants)
- **Users may come from both the Netherlands and abroad**



# User committee (2/2)



- **Minimum of 4 users of which at least 2 “non-academic”**
  - You decide which users are required to achieve impact
- **Definition of academic and non-academic users:**
  - Academic users: i.e. individuals from national or international universities, umc’s or research organisations
    - *Increasing opportunities for scientific impact*
  - Non-academic users: i.e. individuals from companies, TO2 institutions, clinics, (patient) associations, civil society organisations, public organisations and government agencies
    - *Increasing chances of application and opportunities for societal impact*
- **Note:** Co-funders are users that provide co-funding

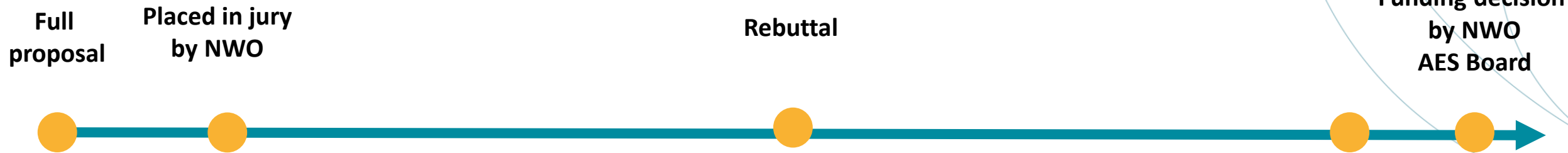


# Assessment procedure



# Timeline (per jury)

typically ~6-8 months



*Admissibility check*

*Expert reviews*

*Full proposal, expert reviews, rebuttal*

**External peer reviewers  
(experts)**

*3-5 reports per proposal*



**Assessment by jury  
(non-experts)**  
10 -12 members  
per jury round



# Criterion 1: Scientific quality (50%)



- This includes:
  - **Originality** and scientifically innovative elements;
  - **Design** of the project (clarity, objectives, hypotheses, research methods and scientific feasibility);
  - **Coherence** and **planning** of the research lines;
  - **Competence** of the **research group** (position in science, available infrastructure);
  - The **research capacity** that can be deployed for the project (requested personnel positions, budget, and resources);
  - The **fit within the Open Technology Programme**: the proposal is focused on applied and technical-scientific research.

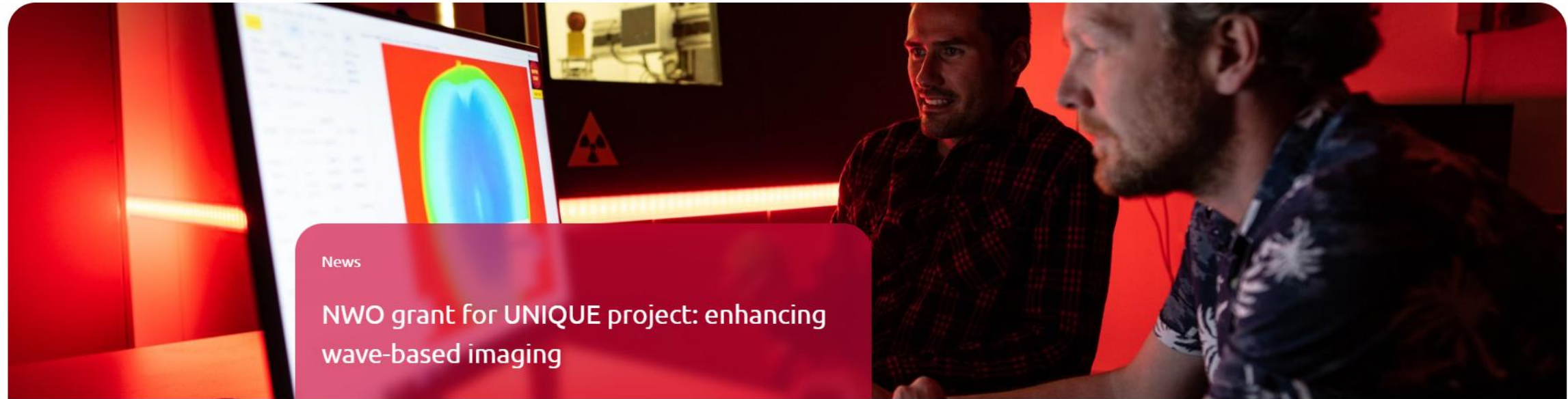


## Criterion 2: Impact (50%)



- This includes:
  - The **motivation** for the primarily chosen type of impact (scientific and/or societal impact);
  - A **strategy and phased plan** for how the proposed research can contribute to impact;
  - The competence and reputation of the research group(s) in terms of **knowledge transfer** and application of their own research results;
  - The composition of the user committee and level of involvement of participating users to maximise both foreseen and unforeseen opportunities for the (not) primarily chosen type of impact
- Note: The applicant decides the leading type of impact in the research: **scientific impact**, **societal impact**, or a **combination of both**. The score for this criterion is independent of the type of impact chosen; one type of impact is not rated better or less than the other.





News

## NWO grant for UNIQUE project: enhancing wave-based imaging

A joint research project of CWI and the University of Amsterdam called UNIQUE (Unified framework for wave-based Inversion, Quantification of Uncertainties, and Experimental design) was awarded a grant from NWO's Open Technology Programme (OTP). Tristan van Leeuwen, leader of CWI's Computational Imaging group, and Chris Stolk (Associate Professor at the University of Amsterdam) will develop the next generation of quantitative wave-based imaging algorithms. These advanced mathematical methods are used to determine the precise physical properties of an object (such as tissue, rock, or metal) by analyzing how waves travel through it.

Publication date 27 nov 2025

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# Open Mind 2026

Open for groundbreaking, outside-the-box ideas



## Context



- Aim: aims to support out-of-the-box research ideas that offer sustainable solutions to global societal challenges through the power of technology
- Researchers (including scientific personnel like postdoc and PhD)
- One main applicant, one co-applicant
- Criteria: Boldness (40%), Quality (30%), Impact (30%)



## Budget



- Total budget expected 1M€
- Max 10 projects will be funded
- Max 100.000€ per project
- The applicant and co-applicant may include costs for personnel, and material.



## Timetable



- Deadline 10 March 2026
- Online information session on 22 January 2026 (14:00)

# Perspectief

Innovative technologies that impact the economy and society often require a large-scale approach.



## Context



- Aim: develop and further develop key technologies that strengthen the (international) position of the Dutch knowledge and innovation system.
- Encourages the establishment of new lines of research, the transcending of old networks and the creation of a close collaboration between researchers and the business community, in order to solve innovation bottlenecks in an interdisciplinary approach.



## Characteristics



- Participants develop new (key enabling) technology via a multidisciplinary approach
- Companies, social organizations and researchers jointly submit a project proposal (public-private research projects)
- NWO contributes at least 2 million euros and at most 5 million euros per project
- Companies contribute at least 30 percent of the total project costs
- Guidance from NWO in realising progress of the projects



## Timetable



- Yearly call
- 3 phases:
  - Statement of intent on website
  - Submission pre-proposal
  - Submission proposal
- Deadline pre-proposal phase 2025 has already passed, next deadline October 2026

Thank you for your attention.

Questions?

