2026

BRAINS

An initiative of Alzheimer Nederland,
EpilepsieNL, Hersenstichting,
ParkinsonNederland, Stichting MS Research,
In collaboration with Biotech Booster and EATRIS

BRAINS-2026

GRANT PROGRAMME FOR PUBLIC–PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (PPP)

1. Summary

In this BRAINS-2026 Open Call, the BRAINS programme provides €1.6 million in PPP funding under the PPP Innovation Scheme to develop solutions for people living with neurological disorders. PPP projects within this programme focus on developing and testing brain-targeted delivery systems and methods to cross the blood–brain barrier, (home) monitoring technologies and human-relevant brain models. Through these efforts, BRAINS aims to accelerate cross-disease innovations for neurological conditions such as dementia, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis (MS) and Parkinson's disease (PD).

The objective is that, within the duration of each selected PPP project, an innovative product or service increases by one to two TRL levels, generates new intellectual property with interest from commercial parties and/or spin-off potential, and thereby reaches application in healthcare practice more rapidly.

Main criteria

Type call:	Open call
Goal:	New interdisciplinary public-private projects focusing on cross-disease solutions within the three themes of the BRAINS programme
Total budget for this call:	€1.6 million PPP funding
Amount of PPP funding per project:	€400.000 - €600.000 per application
Project length:	Maximum 48 months
Who can apply:	Researchers from Dutch knowledge institutions and Dutch SMEs.
Minimal consortiumparters:	The consortium must consist of at least one for-profit enterprise and one research organisation.
Disease overarching:	Each project must be relevant for and applicable to multiple neurological disorders, of which at least one must be dementia, epilepsy, MS or Parkinson's disease. A project may primarily focus on one neurological disorder, provided that the underlying technology or methodology has broader applicability.
TRL/research type:	TRL 2–7; limited fundamental research (TRL 2–3) only if necessary; primarily industrial research (TRL 4–6) and experimental development (TRL 7); TRL 8–9 excluded.
Need driven:	Each project focuses on addressing the needs of the target group and end users. These needs guide the research. The target group and end users must be demonstrably involved in the preparation, execution and implementation of the project.

Timeline

- **Step 1:** Submission of a pre-proposal: **Deadline Friday 24th of April 2026, CET 12:00**
  Invitation to write a full proposal: No later than 19th of May 2026
- **Step 2:** Valorization mentoring programme: 20th of May – 7th of August 2026
- **Step 3:** Submission of a full proposal: **Deadline: 7th of September 2026, CET 12:00**
- **Step 4:** Rebuttal: Monday 12th of October – 2nd of November 2026
- Grant award: End of January 2027
- Expected start of projects: Juli 2027

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2. Background Information

2.1 Background Health~Holland

Health~Holland is the branding name of the Top Consortium for Knowledge and Innovation (TKI) Life Sciences & Health. Health~Holland stimulates and facilitates public-private collaboration.

Together with partners, Health~Holland strengthens the Dutch Life Sciences & Health (LSH) ecosystem. Within this dynamic ecosystem, Health~Holland brings together science, entrepreneurship, policy and society to translate scientific insights into innovative technologies and therapies that contribute to a healthier and more resilient society.

Health~Holland invests strategically in a future-proof ecosystem by deploying smart funding instruments, sharing knowledge and experience, and leveraging a strong national and international network. Barriers to innovation are identified at an early stage and, where possible, actively addressed so that promising innovations reach practical application more quickly, effectively and with greater impact.

Health~Holland can financially support programmes by allocating PPP funding. Within these programmes, PPP projects are selected and executed together with the required partners. The objective is to develop sustainable innovative products and services within the LSH sector that contribute to the economic growth of the Netherlands.

2.2 BRAINS-2026 PPP call

Neurological disorders are the largest source of disease-related disability in Europe and account for 21 million lost healthy life years (QALYs) annually. In the Netherlands, one in four people lives with a neurological disorder; in 2023, 4.6 million individuals were registered with general practitioners with a neurological condition, of which 1.47 million had chronic conditions.

To address this disease burden and meet the growing demand for care, the BRAINS programme provides €1.6 million to develop solutions for people with neurological disorders.

PPP projects within this programme focus on developing and testing brain-targeted delivery systems and methods, (home) monitoring technologies and human-relevant brain models in order to accelerate cross-disease innovations for, among others, dementia, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis (MS) and Parkinson's disease (PD). The aim is that, within the duration of each selected PPP project, an innovative product or service advances by one to two TRL levels, generates new intellectual property with commercial interest and/or spin-off potential, and thereby reaches application in healthcare practice more rapidly.

2.3 Relevance Health~Holland & Relevant Policy Documents

PPP Innovation Scheme

Health~Holland, as one of the twelve TKIs, implements the PPP Innovation Scheme for the Life Sciences & Health (LSH) sector on behalf of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ). The objective of the PPP Innovation Scheme is twofold:

1. To stimulate public-private collaboration in R&D that is socially and economically relevant in the (medium) long term, and;
2. To strengthen research aligned with the Knowledge and Innovation Agendas (KIAs), thereby contributing to the economic and societal goals of the mission-driven innovation policy.

The following legislation and regulations apply to the PPP Innovation Scheme and can be downloaded under section 5.2:

- Regulation on National EZK and LNV Subsidies – BWBR0035474 – Chapter 3.2 PPP Innovation
- Framework Decision on National EZK and LNV Subsidies – BWBR0024796
- Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation (2022/C 414/01)

- General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER): Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of the Commission of 17 June 2014.

To strengthen the Netherlands' ability to respond to economic and societal challenges, the Dutch government is pursuing a targeted industrial policy. This policy focuses on three objectives: strengthening the Dutch earning capacity, increasing the resilience of the Dutch economy, and creating societal impact.

This industrial policy focuses on six markets where the Netherlands already shows strong momentum and which, according to several analyses including the growth markets analysis, significantly contribute to Dutch earning capacity, economic resilience and societal missions. Within this targeted industrial policy, the National Technology Strategy (NTS) provides direction for public and private investment in research and development, aimed at creating a strong technological foundation for the growth of these six markets.

By funding PPP projects that contribute to the Health and Care missions of the mission-driven innovation policy and to the ten priority key technologies identified in the NTS, economic and societal value is generated in both the short and long term. These investments generate revenues that contribute to the prosperity of current and future generations. Through this approach, Health~Holland contributes to the economic potential, resilience and earning capacity of the Netherlands.

National Technology Strategy
Within the National Technology Strategy (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2024), ten priority key technologies have been defined as building blocks for a strategic technology policy. These technologies offer opportunities for the Dutch knowledge sector and industry to create global impact and are essential for future innovation.

For almost all of these key technologies, application, further development and commercialisation in the medical domain play an important role. The most prominent examples for the LSH sector are the key technologies "Biomolecular and Cell Technologies", "Imaging Technologies" and "Artificial Intelligence and Data Science". However, the other seven key technologies are also highly relevant for the LSH sector.

Each submitted project must therefore actively contribute to the further development of at least one of the ten priority key technologies identified in the NTS. These are:

- Optical systems and integrated photonics
- Quantum technologies
- Process technology, including process intensification
- Biomolecular and cell technologies
- Imaging technologies
- Mechatronics and optomechatronics
- Artificial intelligence and data science
- Energy materials
- Semiconductor technologies
- Cybersecurity technologies

Societal Theme 'Health and Care'
The Health and Care missions were formulated by the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS). The central mission aims to enable people to live five additional years in good health, while reducing the health gap between people with a high and low socioeconomic status by 30%.
Five specific missions contribute to this central objective through improvements in the living environment, delivering care in the right place, creating better prospects for people with chronic diseases and dementia, and improving protection against health threats that can disrupt society.
Given the current challenges related to workforce shortages in healthcare, labour-saving innovation is a key cross-domain priority alongside reducing health inequalities. These missions have a time horizon extending to 2040. The Knowledge and Innovation Agenda (KIA) 2024–2027 describes how technological innovation through

public-private collaboration can contribute to achieving the central mission and the five specific missions within the societal theme Health & Care.

2.4 Types of organisaties in a PPP grant application

Within a PPP grant application, a distinction is made between different types of organisations. Correctly categorising your organisation is important in order to verify whether the consortium composition meets the requirements of the call and whether your organisation is eligible to receive PPP funding.

Within the PPP Innovation Scheme, the following types of organisations are distinguished:

Research Organisation[1]
A research organisation is an entity that primarily conducts independent fundamental research, industrial research or experimental development, and/or disseminates knowledge broadly through teaching, publications or knowledge transfer. The legal form and method of financing (public or private) are not decisive in this regard.

If the organisation also performs economic activities, separate accounts must be maintained for the financing and revenues of those activities. Undertakings that can exert decisive influence over the organisation (for example as members or shareholders) may not receive preferential access to the research results obtained.
Examples of research organisations in the Netherlands include universities, university medical centres, universities of applied sciences, TO2 institutes and KNAW institutes.

Enterprise
According to established case law of the European Court of Justice, an enterprise is any entity engaged in economic activity, regardless of its legal form or method of financing. These economic activities generate revenue, for example through the provision of goods or services for more than a symbolic fee.
The entity may not be financed entirely through subsidies or donations. A profit motive is not required for qualification as an entrprise; engaging in economic activities within a market context is sufficient.

For-profit enterprise
A for-profit undertaking carries out economic activities with the aim of generating profits that may be distributed to shareholders, owners or participants.

Non-profit enterprise
A non-profit undertaking meets the same general definition as a for-profit undertaking in that it carries out economic activities that generate revenue and income. However, any profits are not distributed to shareholders, owners or participants but are fully reinvested in the objectives of the organisation, such as research and development, societal goals or cultural initiatives.
Both for-profit and non-profit undertakings are further distinguished based on their size (FTE) and their annual turnover or balance sheet total.

⚠ Note: A foundation cannot be categorised as a for-profit undertaking. It may only be classified as a non-profit undertaking, another type of organisation, or a research organisation (provided it meets the relevant criteria).

Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME)
According to Recommendation 2003/361/EC of the European Commission, an undertaking qualifies as a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) when it employs fewer than 250 full-time equivalents (FTEs) and has an annual turnover of no more than €50 million, or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding €43 million.

[1] Definitie onderzoeksorganisatie volgens Kaderregeling betreffende staatssteun voor onderzoek, ontwikkeling en innovatie (Hoofdstuk 1.3, artikel 16.ff). Meer informatie: https://www.rvo.nl/onderwerpen/subsidiespelregels/ezk/onderzoeksorganisatie

Within the SME category, a distinction is made between micro-enterprises, small enterprises and medium-sized enterprises. More information about SME classification can be found through the European Commission's SME User Guide and SME Wizard.

Large enterprise
An undertaking is classified as a large enterprise when it employs 250 FTEs or more and/or has an annual turnover exceeding €50 million and a balance sheet total exceeding €43 million

Other organisations
Organisations that do not meet the definition of a research organisation or an undertaking are categorised as other organisations. In general, this category includes health foundations, top clinical hospitals, general hospitals, regional development agencies (ROMs) and organisations with ANBI status.

2.5 Evaluation of Health and Care Innovations

This option applies if the innovation falls under the MDR/IVDR regulations and it is expected that the innovator or consortium will apply for CE marking for the innovation in the future, or if CE marking has already been obtained.

Explanation of the collaboration with Health Innovation Netherlands
Health~Holland considers it essential to analyse the actual impact and implementation potential of MedTech innovations already during the R&D phase. Conducting such an analysis is complex and involves many stakeholders. For this reason, Health~Holland collaborates closely with Health Innovation Netherlands (HI-NL).
HI-NL is a multidisciplinary infrastructure initiated by leading organisations such as the Dutch National Health Care Institute, the NFU, Health~Holland and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS). HI-NL facilitates an early tailored dialogue (Animation) between innovators and all relevant stakeholders within the healthcare system and thereby supports and guides the development, evaluation, implementation, scaling and reimbursement of safe, effective and efficient healthcare innovations for patients and citizens.

Insight into the innovation development trajectory
The HI-NL innovation trajectory provides innovators and entrepreneurs with insight into their entire innovation development pathway through expert support and multi-stakeholder advice on the development of their specific innovation, tailored to the type of innovation and stage of development.

The objective is to provide innovators and entrepreneurs, as early as possible, with a comprehensive overview of how their innovation can be integrated into the healthcare or prevention landscape and which concrete next steps are required to achieve this.
The HI-NL innovation trajectory consists of four consecutive phases:

- **The Intake**, in which the fit, scope, direction and timing of the HI-NL innovation trajectory are discussed. For scope and direction, examples include (non-exhaustive): intended claims, target population, strength of current evidence and required evidence, comparison with the current standard of care, application and integration within the existing care context, CE marking, reimbursement, implementation and scaling.
- **Extensive scoping and synthesis** of the innovation and the intended context by a team of healthcare innovation experts (a so-called case team) in collaboration with the innovator. This phase requires the involvement of the innovator or entrepreneur in approximately four meetings over a period of eight weeks, which may require some preparation.
- A **Round Table session** with all relevant stakeholders (including patients, medical specialists, health insurers, HTA experts, CE experts, entrepreneurs and policymakers). In this phase, all relevant stakeholders within the healthcare field that play a role in the specific innovation are brought together simultaneously to provide the innovator or entrepreneur with consensus advice regarding their innovation and the necessary next steps.

- **The Innovation Guide**. The knowledge collected during the scoping and synthesis phase is combined with the multi-stakeholder consensus advice and delivered in the form of a comprehensive Innovation Guide containing concrete recommendations for the next steps in the development trajectory. The Innovation Guide is discussed during a close-out call and is a confidential document that remains the property of the innovator.

Which steps should the consortium take?
If the consortium wishes to learn more about the HI-NL innovation trajectory and is considering including it as part of the application, the consortium may contact HI-NL no later than three weeks before the deadline of this call.
An intake meeting will then be scheduled, during which HI-NL will provide a more detailed explanation of the innovation trajectory and what it could mean for the project or innovation pathway. Prior to the intake meeting, applicants will be asked to complete an intake form so that HI-NL can gain a clear overview of the current status of the innovation and the development pathway (also in the context of the PPP grant application), the relevant context and the questions that need to be addressed.

If, after contact with HI-NL, it appears that a Round Table trajectory would add value, this can be indicated in the relevant question in the application form. In addition, the IP-holding party may include a dedicated budget of **€33,275 (including VAT)** in the budget form, which covers the costs of the entire HI-NL innovation trajectory, as part of the total PPP funding requested. This amount may be included under the category **'third-party costs'**, with the description **'HI-NL Innovation Trajectory'**.

Contact person HI-NL
HI-NL can be contacted via the following email address: info@healthinnovation.nl
More information about HI-NL can be found at www.healthinnovation.nl

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2.6 Participation of Target Group & End Users

To increase the likelihood of successful implementation and acceptance of an innovative product or service, it is essential that the consortium identifies at an early stage who will be affected by the innovation.
This is divided into two groups: the **end user**, who is directly affected by the implementation of the innovation, and the **target group**, who indirectly experiences the effects of implementation. In some cases (for example in ambulatory monitoring), the end user and the target group may be the same group.

End user
The end user is defined as the person(s) or organisation(s) that will work with the innovation or whose work will be affected as a result of the implementation of the innovation. End users interact directly with the innovation and can provide valuable input, based on their experience, for the development, improvement and implementation of the innovation.

Target group
The target group includes individuals with lived experience, such as patients and/or their relatives. The societal relevance of an innovation is often characterised by this group, who will experience the positive effects of the innovation without necessarily having to change their role directly.
Involving and consulting individuals with lived experience in the preparation, execution and implementation of the PPP project is mandatory. Their advice regarding relevance, feasibility, inclusion criteria, participant burden and ethical considerations must be explicitly requested and incorporated into the project proposal.

For example: a consortium develops a new immunotherapy for people with progressive MS. The target group consists of people living with progressive MS and their relatives, while the end users are neurologists and specialised healthcare professionals who will apply the treatment.

To increase the success of innovations, equal collaboration with target groups and end users is encouraged, such as citizens in their roles as patients, end users, clients and relatives. Researchers must be able to apply participation methods to enable equitable and safe collaboration and co-creation. It is permitted to engage an external expertise centre or patient organisation for this purpose, either as a subcontracted partner or as a consortium partner. Expenses for individuals with lived experience are eligible during the project period and may be covered through PPP funding. After a PPS project within BRAINS has been awarded, the health foundations and patient organisations that are part of the BRAINS programme group can provide input and support in this process.

2.7 ARRIVE guidelines

PPP projects within the BRAINS programme preferably focus on patients, patient-derived materials, or models, data or systems derived from them. If animal experimentation forms part of the project proposal, it must be clearly justified how this research relates to the human situation and why it represents a necessary step in the development of the innovation or product.

When research involves the use of laboratory animals, it is essential that the ARRIVE guidelines (Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments) are followed. These internationally developed guidelines provide a clear framework for the careful and comprehensive reporting of animal research. Applying the ARRIVE guidelines improves the quality of research reporting, which contributes to the reproducibility of results, prevents unnecessary repetition of experiments, and supports a careful ethical justification for the use of animals.

Following these guidelines also ensures that research outcomes align with international standards and the publication requirements of leading scientific journals and funding organisations. In this way, not only is the scientific value of the research strengthened, but it is also ensured that the use of laboratory animals contributes to maximum societal and scientific impact. More information about the ARRIVE guidelines can be found at: https://arriveguidelines.org.

3. Eligibility and project criteria

3.1 Eligibility and project criteria

The application must comply with the following substantive, consortium, financial and programmatic conditions:

Substantive

- Each project must be relevant to and applicable to multiple neurological disorders, of which at least one must be dementia, epilepsy, MS or Parkinson's disease. A project may primarily focus on one neurological disorder, provided that the underlying technology or methodology is demonstrably broadly applicable.
- Each project must align with at least one of the three themes within BRAINS: (1) Blood–Brain Barrier, (2) Connected Neuro-Tech, (3) Human-relevant brain models (as described in Section 3.2).
- The project must result in innovative products and/or services with scientific, societal and economic added value.
- The project must make a concrete contribution to the (further) development of one or more of the ten priority key technologies of the National Technology Strategy (NTS) and thereby align with the Dutch growth markets (see Section 2.3).
- The research must contribute to the central mission and to one of the five specific missions as described in the Knowledge and Innovation Agenda (KIA) 2024–2027 for the Societal Theme Health & Care.
- Needs-driven: Each project focuses on addressing the needs of the target group and end users. These needs guide the research. The target group and end users must be demonstrably involved in the preparation, execution and implementation of the project (as described in Section 2.6).

Consortium

- The consortium must consist of at least one for-profit undertaking (company) and one research organisation.
- The main applicant must be a research organisation established in the Netherlands or a Dutch SME.
- Foreign undertakings and research organisations are encouraged to participate in the consortium, provided that the results of the research project demonstrably benefit Dutch society, the knowledge infrastructure and the economy. Foreign parties are not eligible to receive PPP funding.

Financial

- Dutch research organisations and Dutch SMEs are eligible for PPP funding according to the financial conditions described in Section 3.5.
- The project must involve genuine collaboration[2]; the project is carried out at joint expense and risk, and all consortium partners make substantive contributions to the project.
- All consortium partners must contribute in kind. This means, among other things, that all consortium partners must at least incur personnel costs, which must be reflected in the budget form.
- In addition to in-kind contributions, it is also possible to provide cash contributions. A cash contribution from one party must be used within the project to cover costs incurred by another consortium partner.
- It is not permitted for the same party to both receive PPP funding and provide a cash contribution.
- Consortium partners may not hire or reimburse each other within the project for services or products, as consortium partners are not allowed to issue invoices to each other. Third parties may be contracted for services; in that case they are not consortium partners.
- If the consortium has received or will receive other public funding for the proposed project, for example from NWO, ZonMw, SIA or Health~Holland, the regulation concerning the cumulation of different subsidies applies[3].

[2] Definition genuine collaboration according to Kaderregeling betreffende staatssteun voor onderzoek, ontwikkeling en innovatie: (Hoofdstuk 1.3, artikel 16.h). More information: https://www.rvo.nl/subsidies-financiering/pps-innovatie/definities

[3] The cumulation of different subsidies are in paragraph 2, article 6, of the Kaderbesluit nationale EZK- en LNV-subsidies. The aid limits regarding the use of PPP funding are specified in article 3.2 of the Regeling nationale EZK- en LNV-subsidies.

Programmatisch

- The project must involve applied research (industrial research and/or experimental development) and no or only a limited proportion of fundamental research (maximum 20% of total project costs). A description of the three types of research is provided in Appendix A. The focus should be primarily on industrial research (TRL 4–6) and experimental development (TRL 7); TRL 8–9 are excluded.
- The project preferably focuses on patients, patient materials or models, data or systems derived from them. If animal experimentation is part of the project, it must be clearly justified how this relates to the human situation and why it represents a necessary step in the development of the innovation or product. The ARRIVE guidelines (Section 2.7) must be followed.
- The project must start no later than July 2027 and has a maximum duration of four years.
- The consortium is encouraged, where possible, to (re)use existing data. Data generated during the project must be managed and made available according to the FAIR principles.
- The versions of the application form, budget form and consortium agreement specifically developed for the BRAINS-2026 PPP Call must be used. Outdated or other versions of these documents will not be accepted and the application will therefore not be taken into consideration.
- If the table under question A.4 of the application form indicates a potential conflict of interest, this must be addressed in a separate document.

3.2 Themes within BRAINS

Projects submitted within this call must fall within one or more of the three themes of the BRAINS programme.

1. Blood-Brain Barrier (BBB)
   This theme focuses on the development of technologies and methodologies that enable therapeutic agents to cross the blood–brain barrier (BBB) safely and effectively. The BBB protects the brain but also forms a major obstacle for many therapies targeting neurological disorders.

   Research within this theme may include, for example, the development of novel delivery systems, biological vectors, nanotechnology-based delivery approaches or physical methods that enable targeted transport of therapeutic compounds to the brain.

2. Connected Neuro-Tech
   This theme focuses on the development of technologies that enable improved monitoring of neurological disorders, both in clinical settings and in patients' daily living environments. Examples include wearable sensors, imaging technologies, digital biomarkers and AI-supported monitoring systems. These technologies may enable earlier detection of disease progression, improved treatment monitoring and more personalised care.

3. Human-relevant brain models
   How can the predictive value of human-relevant models be improved? This theme focuses on addressing this question and includes standardised iPSC-, organoid- and brain-on-a-chip platforms with high-throughput read-outs for rapid target validation and toxicity screening.

3.3 Consortium composition

PPP funding applicants establish a consortium in which research organisations, companies, and preferably also relevant public organisations jointly implement a project, while retaining their own identity and responsibilities. The collaboration is based on a clear and well-balanced distribution of tasks and risks. The consortium must consist of at least one research organisation and one company. In addition, further companies, research organisations and other (public or private) parties may join the consortium. Participation of foreign partners is encouraged, provided that the results of the project demonstrably benefit the Dutch knowledge infrastructure and economy. All consortium partners must contribute equally in both financial and substantive terms to the project.

The consortium designates one party as the main applicant of the project. The main applicant acts as the project coordinator/lead partner and serves as the contact point for the BRAINS programme throughout the entire procedure. Only Dutch research organisations and Dutch SMEs are eligible to act as the main applicant. All other parties within the consortium act as co-applicants.

3.4 Consortium agreement & intellectual property policy

Prior to the start of the project, all consortium partners must sign a **consortium agreement**. This collaboration agreement establishes the mutual arrangements, responsibilities, rights and obligations of all parties involved. The agreement provides a legal framework for the implementation of the project and includes provisions, among other things, regarding decision-making and conflict resolution, the accession or withdrawal of consortium partners, and the allocation and use of intellectual property rights (IP). A **model consortium agreement** for the BRAINS-2026 PPS Call is available via the website, both in a standard version and in a version for clinical studies..

⚠ Use of the model consortium agreement provided for the BRAINS-2026 PPS Call is mandatory. Any modifications to the model must be clearly identifiable.

Agreements regarding IP follow the Kaderregeling betreffende staatssteun voor onderzoek, ontwikkeling en innovatie (specifically article 2.2.2) and the PPP innovation scheme (Staatscourant 20 oktober 2023, 28651).

IP rights

The basic principle is that the party that independently develops a result is also the owner of that result (ownership follows inventorship). However, there are three exceptions under which IP generated by a research organisation may become the property of the industrial partner. These three exceptions may be applied individually or in combination and are jointly included in the template.

Option A: Full funding (Art. 8.2.1) – "Who pays, decides"

If a research organisation develops a result but the industrial partner fully covers the associated costs, the industrial partner becomes the owner of that result. In practice, this situation will occur rarely, if at all, as PPP projects are based on genuine collaboration with shared contributions and funding. This option is included in the template for completeness.

Option B: Adequate reflection of the contributions (Art. 8.2.2 & 8.10 – OPTIONAL)

Where applicable, the parties may explicitly agree in advance that certain *Foreground* developed (in part) by a research organisation will nevertheless become the property of the industrial partner. This is possible where such ownership adequately reflects the significant contribution of the industrial partner to the creation of those results. This option is **optional** and requires a concrete description and justification in Article 8.10 of both the intended Foreground and the contributions that justify the alternative allocation of ownership.

⚠ Adequate reflection of the contributions (Articles 8.2.2 and 8.10) is optional. The consortium may also remove Articles 8.2.2 and 8.10 from the consortium agreement if they are not applicable.

Option C: Option right (Art. 8.2.3 & 8.5–8.8)

Industrial partners that make a substantial contribution to the project budget (at least 10% in cash and/or in kind) may obtain an option right to *Foreground* generated by the research organisation for:

1. Obtaining a licence to Foreground owned by the research organisation;
2. Obtaining ownership of Foreground owned by the research organisation.

When the option right is exercised, the parties will agree in good faith on the conditions for the licence or transfer. These arrangements must at minimum include:

- Market-based compensation, taking into account the company's project contribution.
- Anti-shelving clause: the company commits to actively exploiting the Foreground.

- Grant-back: the research organisation retains a royalty-free, non-exclusive licence for research and education.
- Indemnification: protection of the research organisation against claims arising from the company's use of the Foreground.
- Access rights remain intact: Access Rights of other consortium members will not be affected.

Parallel agreement (Art. 8.11 – OPTIONAL)

If two or more parties already have (or wish to conclude) a separate agreement, this may be used within a PPP funding project provided that it complies with the framework regulation and has been submitted in time to Stichting LSH-TKI, and written confirmation has been obtained that it does not conflict with the consortium agreement. In case of conflict, the consortium agreement always prevails. If no parallel agreement exists or is intended, Article 8.11 may be removed.

Results that are not subject to intellectual property rights must be widely disseminated.

3.5 What funding can be requested?

Within this call for proposals, funding (PPP subsidy) may be requested by Dutch research organisations and Dutch SMEs. Other parties are welcome to participate in consortia but cannot finance their costs through PPP funding. Per project, a minimum of €400,000 and a maximum of €600,000 in PPP funding must be requested. The conditions for the use of PPP funding per type of organisation are described below.

Dutch research organisations

Dutch research organisations may finance up to 70% of their own costs with PPP funding for fundamental research and industrial research. For experimental development, they may finance up to 60% of their own costs with PPP funding.

Dutch SMEs

Dutch SMEs may finance up to 60% of their own costs with PPP funding for fundamental research and industrial research. For experimental development, they may finance up to 40% of their own costs with PPP funding.

Conditions for the use of funding by Dutch SMEs

As proof of SME status, each SME must submit a completed 'SME check. In addition, for all state aid subsidies, including the PPP scheme, an SME can only receive PPP funding if it is not classified as an undertaking in difficulty (UID) according to the relevant definition. Therefore, all SMEs using PPP funding must submit a 'Declaration that the company is not an undertaking in difficulty', together with the completed decision scheme. The definition of UID, the declaration and the decision scheme can be found here.

Please note: Health~Holland will randomly request additional information to verify the submitted declaration and decision scheme. Additional documentation may be required, including:

- Separate and/or consolidated annual accounts of the company (or group of companies) used to complete the decision scheme (with a balance sheet date not older than 18 months)
- If applicable: an organisational chart of the affiliated group, clearly showing the shareholding relationships.

Table 1.A below reiterates these maximum percentages. A project may consist of a combination of the three types of research. Consortia are encouraged to jointly organise the activities and the project budget in such a way that both research organisations and companies contribute equally and substantively to the project. In addition, Dutch SMEs are given an equal opportunity to request PPP funding for their R&D activities.

Table 1.B shows the **minimum percentage of the total project costs** that must be contributed by the research organisation(s) and the undertaking(s) in the project. These minimum contributions relate to the combined contribution of all organisations of the same type within the consortium. For example, if a consortium consists of two research organisations and two undertakings, the research organisations must jointly contribute at least 10% of the total project costs *in kind*. For undertakings, the requirement is that they jointly contribute 15% or 30% of the total project costs *in kind* (and in cash), depending on the type of research.

Section 5.1 provides two calculation examples illustrating how the funding conditions apply to two different types of consortia.

Table 1.A: Funding per type of research

Partner level

Maximum % PPP funding based on eligible partner costs	Fundamental and industrial research	Experimental development
Research organisations	70%	60%
Dutch SMEs	60%	40%
Large companies, foreign SMEs, Dutch and foreign other parties	0%	0%

The percentages in Table 1.A are calculated based on the total costs of the respective organisation.

Table 1.B: Minimum Contributions

Project level

Minimum contribution based on total project costs	Fundamental and industrial research	Experimental development
Research organisations	min. 10%	min. 10%
Enterprises with and without profit motive	min. 15%	min. 30%

The percentages in Table 1.B are calculated based on the total project costs.

3.6 Calculating project costs

Only costs directly related to the R&D activities within the project are considered eligible and may be included in the budget form. The budget form distinguishes between five types of eligible costs. For additional information, consult the tab 'Explanation of cost categories' in the budget form.

Personnel costs

Each consortium partner must include personnel costs in the budget form. Examples of personnel directly related to R&D include scientific staff (PhD candidates, postdocs, principal investigators), technicians and scientific support staff.

When entering personnel costs, one of the three cost calculation methods described in the Framework Decision (Section 4) must be used. An organisation may apply only one of these methodologies.

Personnel costs + 50% overhead method

The direct personnel costs (gross salary, holiday allowance, non-profit-dependent end-of-year bonus/13th month, employer's charges, etc.) of project staff are entered and automatically increased by a 50% overhead rate. This surcharge is intended to compensate for the indirect or overhead costs of the organisation.

The hourly rate is calculated by dividing the direct personnel costs by the number of productive hours per year commonly applied within the organisation. This method is mainly intended for personnel employed under a regular employment contract.

Fixed hourly rate
The fixed hourly rate covers both personnel costs/labour costs and the organisation's indirect or overhead costs. Within the PPP Innovation Scheme, a fixed hourly rate of €60 per hour is applied.

Parties that do not receive PPP funding may apply their own hourly rate, provided that the cost calculation is based on a commonly used and verifiable method, grounded in sound business-economic principles and standards that are considered acceptable in normal practice and that are systematically applied by participants in collaborative projects. These parties may adjust the standard €60 hourly rate in the budget form.

Integral Cost System (ICS)
The Integral Cost System (ICS) method is suitable for large organisations that regularly submit funding applications to RVO and must be approved in advance at the organisational level by RVO.

When using ICS, the organisation must therefore submit proof of approval from RVO when submitting the application. **Please note: when using ICS, costs for materials, depreciation, and travel and subsistence are often already included in the personnel costs. To avoid double funding, these costs may not be listed separately in the budget form.**

⚠ A complete and accurate time registration must be maintained for personnel costs throughout the duration of the project.

Costs of materials and supplies
Costs for materials and supplies include the use of materials from existing stock as well as materials purchased specifically for the project. Costs for materials not specifically purchased for the project may be included if their use is recorded. When reporting consumables, the historical purchase cost must be used. Materials include consumables such as raw materials, components, chemicals, kits, etc.

Costs for the use of machines and equipment
Equipment costs include the use of existing equipment or the purchase of new equipment, machinery or software licences.Usage costs for existing equipment that was not specifically purchased for the project must be calculated based on a verifiable record of equipment use. This means that the time or number of operations performed for the project must be demonstrably recorded. A cost per unit of time or per operation must also be calculated.
For equipment purchased specifically for the project, the costs must be supported by an invoice and included using a linear depreciation method with a minimum depreciation period of five years.

⚠ If a company includes costs for a product, service, or delivery within the framework of this scheme, these costs must be based on the actual cost price. Charging profit mark-ups, margins, or other commercial rates is not permitted. Only directly attributable, actual, market-conform costs demonstrably incurred for the execution of the project may be included.

Costs payable to third parties
Third-party costs are direct project costs for which invoices are received from external parties. These costs must be proportionate relative to the rest of the project budget. If this cost category is excessively high, it may influence the assessment by the evaluation committee.
Examples of third-party costs include: outsourcing of animal experiments, expense reimbursements for individuals with lived experience, METC/CCD fees, hiring a consultant, compensation for volunteers, remuneration of board members through a separate company structure, secondment of personnel

Publication, travel and subsistence costs
Costs for Open Access publication, conferences, and travel and accommodation related to international conferences may be included here. Costs for domestic travel and commuting are not eligible.

Examples of non-eligible costs
The following examples illustrate non-eligible costs, which may therefore not be included in the budget form:

- Applying for and maintaining patents[4]
- Audit costs
- Bench fees
- Overhead
- Support staff not directly related to R&D activities, such as:
  - o Project controller
  - o Business developer
  - o Administrative staff
- Costs related to implementation of the developed innovation
- Preparation of a business case
- Conducting efficiency studies (Health Technology Assessment)
- Non-scientific dissemination
- Project management activities not directly related to R&D activities, such as:
  - o Escalation to a steering committee
  - o Developing a risk management model
  - o Administrative reporting

Instructions budget form
Within the BRAINS-2026 PPS Call, a specific budget form is used. This budget form contains several built-in functions and references. It is therefore important to follow the instructions provided in the budget form (see the "Instructions" tab). Modifying the built-in functions and references in the budget form is not permitted.

For further explanation of the calculation of eligible costs, see Verordening (EU) nr. 651/2014 van de Commissie van 17 juni 2014, artikel 25, and the Kaderbesluit nationale EZK- en LNV-subsidies, Hoofdstuk 4, artikel 10-14.

3.7 Data management

Open access publications
Health~Holland considers it important that research results partially or fully funded with PPP funding (public funds) are freely accessible worldwide. All scientific publications resulting from research funded through PPP subsidies must therefore be freely accessible worldwide (open access) from the moment of publication.

Through the Open Access website, organisations can check whether agreements have been made with traditional publishers. This website provides, among other things, an overview of more than 8,000 journals in which corresponding authors from Dutch universities and university medical centres can publish open access free of charge or at a reduced rate. Costs associated with open access publishing are considered eligible project costs.

FAIR
Health~Holland encourages optimal use of research data and therefore requires that data be stored according to the FAIR- principles: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable. This means that data generated within the projects can be found, understood and used by both humans and machines. The process of making data FAIR is explained by the GoFAIR Foundation in the three-point FAIRification framework. Health~Holland intends to further expand its policy regarding FAIR data management in the future and will increasingly monitor the FAIR compliance of project data.

Data management plan
To increase awareness among researchers of the importance of responsible data management, applicants mustprepare a data management plan after final approval of their proposal. This plan must follow the

[4] Costs for patents that are purchased at arm's length conditions from external sources, or for which a licence is granted by external sources, are eligible for funding.

Health~Holland data management plan format. Approval of the data management plan by Health~Holland is a condition for the disbursement of PPP funding.

4. Procedure

4.1 Application procedure and timeline

Publication BRAINS-2026 PPS call	March 2026
Deadline submission pre-proposal	Friday April 24 2026, CET 12:00
Invitation to wwrite full proposal	No later than May 19 2026
Valorization mentoring programme	May 20 – August 7
Deadline submission full proposal	Monday September 7 2026, CET 12:00
Eligibility check	Within 7 days after receipt of the application
Assessment by external reviewers and evaluation committee	September – October 2026
Rebuttal	Monday October 12 – November 2 2026
Final deliberation by evaluation committee	November – December 2026
Funding decision by BRAINS Steering Committee	End January 2027
Submission of final unsigned Consortium Agreement	No later than 3 months after receipt of the award letter
Submission of signed Consortium Agreement	Two weeks after approval of the final version by BRAINS

Submitting a PPS funding application within the BRAINS-2026 PPS Call consists of the following steps:

- **Step 1:** Submission of a pre-proposal **(deadline Friday 24 April 2026, CET 12:00)**
- **Step 2:** Valorization mentoring programme
- **Step 3:** Submission of a full proposal **(deadline Monday 7 September 2026, CET 12:00)**

4.2 Step 1 – Mandatory pre-proposal

The deadline for submitting a pre-proposal is **Friday 24 April 2026, CET 12:00**. Pre-proposals can be submitted by sending an email to pps_brains@hersenstichting.nl.
Only pre-proposals using the template 'BRAINS-2026 PPS Open Call – preapplication form' will be considered.

Please note: submitting a pre-proposal is mandatory in order to be eligible to submit a full proposal.

After receipt of the pre-proposal, it will be checked for eligibility according to the consortium and budget conditions described in Section 3.1. A pre-proposal that does not meet the eligibility criteria will definitively exclude the submission of a full proposal.

4.2.1 Assessment of pre-proposals

If, after the eligibility check, more eligible pre-proposals are received than can be invited to submit a full proposal, a ranking and selection will be made. The selection will be based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Expected added value for multiple neurological disorders
- Composition of the consortium
- Relevance (societal, scientific and economic)
- Technology readiness levels and type of research within the project
- End-user and target-group participation

Please note: Only proposals that meet the eligibility criteria and are ranked as most promising based on the above criteria will be invited to submit a full proposal. If your pre-proposal is rejected based on the eligibility check or the selection process, the applicant will receive a notification explaining why the project was not invited to submit a full proposal.

⚠ The scope of the full proposal and the composition of the consortium must remain essentially unchanged. In the event of significant changes between the pre-proposal and the full proposal, the consortium must contact the BRAINS programme.

4.3 Step 2 – Valorization mentoring programme

Following a positive pre-proposal evaluation, consortia will be invited to prepare a full proposal. During this period, consultation sessions with advisors from EATRIS and/or Biotech Booster will take place. These online sessions aim to determine what is required to increase the TRL level and thereby enhance the likelihood that patients will ultimately benefit from the project outcomes.

EATRIS is a European non-profit organisation focused on improving and optimising the preclinical and early clinical development of technologies, medicines, vaccines and diagnostics, and overcoming barriers to health innovation. EATRIS strengthens translational and regulatory quality through a network of more than 150 academic and clinical partners in over 15 EU countries, providing direct access to thousands of researchers and infrastructures. It offers valorisation advice, EMA liaison and clinical validation strategies.

Biotech Booster is a National Growth Fund programme that strengthens the innovation pipeline through entrepreneurship training, investor matchmaking and business development support starting from TRL-5. The consortium connects more than 200 investors and entrepreneurs in the Netherlands and has a proven track record with over 50 spin-offs.

Submitting a full proposal within this call automatically means participation in the mentoring programme. This programme is provided by the BRAINS programme to increase the likelihood that research results ultimately reach patients.

4.4 Step 3 – Full proposal

4.4.1 Submission of full proposal

The deadline for submitting the full proposal is **Monday September 7 2026, CET 12:00**. Full proposals can be submitted by sending an email to pps_brains@hersenstichting.nl.
All required documents are available on the website.

The full proposal must consist of the following documents:

- A fully completed application using the template 'BRAINS-2026 PPS Open Call – full application form'
- Budget form
- Letters of Commitment (Letters of Intent will not be accepted), in which each participant confirms the co-funding commitment and the amount of in-kind and/or in-cash contribution, signed by an authorised representative. The main applicant does not need to submit a Letter of Commitment.
- An unsigned draft version of the Consortium Agreement (a blank template is not sufficient). The consortium is required to use the provided template consortium agreement. The draft version may only contain non-essential modifications that do not conflict with the framework regulation. In case of doubt regarding modifications, the consortium should consult an expert such as a technology transfer office or legal advisor.
- A signed Declaration that the company is not an undertaking in difficulty for all Dutch SMEs that intend to use PPP funding within the project. See *verklaring geen onderneming in moeilijkheden*
- An SME checkfor all Dutch SMEs intending to use PPP funding within the project.

Instructions for writing the proposal

- The application form must be completed in English.
- Avoid repetition from previous answers; each answer must provide clear added value compared to other sections.
- Additional appendices or documents other than those listed above are not permitted and will not be considered.
- The word limit per question in the application form may not be exceeded.
- Avoid copying AI-generated text verbatim without editing; ensure the proposal reflects the consortium's own vision, context and expertise. The consortium is responsible for verifying and substantiating all statements and facts.
- Adding figures or images to the proposal is permitted and may visually support the application. However, text tables may not be included as images and images containing large amounts of text may not be used to circumvent the word limit. Images with limited explanatory text are allowed; words within such images do not count toward the word limit.
- Statements and figures must be supported by sources listed in the reference list at the end of the application form (Section D. References).
- The application form must be signed by a formally authorised representative of the entity acting as the main applicant.

4.4.2 Eligibility of the application

After submission, the application will be checked for eligibility within seven working days. This check verifies the completeness of the application and whether it complies with the conditions described in Section 3.2. If the application is incomplete, the consortium will have one working day to make the required corrections and provide the requested information.

4.4.3 Evaluation of PPS funding applications

Eligible applications will be assessed against all conditions of this call, including the type of research and alignment with strategic policy documents such as the NTS. Proposals will also be evaluated by an expert and independent evaluation committee. The final composition of the evaluation committee will be published on the website no later than the deadline for submitting the full proposal.

External reviewers may also be consulted during the evaluation process. Both reviewers and members of the evaluation committee must sign a confidentiality agreement before assessing a PPS funding application. The evaluation committee assesses proposals according to the criteria described in Section 4.4.4 and assigns each criterion a score (1–5). Based on these scores, a ranking of all applications is established. During the evaluation committee meeting, all full proposals are discussed individually and provided with a recommendation for (conditional) funding or rejection. Based on the number of recommended projects and the available budget, a ranking is submitted as advice to the BRAINS programme. The BRAINS Steering Committee ultimately decides whether or not to award funding and determines the level of PPP funding for the collaborative project.

4.4.4. Substantive criteria

The evaluation committee assesses project proposals based on the following content-related criteria. These criteria are divided into societal value and programme alignment, scientific quality, feasibility, and economic value.

1. *Societal value and programme alignment*
   a) The project presents a clear problem definition with clear societal relevance for the Netherlands and provides a convincing and well-substantiated contribution to solving it.
   b) The project is cross-disease: the technology, methodology or application is relevant and applicable to multiple neurological disorders, including at least one of dementia, epilepsy, MS or Parkinson's disease.
   c) The project aligns with at least one of the three BRAINS themes: Blood-Brain Barrier, Connected Neuro-Tech or Human-relevant brain models.

d) The target group of the innovation is clearly described and sufficiently involved in the preparation, execution and implementation of the project.
e) Planned activities for dissemination and implementation of results are well considered and clearly described for each partner.
f) The project aligns with the Knowledge and Innovation Agenda 2024–2027 Health and Care by contributing to the central mission and one of the five specific missions.

2. Scientific quality

a) The research is clearly described and the project objectives are well defined.
b) The project is innovative and builds on the state of the art while generating new scientific insights and developing novel applications.
c) The project focuses primarily on applied research (industrial research and/or experimental development), with a maximum of 20% fundamental research.
d) The methodology and approach are appropriate and sufficiently detailed, including timeline, milestones, deliverables and realistic estimates of participants, animals and/or samples where relevant.
e) If animal experiments are part of the project, it is convincingly justified how these relate to the human situation and why they are necessary.
f) Clear criteria are defined for determining when the project can be considered successful.

3. Feasibility

a) The consortium possesses the required expertise, network, personnel, facilities and resources to successfully complete the project.
b) The roles of consortium partners are complementary, clearly described and based on equal collaboration. Potential conflicts of interest must be addressed in a separate document.
c) The project timeline is realistic and accounts for possible iterations and adjustments based on interim findings.
d) Project risks are properly assessed and mitigation strategies are described.
e) The project budget is realistic and consistent with PPP conditions.

4. Economic value

a) The project results in concrete innovative products and/or services with economic value.
b) Planned activities for further development towards market introduction (TRL 8–9) are realistic and well developed.
c) The market for the innovation is correctly addressed (market size, access, cost-effectiveness, risks).
d) The economic value for the Netherlands is clearly described and the necessity of the project is well justified.
e) The project contributes demonstrably to the development of one or more priority key technologies of the NTS and aligns with Dutch growth markets.

4.5 Award procedure, monitoring and payments

4.5.1 After grant award of the PPP funding application

Within four months after receiving the award letter, the project coordinator must submit a final unsigned consortium agreement agreed upon by all partners to the BRAINS programme for review. After approval, the consortium has two weeks to obtain signatures from all partners.

Once the consortium agreement is fully signed and approved, the BRAINS programme prepares an implementation agreement, which must be signed by all partners within four weeks. This agreement defines the rights, obligations and contributions of the consortium partners.

Health~Holland will publish information about all funded projects on the projects page of its website based on a project profile provided by the consortium. The consortium must also submit a data management plan (see Section 3.7).

Once the signed implementation agreement, data management plan and project profile have been received and approved, the first advance payment of PPP funding will be issued. Subsequent payments will be made annually after approval of the progress reports and the final report.

Payments will be made to the institution where the project coordinator is employed. The project coordinator is responsible for distributing funds among consortium partners and providing collective financial accountability.

4.5.2 During the project

During the project period, the following obligations apply:

- All communication about PPS projects must clearly reflect the public-private nature of the project and mention the public and private partners involved. Communication guidelines can be found in the Health~Holland Brandbook.
- A time registration system must be maintained for each employee during the project period.
- RVO is expected to request annual progress information from all ongoing PPS projects.
- Each project will be assigned an account manager, who serves as the primary contact person from the BRAINS programme and participates in steering committee meetings.
- Within six weeks after each project year, the project coordinator must submit a progress report using the format provided by the BRAINS programme.
- The consortium must organise a consortium meeting each year, involving the target group and end users. The project coordinator must notify the BRAINS programme so that the account manager or another representative can attend.

4.5.3 After the end date of the project

Within eight weeks after the project end date, the project coordinator must submit the following documents to the BRAINS programme:

- A final report
- Management declarations for consortium partners that have used less than €125,000 PPP funding
- Audit statements for consortium partners that have used €125,000 or more PPP funding
- An updated project profile including the results of the completed project.

The final PPP payment will be made once these documents[5] have been received and approved by the BRAINS programme.

[5] Please note: the documents required for the final reporting may be subject to change, depending on any new requirements introduced by RVO.

5. More information

5.1 Calculation examples

Calculation example 1 – Research organisation and Dutch SME

This calculation example assumes a project consisting entirely of industrial research.

Parties	Costs
Research organisation X	€ 600.000
Dutch SME Y	€ 400.000
Total	**€ 1.000.000**

Parties	Max. % PPP-subsidy*	Max. € PPP-subsidy
Research organisation X	70%	€ 420.000
Dutch SME Y	60%	€ 240.000
Total	**66%**	**€ 660.000**

The percentage of PPP funding is calculated based on the **total costs of the respective partner.*

Minimum required contributions	% of total costs*	Minimum contribution (€)
Research organisation X	10%	€ 100.000
Enterprises (with and without profit motive)	15%	€ 150.000
Open amount to be financed based on costs and minimum required contribution	***= €1.000.000 (costs) - €660.000 (max. PPP-subsidy) - €250.000 (minimum contributions)***	**€ 90.000**

Percentages for the minimum required contributions are calculated based on the **total project costs.*

Funding per partner

Parties	Total costs	In kind	In cash	PPP-subsidy
Research organisation X	€ 600.000	€ 180.000	€ 0	€ 420.000
Dutch SME Y	€ 400.000	€ 160.000	€ 0	€ 240.000
Total	**€ 1.000.000**	**€ 340.000**	**€ 0**	**€ 660.000**

In this example, the remaining amount of €90,000 is distributed between the research organisation and the SME, while both parties make use of the maximum allowable PPP funding.

Calculation example 2 – Consortium consisting of four parties

This calculation example assumes a project consisting entirely of **industrial research**.

Parties	Costs
Research organisation X	€ 500.000
Dutch SME Y	€ 150.000
Large company Z	€ 250.000
Hospital A	€ 100.000
Total	**€ 1.000.000**

Parties	Maximum % PPP-subsidy*	Maximum % PPP-subsidy*
Research organisation X	70%	€ 350.000
Dutch SME Y	60%	€ 90.000
Large company Z	0%	€ 0
Hospital A	0%	€ 0
Total	**44%**	**€ 440.000**

The percentage of PPP funding is calculated based on the **total costs of the respective partner.*

Minimum required contributions	% of total costs*	Minimum contribution (€)
Research organisations	10%	€ 100.000
Enterprises (with and without profit motive)	15%	€ 150.000
Open amount to be financed based on costs and minimum required contribution	***=€1.000.000 (costs) - €440.000 (maximum PPP-subsidy) - €250.000 (minimum contributions)***	**€ 310.000**

Percentages for the minimum required contributions are calculated based on the **total project costs.*

Funding per partner

Parties	Total costs	In kind	In cash	PPP-subsidy
Research organisation X	€ 500.000	€ 125.000	(€ 25.000)*	€ 350.000
Dutch SME Y	€ 150.000	€ 60.000	€ 0	€ 90.000
Large company Z	€ 250.000	€ 250.000	€ 50.000	€ 0
Hospital A	€ 100.000	€ 75.000	(€ 25.000)*	€ 0
Total	**€ 1.000.000**	**€ 510.000**	**€ 50.000**	**€ 440.000**

**Numbers in parentheses indicate that these partners receive the private cash contribution and use it to cover part of their costs. In this case, the in-cash contribution of Large Company Z is distributed between Research Organisation X and Hospital A.*

5.2 Downloads

Documents for consultation

- Mission document 2024-2027
- Knowledge and Innovation Agenda 2024-2027
- Knowledge and Innovation Covenant 2024-2027
- National Technology Strategy

Legislation and regulations

- Regulation on National EZK and LNV subsidies
- Kaderbesluit nationale EZK- en LNV-subsidies
- Kaderregeling betreffende staatssteun voor onderzoek, ontwikkeling en innovatie
- Vedening (EU) nr. 651/2014 van de Commissie van 17 juni 2014
- Definities Onderzoek & ontwikkeling uit het EU Steunkader
- PPS-Innovatieregeling Staatscourant 20 oktober 2023

5.3 Questions

For questions regarding the BRAINS-2026 PPS Call, please send an email to: pps_brains@hersenstichting.nl

Appendix A: Definitions of the three types of research

Fundamental research means experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any direct commercial application or use in view.
Industrial research means the planned research or critical investigation aimed at the acquisition of new knowledge and skills for developing new products, processes or services or for bringing about a significant improvement in existing products, processes or services. It comprises the creation of component parts of complex systems, and may include the construction of prototypes in a laboratory environment or in an environment with simulated interfaces to existing systems as well as of pilot lines, when necessary for the industrial research and notably for generic technology validation.
Experimental development means acquiring, combining, shaping and using existing scientific, technological, business and other relevant knowledge and skills with the aim of developing new or improved products, processes or services. This may also include, for example, activities aiming at the conceptual definition, planning and documentation of new products, processes or services. Experimental development may comprise prototyping, demonstrating, piloting, testing and validation of new or improved products, processes or services in environments representative of real life operating conditions where the primary objective is to make further technical improvements on products, processes or services that are not substantially set. This may include the development of a commercially usable prototype or pilot which is necessarily the final commercial product and which is too expensive to produce for it to be used only for demonstration and validation purposes. Experimental development does not include routine or periodic changes made to existing products, production lines, manufacturing processes, services and other operations in progress, even if those changes may represent improvement.

Appendix B-I: Technology Readiness Levels

The Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) indicate the maturity of a technology, ranging from basic principles (TRL 1) to a proven system in practice (TRL 9). The scale is used internationally (e.g. by the EU and national funding agencies) to position innovations and determine the next steps towards market introduction.

TRL	Definition
TRL 1	Basic principles observed
TRL 2	Technology concept formulated
TRL 3	Experimental proof of concept
TRL 4	Technology validated in lab
TRL 5	Technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
TRL 6	Technology demonstrated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
TRL 7	System prototype demonstration in operational environment
TRL 8	System complete and qualified
TRL 9	Actual system proven in operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies; or in space)

Appendix C: HH-tool National Technology Strategy

National Technology Strategy: Definitions key technologies Key technology	Definition (NTS)
Biomolecular & cell technologies	*Biomolecular and cell technologies fall within the broader field of biotechnology, but the focus here is on molecules and cells. This key technology includes mapping, measuring and using molecules such as DNA, RNA, and proteins/metabolites. Sub-technologies include omics, gene editing, stem cell technology and synthetic cell technology.*
Imaging Technology	*Imaging technologiesdeal with the generation, collection, duplication, analysis, modification and visualisation of images (optical and non-optical). They involve the integral chain of imaging, requiring both hardware and software. They are widely used in the medical sector, semiconductor industry, security domain, agriculture, industry, traffic and aerospace.*
Artificial Intelligence & Data	*Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a systems technology aimed at realising behaviour by machines that resembles natural intelligence. Data science, data analytics and data spaces concern all aspects of collecting, managing, accessing, sharing and analysing data to create value.*
Optical Systems & integrated photonics	*Optical systems are engineered systems to refract, reflect or manipulate light to perform particular optical functions. For example, communication is possible using photons as information carriers. Integrated photonics is the technology that integrates various photonic functions (generation, modulation, sensing, etc.) in a functional photonic chip.*
Mechatronics & optomechatronics	*Mechatronics involves the integrated design of mechanical systems and associated control and regulation systems and combines physics, mechanical and electrical engineering, and ICT. Optomechatronics involves the integration of optical technology into mechatronic systems. Optomechatronic systems play an important role in semiconductor manufacturing, scientific instruments, 3D printing, medical equipment, aerospace and robotics.*
Semiconductor technologies (Microelectronics)	*Semiconductor technologies concern semiconductor components and/or highly miniaturised electronic subsystems and their integration into larger products and systems. They include the fabrication, design, packaging and testing of semiconductor components into microscale systems that integrate multiple functions on a chip and the development of machines for this purpose.*
Quantum technologies	*Quantum technologies utilise the dual nature of the smallest particles we know, such as photons, atoms and electrons, as well as similar systems that exhibit quantum properties. They facilitate the quantum computer, quantum communication and quantum sensing, which can be used to find solutions to complex problems.*
Cybersecurity technologies	*Cyber security technologies focus on the reduction of relevant digital risks, also including dealing with risks of damage or failure of digital systems and the availability, integrity and confidentiality of data. They are aimed at preventing cyber incidents and - when cyber incidents have occurred - detecting them, mitigating damage and making recovery easier.*
Process technologies, including process intensification	*This key enabling technology focuses on the optimal, stable and safe design of (green) chemical production processes. This includes matters such as: scalability, heat integration, safety, optimal downstream processing, space utilisation and cost efficiency. We want to make more use of sustainable raw*

	materials, reduce by-products and waste streams and reuse and recycle them as much as possible.
Energy materials	*Energy materials comprise all materials that facilitate the storage of (sustainably generated) energy, transport it, efficiently capture and transform it into another form of stored energy. They make an essential contribution to the energy and climate transition, for example in wind turbines, batteries or electrolysers.*

Appendix D: Definition of enterprise

According to established case law from the European Court of Justice, an enterprise is any unit that carries out economic activity irrespective of its legal status and manner of funding.
In this regard, the following points are important:

- The legal status (e.g. a private company or a foundation) of the entity is not decisive;
- A for-profit status is not required, competition on the market is sufficient (economic activities). This means that the entity participates in economic dealings and that there is business funding. Business funding means that the funding cannot consist entirely of grants, gifts and endowments. A turnover needs to be made and there has to be income from economic activity. *Please note: Startups/businesses fully funded by capital investments are not required to generate turnover yet;*
- An entity that carries out both economic and non-economic activities will only be designated as an enterprise with respect to the economic activities;
- The European Court of Justice has further determined that entities that (legally or de facto) fall under the authority of the same main entity should be viewed as a single enterprise;
- ANBI: Having a Dutch ANBI or charitable status (serving the common interest, no profit-making status, 90% rule) means that such an entity with ANBI status cannot also be an enterprise. That is because an entity with ANBI status enjoys fiscal advantages that a business does not enjoy.
- Foundations**:** A foundation can never be a for-profit enterprise, as pursuing profit is legally incompatible with the legal form of a foundation. If the foundation engages in economic activities, it may be regarded as a not-for-profit enterprise.

With respect to economic activity, the following aspects are, amongst others, considered in line with the Dutch Tax and Customs Administration:

- Registration with the Dutch Chamber of Commerce (KvK);
- Having a Dutch VAT (BTW) number and/or corporate income tax (VPB) number;
- Goods and/or services are delivered;
- The remuneration received for these is more than symbolic;
- The entity participates in the economic arena and enjoys income from this.

Appendix E: European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC regarding SME definition

The European Commission's Recommendation 2003/361/EC, adopted on 6 May 2003, provides a standardized definition of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) across the European Union. This harmonized framework ensures consistency in eligibility for support programs, regulatory exemptions, and statistical reporting. The criteria are based on three main factors: **staff headcount**, **annual turnover**, and **annual balance sheet total**.

The classification of SMEs is as follows:

> **Micro-enterprises** are defined as enterprises that employ fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 2 million.
> **Small enterprises** are defined as enterprises that employ fewer than 50 persons and whose annual turnover or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 10 million.
> **Medium-sized enterprises** are defined as enterprises that employ fewer than 250 persons and either have an annual turnover that does not exceed EUR 50 million, or an annual balance sheet not exceeding EUR 43 million.

For more details 'The revised User Guide to the SME definition' can be downloaded here.
Or use the European SME Wizard.

Health~Holland may verify the outcome of the self-assessment questionnaire using the three main criteria: staff headcount, annual turnover, and annual balance sheet total.

Appendix F: Conflict of Interest

1. Introduction and Legal Framework

According to Articles 29.d and 30.c of the Framework, applicable to the PPP Subsidy regulation, research organisations must receive remuneration equivalent to the market price for the intellectual property rights generated during the project. The absence, or inadequacy of agreements pertaining to a remuneration based on the market price leads to the indirect granting of state aid to the participating industrial parties.
'Remuneration equivalent to the market price' entails a best-effort obligation for the parties involved. It means that the research organisation and the participating industrial parties are expected to actively negotiate this remuneration on so-called 'arm's length' terms – conditions that reflect what would reasonably be agreed upon between unrelated parties in a competitive, commercial setting. Any transaction resulting from an open, transparent and non-discriminatory procedure will be deemed to comply with the arm's length procedure.

2. Definition of Conflict of Interest (COI)

Every project has the potential for a conflict of interest between the research organisation and one or more industrial partners. A conflict of interest can exist on a personal (individual) level or on an organisational (institutional) level. An objective conflict of interest exists when a situation has the potential to create undue advantage or disadvantage – regardless of whether harm or benefit actually occurs. The presence of a conflict of interest means that the arm's length conditions are potentially not met.

Conflict of Interest often arises when financial interests are present that may influence the objectivity of decision-making or project execution. Examples of financial interest may be: the PI or its direct family member have shares, options and/or other participation in any of the industrial participant(s); a participating company is a recent spin-off from the research organisation with, for example, overlapping personnel, shared IP rights, or ongoing financial interests.

Individual Conflict of Interest*: An individual conflict of interest arises when a person's personal interests — such as financial gain, intellectual property rights, or family ties — have the potential to influence their professional responsibilities and objectivity within the project*.

Examples, but not limited to:

- A researcher, for example, the Principal Investigator (PI), working on the project holds shares in or has a formal role (founder, advisor, or board member) within a (spin-off) company participating in the consortium.
- A researcher receives royalty payments from a patent licensed to an industrial partner within the consortium.
- A project member has been paid over €10,000 in consulting fees by a partner company in the last year.
- A researcher is employed by both the research institution and a company in the consortium.
- A close relative of a researcher is a shareholder or executive at one of the participating industrial partners.

Institutional Conflict of Interest*:* An institutional conflict of interest occurs when an organisation involved in the project has financial, structural, or governance-related ties to another participating organisation, which could affect objective project decisions or create preferential outcomes.

Examples, but not limited to:

- A participating company is a recent spin-off from the research organisation, with, for example,overlapping personnel, shared IP rights, or ongoing financial interests.
- A research organization and a participating industrial partner share employees, board membersor management.
- One consortium partner holds equity in another partner without being a formal affiliate.
- An industrial partner funds sponsored research in the same department that is executing thePPP project.
- Decision-making authority within the consortium is disproportionately influenced by a singleinstitution.

It is up to the parties concerned – and in particular the directors of the participants – to recognize, interpret and report such an objective conflict of interest. This obligation to report may already exist at the time of the application being made.

3. Identifying Conflicts of Interest

To help identify potential conflicts of interest, the following questions can be used as a reference. These are not exhaustive but aim to prompt transparent disclosure.

3.1 Individual potential COI

- Is any individual involved employed by both (one of) the research organization(s) and (one of)the industrial partner(s)?
- Does the Principal Investigator (PI) in the project have any financial interest in (one of) theindustrial participant(s)? If so, how many shares, options and/or other financial benefits do thePI (or the relatives) have rights to?
- Does any other investigator(s)/employee(s) of the research organisation have any financialinterest in the industrial participant(s)? If so, how many shares, options and/or benefits do theinvestigator (or the relatives) have rights to?
- Have the PI or their immediate relatives received financial benefits (e.g. shares, patent rights,consultancy fees) from any industrial participant(s) involved in the project?
- Does the Principal Investigator (PI) have an inventorship role in a patent that has been licensedto, or is being developed by, a participant in the project?
- In the last 12 months, did any commercial entity or any of the entities that are participating inthe project pay for or reimburse you (your employer, or your relatives) for consulting services,salaries or otherwise? If, so does such payments exceed €10.000 per year? If so, will thecompany in question benefit from the outcome of the Project?

3.2 Institutional potential COI

- Are any of the consortium partners in the project affiliated or associated with another consortiumpartner in the project? If so, how?
- Does any consortium partner have directly or indirectly any shares, options and/or any otherparticipation in another consortium partner despite not being an affiliated entity? If so, howmany shares, options and/or participations?
- If the financial interest as stated in the two points above does not apply, would a consortiumpartner exercise any control over any of the other consortium partners' decision-making? If so,how?
- In the last 12 months, did any Industrial partner in the Project pay for or reimburse anysponsored research or services to the Research Organisation(s) to the same research group(s)involved in the Project? If, so does such payments exceed €10.000 per year? If so, will thecompany in question benefit from the outcome of the Project?

4. Reporting Obligations

Upon identification of a (potential) conflict of interest, the Program group must be notified immediately. This includes situations already present at the time of application.

The following questions must be answered **in a separate document:**

- What is the nature of the potential conflict of interest? Please use the questions in 3.1 and/or3.2 to describe the nature of the potential COI.
- Have the involved participants, including relevant directors, adequately weighed the interests?
- Has the potential conflict of interest been adequately addressed?
- Is there a transparent procedure in place to ensure that the participants, PI's, researchers ordirectors can abstain from involvement in certain decisions (which may involve a conflict ofinterest)?
- How are the arm's length conditions adequately met?
- Has the participant/director provided for the involvement of other researchers who can makethese decisions without bias?
- Can the director involve his or her fellow director(s) in the decision-making process and is itpossible in the management relationship for the director concerned to abstain from makingmanagement decisions (four eyes principle)?

The responsibility for answering these questions rests exclusively with the consortium partners. This means that the consortium parties involved have to assess whether and to what extent the potential conflict of interest has been adequately addressed and whether they are satisfied with the precautionary measures that the director(s) concerned have taken.

5. Role of Program group and Health~Holland

The Program group, and by extension Health~Holland, will not subjectively evaluate the conflict of interest. The Program group will assess whether the performance of the consortium will be hindered or compromised by the existence of such a potential conflict of interest. The Program group, and by extension Health~Holland, will therefore require full transparency if and when an objective conflict of interest arises or is likely to arise.

If, as a result of a conflict of interest, situations occur that violate the arm's length conditions, the consortium parties are liable for any resulting damage, including implications of indirect state aid.

6. Legal Support

For the sake of completeness, Health~Holland recommends involving legal support from the consortium partners, preferably from the research organisation, in order to adequately address a potential conflict of interest.