

Regulations EOS research programme (call 2021)

General Regulations

For TYPE I-FL, TYPE II-FL and other institutions contracted with FWO in the frame of an EOS consortium, the General Regulations of FWO apply. For TYPE I-FR, TYPE II-FR and other institutions contracted with F.R.S.-FNRS in the frame of an EOS consortium, the General Regulations of F.R.S.-FNRS apply.

Detailed information, guide for applicants, guide for evaluators and forms will be made available online as soon as the new EOS call is being launched.

Any additional information can be obtained from:

- The Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO), eos@fwo.be .
- The F.R.S.-FNRS, eos.helpdesk@frs-fnrs.be .

Aim

Art. 1.

The aim of the EOS programme is to promote joint research projects in basic research in any discipline between the Flemish and French-speaking community, based on scientific excellence.

Eligibility

Art. 2.

The FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS board can allocate EOS project funding to four TYPES of host institutions defined below.

Art. 3.

Host institutions that are fully eligible are defined as TYPE I institutions.

§1. TYPE I-FL: for the Flemish community, the eligible host institutions are the following:

- Universities in the Flemish community;
- The Evangelical Theological Faculty in Leuven and the Faculty of Protestant Theology in Brussels for research related to religious studies or theology;
- The Antwerp Maritime Academy for research related to nautical sciences;
- The Vlerick Management School and the Antwerp Management School for research related to management sciences;
- The Institute of Tropical Medicine for research related to tropical medicine, veterinary medicine or healthcare in developing countries.

TYPE I-FL principal investigators and the spokesperson-coordinator of the consortium must hold at least one of the appointments or research fellowships as governed by the provisions of Article 10, §1., §2. and §3. of [the FWO regulations for research projects fundamental research](#) .

TYPE I-FL co-supervisors should be researchers who have obtained a PhD, with a remunerated appointment at a TYPE I-FL host institution.

If the requirements set out here are not met at the time of the application, the applicant needs to prove that this will be the case at the start of the EOS research project. Moreover, the appointment of the spokesperson coordinator and principal investigator must fully cover the duration of the EOS research project applied for. In addition, the submission of the application shall be subject to prior approval by the Head of institution where the research will be carried out.

§2. TYPE I-FR: for the French-speaking community, the eligible host institutions are the following:

- The six French-speaking universities from the French-speaking community.

TYPE I-FR principal investigators and the spokesperson-coordinator of the consortium should be a permanent researcher of F.R.S.-FNRS (chercheur qualifié, maître de recherches or directeur de recherches en poste), or a researcher holding a tenure track academic or scientific position (or an assimilated position including pending tenure track) within one of the research institutions from the French-speaking community.

This appointment must have a final and conclusive assent from the competent body to legitimize this appointment in accordance with the Law or the university's regulations at the latest by the beginning of the EOS project.

This academic or scientific position must be effective at the latest by the beginning of the EOS project.

Moreover, the appointment of the spokesperson coordinator and principal investigator must meet these criteria for the duration of the EOS research project applied for.

TYPE I-FR co-supervisors should be researchers who have obtained a PhD, with a remunerated appointment at a TYPE I-FR host institution.

Research logisticians of rank A, as defined by the Royal Decree of 31st October 1953 fixing 'le statut des agrégés, des répétiteurs et des membres du personnel scientifique des universités de l'État', are allowed to be co-supervisor applicant provided they hold a Ph.D.

For the co-supervisors, if the requirements set out here are not met at the time of the submission, the applicant needs to prove that this will be the case at the start of the EOS research project.

The PI, spokesperson or co-supervisor who would have reached retirement at the starting date of the project is not eligible. If the applicant reaches the age of retirement in the course of the project, he/she should precisely describe the handover of his/her tasks in the proposal. Otherwise, the Head institution can provide prior approval to the retired PIs, spokespersons or co-supervisors in order to pursue the project until its completion.

Art. 4.

Research institutions of the Flemish and French-speaking community that are not comprised under Art 3. and are not considered as a federal research institution, are eligible for EOS funding and are defined as TYPE II institutions.

§1. TYPE II-FL: The following research institutions of the Flemish community are eligible:

- Institute for Agricultural and Fisheries Research (ILVO);
- Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO);
- Interuniversity Microelectronics Center (IMEC);

- Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp (KMSKA);
- Royal Conservatory of Antwerp;
- Royal Conservatory of Brussels;
- Royal Zoological Society – Antwerp (KMDA);
- Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp (MuHKA);
- Botanic Garden Meise;
- Flemish Institute for Biotechnology (VIB);
- Flemish Institute for Technological Research (VITO);
- Flemish School of Arts;
- Flanders Make;
- Flanders Marine Institute;
- Flanders Heritage Agency;
- Flanders Hydraulics Research;
- Flemish Peace Institute.

TYPE II-FL principal investigators should be researchers who have obtained a PhD and have a permanent remunerated appointment to one of the above listed TYPE II-FL institutions.

TYPE II-FL co-supervisors should be researchers who have obtained a PhD and have a remunerated appointment at one of the above listed TYPE II-FL institutions.

If the requirements set out here are not met at the time of the application, the applicant needs to prove that this will be the case at the start of the EOS research project. Moreover, the appointment of the principal investigator must fully cover the duration of the EOS research project applied for.

§2. TYPE II-FR: The following research institutions of the French-speaking community are eligible:

- Centre Wallon de Recherches Agronomiques (CRA-W);
- Institut de Recherches Microbiologiques Jean-Marie Wiame (I.R.M.W.);
- Musée Royal de Mariemont.

TYPE II-FR principal investigators should be researchers who have obtained a PhD and have a permanent remunerated appointment to one of the above listed TYPE II-FR institutions.

TYPE II-FR co-supervisors should be researchers who have obtained a PhD and have a remunerated appointment at one of the above listed TYPE II-FR institutions.

If the requirements set out above are not met at the time of the submission the applicant needs to prove that this will be the case at the start of the EOS research project. Moreover, the appointment of the principal investigator must meet these criteria for the duration of the EOS research project applied for.

The PI or co-supervisor who would have reached retirement at the starting date of the project is not eligible. If the applicant reaches the age of retirement in the course of the project, he/she should precisely describe the handover of his/her tasks in the proposal. Otherwise, the Head institution can provide prior approval to the retired PIs or co-supervisors in order to pursue the project until its completion.

Art 5.

The federal research institutions listed below are eligible for EOS funding and are defined as TYPE III institutions:

Official Federal Research Institutions:

- State Archives of Belgium
- Royal Belgian Institute for Space Aeronomy
- Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences
- Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage
- Royal Meteorological Institute of Belgium
- Royal Museum for Central Africa
- Royal Library of Belgium
- Royal Museums of Art and History
- Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium
- Royal Observatory of Belgium

Assimilated Federal Research Institutions:

- Veterinary and Agrochemical Research Center
- National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology
- Scientific Institute of Public Health
- Royal Military Academy
- Belgian Nuclear Research Center (SCK/CEN)
- Von Karman Institute
- Royal Museum of the Armed Forces and Military History

TYPE III principal investigators should be researchers who have obtained a PhD and have a permanent remunerated appointment to one of the above listed federal institutions.

TYPE III co-supervisors should be researchers who have obtained a PhD and have a remunerated appointment at one of the above listed federal institutions.

If the requirements set out here are not met at the time of the application, the applicant needs to prove that this will be the case at the start of the EOS research project. Moreover, the appointment of the principal investigator must fully cover the duration of the EOS research project applied for.

Art 6.

Any foreign research institution is also eligible for EOS funding and is defined as a TYPE IV institution.

TYPE IV principal investigators should be researchers who have obtained a PhD and have a permanent remunerated appointment at the concerned TYPE IV research institution.

TYPE IV co-supervisors should be researchers who have obtained a PhD and have a remunerated appointment at the concerned TYPE IV research institution.

If the requirements set out here are not met at the time of the application, the applicant needs to prove that this will be the case at the start of the EOS research project. Moreover, the appointment of the principal investigator must fully cover the duration of the EOS research project applied for.

EOS Consortium

Art. 7.

§1. Each EOS consortium must include minimum two and maximum six research groups from TYPE I institutions. A research group is defined as a principal investigator together with his/her co-supervisors from the same institution involved in the project.

§2. Each consortium must include at least one research group from a TYPE I-FL institution and one from a TYPE I-FR institution.

§3. In addition to the number of research groups from TYPE I institutions, each consortium may also contain up to two research groups belonging to TYPE II, III, and IV institutions.

§4. Each research group, regardless of the TYPE of research institution the research group belongs to, may participate in only one EOS application. As such each individual researcher can only take up the role of principal investigator (PI) or co-supervisor once per EOS call.

§5. At least one PhD student should be recruited by each community (at least one at a TYPE-FL and one at a TYPE-FR institution).

§6. Each research group, regardless of the TYPE of institution the research group belongs to, has to appoint a principal investigator who meets the requirements as defined in the ELIGIBILITY section of this regulation.

§7. Each consortium appoints one spokesperson-coordinator who must be affiliated to a TYPE I institution and must meet the requirements for a principal investigator as defined in the ELIGIBILITY section of these regulations.

Agreement and contracting parties

Art. 8.

§1. Each host institution involved in the approved EOS consortium, except TYPE IV institutions, and each principal investigator and co-supervisor, must be included in the EOS research contract: the contract shall stipulate all relevant provisions concerning the recruitment of staff, the administration of the EOS funding, and the ownership of the granted equipment.

§2. All contracting parties must meet the requirements set out in the ELIGIBILITY section of these regulations.

Evaluation procedure

Art. 9.

§1. EOS pre-proposals are to be submitted in English before the deadline by the spokesperson-coordinator through the online EOS platform as indicated in the guide for applicants. The pre-proposal must be submitted no later than 23 February 2021 at 2pm (Belgian time).

§2. In a first evaluation phase of the ex-ante evaluation, the eligible pre-proposals will be assessed by one of the three EOS sub-panels; (A) Life Sciences, (B) Exact Sciences and (C) Social Sciences and Humanities. The spokesperson-coordinator is responsible for selecting the appropriate sub-panel in which the proposal fits best. All three EOS sub-panels are composed of high-level international experts with a non-Belgian affiliation and a broad vision on science in general.

§3. The spokesperson-coordinators of EOS pre-proposals that were successful in the first evaluation phase (see §2) are allowed to submit an EOS full proposal through the online EOS platform no later than 7 July 2021 at 2pm (Belgian time).

§4. In a second evaluation phase, the EOS full proposals will be assessed by specialized international remote reviewers who will write evaluation reports that will be sent to the spokesperson-coordinator for commenting during the rebuttal phase. The rebuttal letter containing the feedback of the spokesperson-coordinator on the assessment of the international remote reviewers should be submitted before the announced deadline through the online EOS platform.

§5. In a third phase of the ex-ante evaluation, the EOS full proposals, together with the review reports and rebuttal letter, are assessed by the final EOS panel consisting of high-level international experts, without any current Belgian affiliation and a broad vision on science in general. The final EOS panel establishes a ranking of the EOS research projects based on the excellence of the predefined evaluation criteria as mentioned in the guide for applicants.

§6. In a last step, the FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS boards ratify the ranking of the final EOS panel.

Intellectual property rights

Art. 10.

Upon approval of the EOS research project, the EOS consortium has to engage in a partnership agreement including all research institutions involved in the consortium and stipulating the terms and conditions applying to publications, confidentiality and the protection and exploitation of intellectual property rights resulting from the EOS research project. The final partnership agreements need to be provided to both FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS in the first budgetary financial year of the approved EOS project.

Reporting

Art. 11.

The spokesperson-coordinator must submit the following scientific reports through the online EOS platform that was used for the submission of the initial project:

- An intermediate report, indicating the progress status of the research and including the relevant list of scientific publications resulting from the EOS research project during the third year of the agreement.
- A final report, indicating the outcome of the research and including the relevant list of scientific publications resulting from the EOS research project within 6 months after completion of the project.

Duration and modalities

Art. 12.

The EOS research contract will have a duration of four years.

Art. 13.

The EOS research contract shall include unilateral termination clauses, which shall in any case be accompanied by prior notice provisions.

Art. 14.

By submitting an EOS research proposal, each included host institution, regardless of the TYPE of host institution, gives its consent for the following actions, in case the EOS proposal gets granted;

- The consent for the execution of the EOS research at their premises as described in the initial EOS proposal;
- The consent to all other researchers involved in the consortium to access their premises and perform the necessary EOS research as described in the initial EOS proposal.
- The consent to all other researchers involved in the consortium to use the equipment provided by the FWO/ F.R.S.-FNRS in the frame of the approved EOS proposal.

The spokesperson-coordinator must upload a standard consent form in the online EOS platform, signed by all principal investigators and the heads of each institution involved in the EOS research project, providing the above described consent for the execution of the EOS research project.

Art. 15.

The EOS funding is awarded exclusively for the execution of the approved EOS research projects, hence the principal investigators and co-supervisors shall use the EOS funding exclusively for this purpose. As soon as their use no longer meets this requirement, the funding - or its balances - shall return to the concerned funding agency which provided the initial budget.

Art. 16.

Any fundamental change to an ongoing EOS research project, content-wise or in the composition of the consortium, can be made the subject of an investigation, equal to that for a new application, and shall be included in an amendment to the agreement, that does not extend the original agreement. Any partial modification of the research project, as well as any change in the planned expenditure, is subject to prior approval by both the FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS.

Cost categories

Art. 17.

§1. Each EOS consortium may apply for a yearly total consortium budget of maximally €1.000.000.

§2. Each research group from a TYPE I institution must apply for a yearly budget of minimal €120.000.

§3. Each TYPE I institution may apply for a yearly budget of maximally €700.000.

§4. The difference between the total requested budget of the Flemish research groups of TYPE I-FL and TYPE II-FL institutions and the total requested budget of the French-speaking research groups of TYPE I-FR and TYPE II-FR institutions cannot exceed 20%.

§5. The board of FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS can allocate up to 10% of the total budget of an EOS research project to all included TYPE II, TYPE III and TYPE IV host institutions, respecting the limit laid out in Art. 17 §1. TYPE IV host institutions will receive the allocated funding through subcontracting modalities outlined in the guidelines.

Art. 18.

§1. For the execution of EOS research projects, the FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS may grant funds for three categories:

- Category 1: staff
- Category 2: operating costs and consumables
- Category 3: equipment

Respecting the initial allocated total EOS budget and after notification to the relevant funding agency, these funds can be transferred from the 1st category to the 2nd category and vice versa but not to the third category.

§2. The final EOS panel can, if necessary and whenever scientifically motivated, reduce the requested budget with a maximum reduction of 20%. However, they cannot increase it and they must respect the upper and lower limits specified in these regulations. Respecting the ranking and selection of the final EOS panel, both F.R.S.-FNRS and FWO boards have the right to apply linear budgetary cuts in order to optimize funding distribution.

§3. Remunerated spokesperson-coordinators, principal investigators and co-supervisors are not allowed additional remuneration from the approved EOS research project.

Staff and consumables

Art. 19.

§1. The following costs can be charged, provided they are specified in the original application:

- a. Staff costs of scientific or technical employees;
- b. Consumables required for the execution of the EOS research project;
- c. Fees for job students, pollsters and expenses resulting from the invitation of a guest researcher in the research department;
- d. Small equipment of less than €20.000 per unit, required for the EOS research project;
- e. Fees for study stays and participation in conferences abroad provided they are in line with the awarded EOS research project;
- f. Access to and dissemination of research results will be funded according to the respective rules of F.R.S.-FNRS and FWO;
- g. Research-related travel costs in Belgium and research-related travel costs to and from the foreign partners included in the EOS consortium;
- h. For institutions contracted with FWO, costs for a CO₂ contribution linked to research-related air travel, to the extent that such travel is in line with the awarded research project;

i. Use of super computer infrastructure;

j. Only for the coordinator-spokesperson: coordination costs for the consortium directly linked to the EOS research project are allowed up to 5% of the total EOS consortium budget.

§2. Staff costs can only be justified if:

- The recruitment of staff is included in the original application;
- The staff were recruited under an employment contract or a grant agreement for the appointment of a PhD or postdoctoral fellow by the host institution;
- In the case of an appointment based on a grant, the grant is subject to social security tax.

§3. Positive balances of the awarded staff and consumables funding can be used for the justification of costs as stipulated in §1, for up to two years after the end date of the contract for staff costs and consumables.

Art. 20.

§1. If, under the terms of contracts supported by the FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS, the principal investigators are allowed to recruit staff, it is recommended that the host institutions apply the provisions of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Research, as published in 2005 by the European Commission, together with [the European Charter for Researchers](#). Furthermore, all appointments must comply with the applicable legal provisions and in accordance with the compensations and regulations in force at the host institution (and therefore in the large majority of cases in accordance with the system applicable at the universities in the concerned Flemish and French-speaking community) as regards the hierarchy of grades, the requirements for recruitment and promotion, and the remunerations. The host institutions may impose additional requirements if deemed necessary.

§2. For TYPE I-FL and II-FL institutes: Scientific staff must meet the requirements to enroll for a PhD at a university in the Flemish community or hold a PhD by thesis or a degree or certificate recognized as equivalent by law or in accordance with European Union directives or a bilateral agreement, in compliance with the provisions of the Flemish Codex on Higher Education of 11 October 2013, Art. V 20.

For TYPE I-FL and II-FL institutes: The host institution shall each year before 15 March of the following year, submit to FWO a list containing an overview of the staff working on the various EOS research projects. The list is broken down by project/budget and includes the following information: surname, first name, date of birth, nationality, date of start of employment, date of end of employment, employment percentage, type of contract, statute (BAP - PhD fellow, BAP – WM, ATP...) and highest degree obtained, and a certificate of the host institution stating that the scientific staff meet the applicable requirements. Staff expenditure under FWO research projects that does not meet these requirements, shall be rejected.

For TYPE I-FR and II-FR institutes: The staff working on the various EOS research projects should correspond to one of the following categories: PhD Student (grant or salary); Non-doctoral Researcher (salary); Postdoctoral Researcher (grant or salary) and Technician (salary capped). The commitment of the staff is subject to the provisions in force in the host institution. The general F.R.S.-FNRS rules apply with regard to diplomas and other prerequisites excepting these regarding the seniority of the diplomas.

For institutes of TYPE III and IV: Scientific staff must meet the requirements that apply at their granting funding agency.

The data will be handled confidentially by FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS and will not be transferred to a third party. The FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS respect international and national legislation on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data, including the GDPR ([General Data Protection Regulation](#)).

§3. As far as possible within the project objectives, the research shall be organized so as to enable predoctoral researchers to obtain a PhD.

Equipment

Art. 21.

§1. Only the equipment that is needed for the project and that is specified in the approved application, can be charged to this category.

§2. TYPE IV research groups are not allowed to request equipment.

§3. Each research group from TYPE I, II and III institutions can apply for a maximum amount of €150.000 for equipment during the entire EOS research project (except for the last project year), respecting the budget limits set out in Art 17. The total cost for equipment can amount up to €300.000 per EOS consortium. Requested equipment funding can take the form of matching funding.

§4. Operating costs, consumables and staff costs cannot be charged to the equipment category.

§5. Expenses are accepted if they are dated during the contracted project duration and can no longer be accepted after the official end date of the EOS research project.

Art. 22.

§1. All materials purchased with the EOS budget, shall become the property of the host institution to which the principal investigator spending the concerned EOS budget is affiliated.

§2. The host institutions, regardless of the TYPE of institution, undertake to keep the concerned material at the disposal of the researcher for the time that is needed to complete the EOS research for which the budget was awarded. Moreover, it undertakes to neither sell nor lend out the material without prior permission of the concerned funding agencies.

Overheads

Art. 23.

If allowed by the government, overheads can be paid to the host institutions in accordance with guidelines to be laid down by the respective governments and the funding agencies FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS. The overhead is transferred directly to the host institutions, except for TYPE IV institutions, and does not need to be requested in the EOS application form. For TYPE IV institutions, the overhead can be requested through the responsible TYPE I institution. Apart from these overheads, the following items shall not be charged to an EOS project budget:

- costs of renting, heating, lighting and maintaining premises and furniture, as these are costs that are normally to be borne by the host institution;
- management or administration costs.

Payment - justification - audit

Art. 24.

Financial report (reporting) - payment

For the financial reporting and payment, the respective rules of the funding agency (FWO or F.R.S.-FNRS) which covers the costs and is included as a contracting partner in the consortium contract, apply.

For FWO, Article 35, 36 and 37 of [the FWO regulations for research projects fundamental research](#) apply.

For F.R.S.-FNRS, the grants provided to principal investigators are managed by the finance department of the host institution. The finance department of the institution is invited to send documentary evidence to the F.R.S.-FNRS as promptly as possible according to the research agreement.

Art. 25.

Justification/audit

For the justification and audit, the respective rules of the funding agency (FWO) which covers the costs and is included as a contracting partner in the consortium contract, apply.

For FWO, Chapter 10 of [the FWO regulations for research projects fundamental research](#) apply.

Art. 26.

Non-submission or late submission of the reports and certificates, as referred to in Articles 24 and 25, will result in suspension of the payments.

General financial provisions

Art. 27.

Under no circumstances can expenditure be charged to grants awarded for future financial years. This also implies that invoices dated before the start date of the contract shall not be accepted.

Art. 28.

The financial management of the awarded budget is entrusted to the accounting department of the concerned institution, regardless of the TYPE of institution, to which the different principal investigators are affiliated.

Art. 29.

The financial year begins on the 1st of January and ends on the 31th of December.

Acknowledgement and open access

Art. 30.

The acknowledgement of the EOS funding is mandatory. All beneficiaries are required to include in every dissemination of results and in every communication activity, including outreach activities:

- the EOS logo;
- the following disclaimer "This project (EOS number) has received funding from the FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS under the Excellence of Science (EOS) programme".

All peer-reviewed publications relating to the results of EOS research projects need to be made available through Open Access, in line with the respective regulations of the funding agency.

Final provision

Art. 31.

For any cases not provided for in these regulations, reference shall be made to the case law of the concerned funding agencies.