General questions

1. Will it be possible to receive the PowerPoint Presentation after the presentation? Slides with charts duration deadlines could be very useful. Could you please share your presentations by email?

All slides are made available online on the FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS webpages.

2. Is it expected that more countries will join weave in the future? In the future will France become a partner of Weave? How about the Netherlands?

For the moment e.g., ANR (France) and NWO (Netherlands) are 'observer' in the Weave initiative. It is indeed possible that new partners will join Weave in the future. However, at this point no concrete plans to officially join Weave are made yet. As soon as this becomes clear, we will inform our research communities about the new possibilities for collaboration within Weave.

3. Why do we rely on European funding to enable collaborative research between Dutch and French speaking universities in Belgium? Can I suggest that FWO and FNRS consider building Belgian funding structures (besides EOS) to support collaborative Belgian research and their scientists?

The Weave initiative is providing a new possibility for Belgian researchers (Flanders and French-speaking Community) to scientifically work together. The Weave initiative, just like the EOS programme, is not European-funded initiative. Weave projects (and EOS as well) are solely funded by FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS respectively, budget that comes from the Flemish or French-speaking government. Each funder has embedded Weave in one of its regular national/regional funding channels. At FWO for example, Weave projects are evaluated together with the jr/sr research projects for fundamental research. At F.R.S.-FNRS, Weave projects are evaluated in the Scientific Commissions of the PDR call.

4. Concerning all the different rules regarding duration/deadlines/budgets/possible partner/... I understand that these things are in place because of historic reasons but are there plans to uniform things considerably in the future? I mean don’t get me wrong, but I just see a lot of reasons to start choosing strategically where to apply for only logistic reasons which is a bit weird.

Within Weave, each funding agency opens an already existing regular programme (call) for fundamental research, so there are indeed differences in duration, deadlines, budgets, ... In fact, this is one of the strengths of Weave, that it makes use of existing funding schedules and that no new channels need to be created. Moreover, this means that each researcher is already familiar with the existing rules of its own funding agency.

5. When will the FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS calls be open?

The call with FWO as Lead Agency was launched together with our call for regular jr/sr projects fundamental research on the 14th of January with a deadline on the 1st of April 2022, 5 pm.

The call with F.R.S.-FNRS as Lead Agency will be launched on May 7th with a deadline on the 7th of July, 2 pm (our regular PDR call timing).
6. **What is the difference between Weave projects and bilateral projects?**

A Weave project is embedded in the regular funding channel of the lead agency, whereas a bilateral extra-European call is organized with funding from a separate channel.

Main differences:

- **Frequency of the calls**: Weave is embedded in the yearly call for fundamental research projects of each participating agency. Bilateral calls depend on specific agreements from both funding agencies with a separate calendar and evaluation criteria.
- **Partners**: Weave is an initiative between European research funders, which can be different from what is the case in bilateral calls.
- **Budget conditions**: Weave projects follow the same budget conditions as the fundamental research projects of the participating agencies, which could be different in bilateral calls.
- **Duration of the projects**: Weave projects can have a duration of 3 or 4 years, depending on the Lead and/or partners involved. Bilateral project duration is dependent on the agreements with each funding agency.
- **Evaluation**: Weave projects are evaluated solely by the agency acting as a Lead (one agency performs the evaluation). Bilateral calls generally rely on the evaluation by an ad hoc expert panel and is done jointly with the partner agency.

7. **What is the difference with the FWO bilateral projects?**

**FWO bilateral extra-European research projects**: this is a separate channel of the FWO. FWO currently has agreements with South-Africa, Russia, Vietnam, Québec, China and Brazil.

Weave is another initiative, embedded by the FWO in the regular channel for Jr/Sr research projects fundamental research. Weave projects follow the same rules and regulations (eg. eligibility, budget, timeline, evaluation procedure, ...) as the research projects fundamental research.

Main differences:

- **Frequency of the calls**: Weave is embedded in the yearly call for research projects fundamental research (fixed deadline: 1st of April). For the FWO bilateral extra-European research projects there is a rotating system in the calls: in principle each year two calls are launched with two different partners, the year after two other calls with two other partners will be launched. So per partner it is in principle a three-yearly call. There are no fixed deadlines, this depends on each new call.
- **Partners**: Weave is an initiative between European research funders while the FWO bilateral projects are extra-European. In addition, within Weave trilateral consortia can also apply (having partners from up to 3 countries/regions) while the extra-European research projects are limited to two partner countries/regions.
- **Budget conditions**: Weave projects follow the same budget conditions as the research projects fundamental research (eg. FWO staff and consumables: € 45,000 to € 130,000 per host institution per year), since for the FWO bilateral extra-European research projects other budget conditions apply (eg. FWO staff costs and consumables: minimally € 45,000 and maximally € 75,000 per year per project).
- **Duration of the projects**: the FWO bilateral extra-European research projects have a duration of max. 3 years. Weave projects can have a duration of 3 or 4 years, depending on the Lead and/or partners involved. See this overview: https://www.fwo.be/media/1024616/weave_max-project-durations_2022_eng.pdf
Evaluation: the FWO bilateral extra-European research projects are evaluated by ad hoc joint interdisciplinary selection committees. Weave projects submitted to FWO (as Lead) are evaluated together with the jr/sr research projects fundamental research by the regular FWO expert panels.

Bilateral project: if a project is submitted within the regular FWO-call for jr/sr research projects for fundamental research, max. 10% of the total requested budget at the FWO can go to non-Flemish researchers (this 10% applies to all co-supervisors of non-Flemish research institutions (and non-federal scientific institutions) combined).

Weave project: Flemish researchers complying with all rules and regulations of the FWO can apply for FWO funding. Swiss researchers complying with all rules and regulations of the SNSF can apply for SNSF funding. If the project gets granted, FWO will pay the Flemish researchers and SNSF will pay the Swiss researchers involved. So, within Weave, FWO funding cannot go abroad. However, for one joint Weave project, funding can be requested to up to 3 different funding agencies, respecting the budget conditions and limits of each funding agency involved.

Scope

8. Can it only be for basic research? but how is basic research defined? what are the limits?

The partners involved in Weave have agreed to open their regular (national/regional) funding channel for fundamental basic research.

For FWO, scope definitions of the expert panels can be found here: https://www.fwo.be/en/the-fwo/organisation/fwo-expertpanels/panels-fundamental-research/

For F.R.S.-FNRS, more information on our evaluation procedure can be found here: https://www.frs-fnrs.be/fr/evaluation

9. Is the type of eligible research only basic research? Or can be translational and clinical research proposals be submitted?

Within Weave, FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS fund fundamental basic research. Clinical studies are only allowed if they are planned to answer a fundamental basic research question.

10. FWO-SNF projects: do I understand correctly that physical exercise as treatment for microvascular diseases (translational) IS NOT eligible since all clinical studies are not eligible?

For FWO, clinical research is only eligible in the following context: “Clinical research and innovative intervention studies (including medical devices, technologies and tools for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of human and animal diseases) are eligible only if they address a fundamental scientific question.” Examples are studies contributing to the discovery of novel biomarkers, elucidation of pathophysiology or etiology of human/animal diseases, evaluation of validity of health claims of therapeutic interventions. In this funding scheme [fundamental projects & fellowships], FWO is mainly looking for proof of concept, mechanistic and innovative clinical research. The research is expected to add high scientific value to the current state of the art by leading to novel insights or technologies, introducing new concepts, approaches, methods, ... In case of doubt, please don’t hesitate to contact the FWO officers.

Please make sure to check at foreign (eg. Swiss) side what is eligible.
Possible collaborations within Weave / Consortium composition

11. Is it possible to do a submission shared between FWO in Flanders and FWF in Austria?

Yes, FWF Austria and FWO collaborate within Weave. Please consult the info-session presentation for more information about the procedures and timelines.

Flemish researchers must comply with all rules and regulations of the FWO. Austrian researchers must comply with all rules and regulations of the FWF.

- **FWO as Lead:** deadline is 1st of April, an administrative submission needs to be done to FWF within 7 days after the FWO deadline.
- **FWF as Lead:** deadline is 1st of April as well, an administrative submission needs to be done to FWO within 7 days after the FWF deadline.

12. Is a proposal by 2 PIs for the same Flemish University and 1 PI from a French Speaking University eligible? If yes is this considered as a bilateral or a trilateral proposal (would we be able to add a foreign partner)?

Same questions if we have 2 French-Speaking partners and 1 Flemish partner?

The two PIs from the same Flemish university would count as 1 “Weave partner”, both requesting funding at the same funding agency (FWO). This would therefore count as a bilateral collaboration (Flemish-French-speaking) and a third partner (from another Weave country) could be added.

Even if the researchers at Flemish side are affiliated to two different institutions in Flanders, they would still count as 1 “Weave partner”, both requesting funding at the same funding agency (FWO). And they could add partners from FNRS and/or SNSF and/or other countries. Within one Weave project, the maximum number of funding agencies at which funding can be requested, is three. We recommend you have a look at the application form, it will help you to find out how to add partners from different institutes.

The same is true for the French speaking part: if partners from one or several French speaking university participate in one proposal (mono or pluri-institution project), they will be considered as 1 partner for the Weave proposal. For example, a project with 1 Flemish partner and 2 French-speaking partners will be considered as a bilateral project. If another partner is involved, requesting funding at a funding agency other than FWO or F.R.S.-FNRS, it becomes a trilateral project.

13. Can Flemish research institutes (not university) participate as full partner?

At FWO side, the same rules apply as for the regular senior or junior projects for fundamental research: the research must be carried out at an eligible Flemish main host institution, possibly in collaboration with other Flemish and/or federal research institutions. See Article 7 of the regulations: the main applicant must be affiliated to one of the principal host institutions, but other research institutes can also participate and request funding.

14. Please confirm that some combinations of partners such as F.R.S.-FNRS with Sweden are not possible

At the moment, F.R.S.-FNRS and FWO have not yet signed an agreement with Sweden so indeed that combination is not yet possible. However collateral collaborations are possible.

**For F.R.S.-FNRS:** If you submit a PDR-Weave (F.R.S.-FNRS as a partner) to an agency that has a collaboration agreement with Sweden you then could have a trilateral collaboration with a Swedish partner. More precisely,
French-speaking Belgium-Swedish collaboration is possible within Weave, if a trilateral project is submitted to FNR (Luxembourg) or to SNSF (Switzerland).

**For FWO:** Please consult this overview for possible combinations for Flemish researchers (FWO as Partner Agency). More precisely, in 2022, Flemish-Swedish collaboration is possible within Weave, if a trilateral project is submitted to FNR (Luxembourg) or to SNSF (Switzerland).

15. **Would it be possible to list the countries with which F.R.S.-FNRS can collaborate as a lead or be involved as partner? The question could be interesting too for FWO.**

All possible combinations can be found in the Weave tool. More details about specific collaboration conditions can be found in the info-session slides from 14/01/2022, which can be found on the website of the FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS.

**For Flemish researchers in call 2022:**
- FWO as Lead: bi- and trilateral projects are possible with ARRS Slovenia, DFG Germany, FNR Luxembourg, F.R.S.-FNRS French-speaking Community of Belgium, FWF Austria, NCN Poland and SNSF Switzerland.
- FWO as Partner: bi- and trilateral projects are possible with the 7 aforementioned partners + additional possibilities (eg. Sweden FORMAS, HRZZ Croatie), see this overview

**For French-speaking researchers in call 2022:**
- F.R.S.-FNRS as Lead: bi- and trilateral projects are possible with FNR (Luxembourg), DFG (Germany), FWO (Belgium-Flanders) and SNSF (Switzerland)
- F.R.S.-FNRS as a Partner: bi- and trilateral project are possible with the 4 aforementioned partners and other “collateral collaboration (check https://weave-research.net/)

16. **Are partners counted in terms of Countries or Regions/Communities?**
Partners are counted in terms of participating agencies (not countries). This means you can have a bilateral Weave collaboration between Flemish researchers and researchers from the French-speaking Community OR you can expand to a trilateral Weave proposal and add a third partner. The consortium is free to choose where they want to submit their application to FWO as Lead or to F.R.S.-FNRS as Lead or another agency that has signed an agreement with either FWO or F.R.S.-FNRS as Lead. Specific timelines and procedures of each agency must be followed.

17. **Is it strategically wise to include 2 Flemish universities (in total 2 Flemish PIs) and 1 university abroad (also with 2PIs) or is this unbalanced and not recommended?**
It is not a matter of strategy, only scientific rationale matters. It is important that the inclusion of each research group is crucial for the execution of the project. If three specific research groups are necessary and each have a clear scientific added value to the project, then they should be included.
18. What is considered the ideal consortium for the project? Are more partners preferred over only 2 (Lead + partner)?

The number of partners will not impact chances of success. The main evaluation criteria is scientific excellence, no matter the number of partners. All included partners should therefore have an added value. Consortium composition needs to be thoroughly scientifically justified in the proposal.

19. How many members at minimum should there be in one research team?

For FWO, one principal investigator (supervisor) is necessary. You can of course optionally include co-PI's (co-supervisors).

For F.R.S.-FNRS, one principal promoter is necessary. Co-promoters (from an institution different from that of the principal promoter can also be added).

For other agencies, please check the specific webpages of the relevant funding agencies.

20. What is the definition of a team? Can it include scientists from different institutions?

For F.R.S.-FNRS: projects can either be single-institution or multi-institution. Therefore, it is possible to collaborate with researchers that are from different institutions of the French-speaking community. No matter how many institutions from the French-speaking community participate in the project, they will still count as one partner for the Weave proposal.

For FWO: the project can either be single- or multi-institution. As a result, collaboration between researchers of different Flemish/Federal (Dutch-speaking staff) host institutions is possible. If within one host institution multiple research teams participate, they will have to merge their respective budgets as the budget is requested on the level of the host institution.

Success rate

21. Is the success rate the same if you apply at FNRS as lead compared to FWO as lead?

Let's assume the success rate of a PDR (FNRS) is around 10%. Does that mean that the chances are doubled if the application is done with a Weave partner?

You mentioned a 20% success rate that will be enforced for the WEAVE projects. Will it be across evaluation panels/fields? Since the projects are in competitions with other PDRs etc how will you do that?

Within Weave, all funding agencies annually agree on the Weave threshold, which is capped at 20%. This means that in principle, the Weave proposals among the top 20% of all the submitted proposals to the Lead Agency will be recommended for funding.

In case the Lead Agency has a success rate lower than 20%, the success rate of the Lead Agency applies.

In case both the Lead Agency and the Partner Agency have a success rate higher than 20%, for example 30%, they can jointly decide to fund the Weave proposals among the top 30%.

For example: in case a Weave project is submitted to a Lead Agency that has a success rate which is lower than 20% (eg. Lead Agency has a typical success rate of 15% in its pre-defined funding scheme), then the success rate of the Lead Agency applies (the Weave Proposals among the top 15% of all the submitted proposals to Agency A will be recommended for funding).

Please consult this overview for more information.
22. I do not fully understand the 20% cap success rate on weave projects. I am assuming that at FWO weave projects and non-weave projects are evaluated by the same panel and that are is going to be a single ranking for all projects (weave + non-weave in one ranking). Does this mean that the actual chance of getting a weave project funded is lower than for non-weave projects if more than 20% of the submissions are weave submissions?

When FWO is the Lead Agency, Weave projects are indeed evaluated together with the junior or senior regular projects fundamental research in the same expert panels. Weave is as such completely embedded in FWO’s regular channel for research projects fundamental research and Weave project are evaluated in competition with the other applications in the panel where you submitted. As the success rates at FWO are year after year around 20%, there is no difference at all between a regular jr/sr project and a Weave project. All Weave partners have agreed to have a joint success rate for Weave being capped at 20% (similar success rate of regular FWO channels for fundamental research). This means that only Weave projects that make it within the top 20% of the regular programme (in which Weave is embedded) can be recommended for funding.

23. How can you be in direct competition with single-partner applications AND have a flat 20% success rate for weave projects?

Weave projects are evaluated together with (by the same regular expert panels) and in competition with regular research projects for fundamental research (depending on the specific national/regional channel in which each funding agency has embedded Weave).

Within an evaluation - no matter to which Lead Agency the Weave project is submitted - projects are ranked based on the evaluation criteria in place (mainly scientific excellence of the team and the project). Within this ranking, a Weave success rate is applied, which is capped at 20%.

In principle, Weave Proposals among the top 20% of all the submitted proposals to the Lead Agency will be recommended for funding. Please consult this overview for more information.

Eligibility

24. What about the eligibility rules? Do they come from the funding tool (e.g. if FNRS, PDR tool is used eligibility rules are the PDR rules)? Is it possible that the eligibility rules change from a country to another? For instance, would it be possible that a country or national research institution would authorize to hire a post-PhD researcher or that the leader of the project has no definite academic position (these examples refer to the FNRS PDR rules) and the other not? What happen in such case?

Researchers must comply with all regulations (eligibility budget …) of their own funding agency (the funder to which they are eligible). So indeed, French-speaking researchers must comply with the rules and regulations of the PDR programme of F.R.S.-FNRS. Flemish researchers must comply with the rules and regulations of the FWO channel jr/sr research projects fundamental research.

25. Could you be a lead for PDR but a co-applicant for PDR-Weave in the same call?

For F.R.S.-FNRS - quick definitions:

- 1 PDR-Weave = any project submitted or funded in a call organized by one of the Weave partner agencies of the F.R.S.-FNRS (F.R.S.-FNRS as a partner).
- 1 PDR = any project submitted or funded in the call organized by the F.R.S.-FNRS – F.R.S.-FNRS as a Lead agent (this project may include partners from the Weave network)

According to the rules set in the PDR and PDR-Weave rules and regulations, it is possible to combine 1 PDR and 1 PDR-Weave. One promoter can therefore apply to 1 PDR-Weave and 1 PDR in the same year.
26. In the case of a FNRS/FWO Weave with the FNRS as the lead agency am I understanding well that the rules concerning the recruitment of researchers (a maximum of 3 years after the Master degree for a PhD researcher and a maximum of 5 years for a postdoc researcher) of the FNRS apply even if the researchers will be affiliated with the Flemish partner university?

Each research team follows the rules of their specific funding agency. FWO partners will have to follow the FWO regulations for recruitment and F.R.S.-FNRS partners will have to follow the F.R.S.-FNRS regulations for recruitment.

**Quota**

27. What are the limits for a Weave application at FWO with regard to running or other research applications at FWO?

Does a project submitted also count for the FWO-limit of 2 ongoing + submitted projects in the case a WEAVE project is submitted with FWO not being the lead agency?

Weave projects are taken into account for the maximum of 2 projects per application round for which you can act as (co-)supervisor(-spokesperson). They also fall within the rule stating that the total number of research projects fundamental research – applied for and currently ongoing – in name of one and the same (co-)supervisor(-spokesperson) cannot be more than two on the starting date of the new granted project. In addition, please be aware that the same Weave project may only be submitted once within the same year. The parallel submission of the same Weave project at several research funders where the research partner(s) involved is (are) eligible, is therefore not allowed.

28. If someone has a FNRS PDR project running. May they apply to a PDR-Weave at FNRS or must it only be submitted through the partner agency?

PDR rules apply when applying to the PDR call so it is not possible to apply for a second PDR when a project is running, except if you are in the last year of that project. You can apply for a PDR-Weave as a partner in one of the calls in which the F.R.S.-FNRS participates (DFG, FNR, FWO and SNSF).

29. I saw on the screen that projects started on 1 January 2019 still count for an ongoing project but this was - if I recall well also the starting date for the 2021-application round so I would assume that this ‘starting date of ongoing projects that count for the limit of 2’ would shift to 1 January 2020 for the current 2022 round of applications? Or am I overlooking something here?

No, this date will not change with each new call, it will remain: Projects started before 1 January 2019 are not taken into account.

30. If a French-speaking researcher participates on a running FWO project as the PI from a French-speaking university with a max. 10% of the budget (previous rules for Flemish Walloon collaboration) does this count for quota rules at either FNRS or FWO side for the Weave projects?

In case you are a Flemish researcher, and you are already involved in an ongoing project funded by the FWO, this will be taken into account for calculation of your quota. On the other hand, if you as a French-speaking researcher involved in an ongoing project funded by the FWO based on the 10% principle (see Art. 11 §3: up
to 10% of the total requested budget can go to a non-Flemish research institution) then it is not taken into account for the quota at F.R.S.-FNRS.

31. But you can apply for PDR and PDR weave with different projects and win both at the same time? Concerning quota fnrs: is it possible to submit at the same time a project as lead and another as partner?

It is possible to apply and get funding for a PDR and PDR-Weave (if you have no active PDR). Since the F.R.S.-FNRS does not allow for double financing, the projects do have to be different.

32. The FWO states the total of requested and ongoing fundamental research projects on behalf of a single supervisor-spokesperson supervisor or co-supervisor may not exceed two. Am I correct to assume that the weave submission where FWO acts as weave partner is also included into this maximum? If the researcher is planning to submit a weave proposal with FNRS as lead where the researcher needs to provide a mandatory pre-submission to FWO in May. Does this mean that our researcher can only apply for 1 other project with deadline 1 April to not exceed the total of requested and ongoing projects?

For the FWO: one regular project application one Weave application as lead and Weave one application from another agency as lead (all different content) is not possible?

Independently of where you submit (FWO as Lead OR FWO as Partner): ALL Weave projects are taken into account for the maximum of 2 projects per application round for which you can act as a (co-)supervisor(-spokesperson). They also count for the regulation stating that the total number of research projects fundamental research – applied for and currently ongoing – in name of one and the same (co-)supervisor(-spokesperson) cannot be more than two on the starting date of the new granted project.

So yes, submitting a Weave proposal with F.R.S.-FNRS as Lead already counts at FWO side as ’one, this application is indeed also taken into account.

33. Can you be a PI in a Weave project and a WP leader in another Weave project?

For each partner, the specific rules apply of the funding agency from which they are requesting funding.

For F.R.S.-FNRS: What will be taken into account is the role as promoter or a co-promoter in a project that you might have. If you already are a promoter in a PDR project, you can have a PDR Weave as a promoter or co-promoter but it is not possible to have more than that.

For FWO: Weave projects are taken into account for the maximum of 2 projects per application round for which you can act as (co-)supervisor(-spokesperson). They also fall within the rule stating that the total number of research projects fundamental research – applied for and currently ongoing – in name of one and the same (co-)supervisor(-spokesperson) cannot be more than two on the starting date of the new granted project.

34. Is it possible for a FNRS partner to participate in more than 1 Weave? Is it possible to submit two different proposals in the PDR Weave with different partners?

It is not possible to participate in more than 1 PDR-Weave application at a time.
Submission

35. **Tools like sportswatches and hometrainers (revalidation project) can it be budgetted within equipment (or are those strictly consumables)?**

Equipment really concerns devices, infrastructure, ... of more than € 20,000 per item (including VAT and accessories such as software, etc).

Consumables are for example: publication costs, travel and accommodation costs, research expenses, laptops, ...

Regarding your specific question: tools like hometrainers and sportwatches are strictly seen as consumables since they are less than € 20,000 per item.

36. **“20.000 can be budgetted for project partners” does this need to be included within the 130.000 or is it extra?**

For each host institution, being the main Flemish host institution to which the supervisor-spokesperson is affiliated as well as additional Flemish or federal host institutions, an amount of €45,000 to €130,000 per host institution per project year for staff and consumables can be applied for. However, for these additional Flemish or federal host institutions the lower limit can be reduced to €0 or €20,000. We kindly advise you to have a look at how the application form is built, because it will probably clarify how the budget conditions have to be applied.

37. **If the personnel/consumable cost at the beginning of the project is higher than at the end can the cost be shifted >130k in the beginning and <130k at the end?**

No, the budget limit of max. € 130,000/year/host institution is really fixed.

38. **If both partners execute half of all work packages does it suffice in every WP to state how the burden will be shared between them or do we need to double the work packages?**

It is very important to have an integrated joint project proposal. In the application, work packages should be explained as a whole: who will do what and when (within WP 1, WP2, WP3, ...). You should not double work packages.

39. **Submitting at FWO as lead with partner in Switzerland: budget limits may vary therefore the use of budget will be different: in how much detail this needs to be explained?**

When submitting to the FWO as Lead, in the specific application form you should provide details and motivation on the budget requested at Flemish side as well as budget requested at non-Flemish (eg. Swiss) side because each Lead Agency is responsible to evaluate all budgets requested for. So in each application, no matter to which Lead Agency it is submitted, needs to include a detailed overview and clear scientific motivation of all budgets requested. We kindly advise you to have a look at how the application form is built, because it will probably clarify which budget details are requested.
40. What happens if the PI from the FWO side is in the junior category and the FNRS PI is senior (though there doesn’t seem to be a distinction between junior/senior at FNRS)? Does it make a difference here when taking the FWO or FNRS as lead agency?

The classification in junior and senior category is only made when FWO is Lead Agency. In this case the postdoctoral seniority of the non-Flemish researchers must be taken into account as well. If the PI from the FWO side is in the junior category and the FNRS PI is senior, the project must be submitted to the FWO within the senior category. As soon as one senior researcher is involved, the project is classified in the senior category. If submitted to FNRS (Lead) indeed no distinction is made at FWO-side between junior and senior.

41. When you submit a junior project at FWO should all partners abroad have a junior profile?

The classification in junior and senior category is only made when FWO is Lead Agency. To decide on the type of research project (junior/senior) the scientific seniority of the involved foreign Weave (co-)supervisor(s) must be taken into account as well. However, the profile of the researchers involved doesn’t have to be identical. You can have a junior researcher at Flemish side and a senior researcher at foreign side. In this case, the project should be submitted to the FWO within the senior category. As soon as one senior researcher is involved, the project is classified in the senior category.

42. A senior researcher (e.g. FWO as lead) cannot team up with a junior researcher of a partner agency? Is a cooperation between a junior and senior possible by submitting it as a senior project? How does one assess if the international project needs to be submitted as a junior or senior project if partners have different levels of seniority?

A senior research can definitely team up with a junior one and the other way around. However, as soon as one senior researcher is involved, the project is classified in the senior category. Please note that the classification in junior and senior category is only made when FWO is Lead Agency.

When the project is submitted to another funding agency as Lead (FWO being Partner Agency), no classification must be made between junior or senior projects.

43. For FWO seniority: 12 years after obtaining your phd. for women there is no effect of having kids during phd or postdoc?

There are flexibility rules in place: extension is possible because of maternity leave, full-time parental leave, full-time sickness leave or military service/compulsory civilian service, even for male researchers. See Article 10, §5.

44. Can the FWO form be shared as an attachment or link perhaps?

Screenshots of the FWO application forms are made available online on the specific FWO pages under the section 'Regulations and downloads':

- FWO as Lead
- FWO as Partner

In addition, we kindly advise you to to have a look at how the application form is built in the FWO e-portal, because it will probably clarify how the different sections must be completed.
45. **What is meant with copy of the full application that has to be sent to ARRS? You mean by post?**

The PDF of your proposal submitted to the FWO (as Lead) must be submitted to ARRS (through their online system or by post). The Slovenian researchers will know how this has to be submitted. Please make sure to respect the deadline (date + hour!) because ARRS is very strict on this matter.

46. **Do we need to send additional administrative information if we do a resubmission in the lead agency having FWO as partner agency?**

Yes, projects that have been rejected before are no longer in the running. For every project that you submit, whether it is a new application or a resubmission, the FWO (and each Partner Agency involved) needs to receive an administrative submission (specific application form ‘Research project WEAVE (FWO acts as Partner Agency)’). Otherwise, the proposal will be declared ineligible and it will not be taken into account for the budget that FWO sets aside.

47. **Is the 24th may presubmission only necessary when FWO is involved? Or also when FNRS is involved (without fwo for example in a fnrs+dfg project)**

The administrative pre-submission needs to be done to the FWO before the 24th of May 2022 only in case where F.R.S.-FNRS is the Lead Agency and FWO is the Partner Agency. This is mainly for budgetary-technical reasons, so the FWO can reserve sufficient funding well in advance.

48. **About sending the identical pdf: the FWF (Austria) doesn’t produce a final pdf in their online system. Do we need to send then just the self-made pdf file and add the other official pdf files from FWF? to whom should we send it or can we upload it also in the FWO online portal as other documents?**

Yes, please make sure that the FWO receives the exact same content as submitted to FWF. This should be uploaded (a specific section is foreseen) as a PDF in the specific FWO application form ‘FWO acts as Partner Agent’ through the FWO E-portal, within 7 days after the FWF deadline.

You can generate the PDF yourself if the FWF system does not allow you to produce a final PDF.

**Evaluation**

49. **how and who evaluates? belgian scientists? international ones?**

Evaluation is the sole responsibility of the Lead Agency and the procedure as such depends on the internal procedure of the Lead Agency.

**When FWO is Lead**, the project will be evaluated by one of our 31 expert panels for fundamental research. For each panel: 12 members incl. international scientific chair and >50% members with non-Flemish affiliation.

**When F.R.S.-FNRS is Lead**, the project will be evaluated by one of our 14 Scientific commissions. Each commission is composed of 15 members, out of which 9 are outside of the French-speaking community (including the president of said commission).

When another funding agency (other than FWO or F.R.S-FNRS) is Lead Agency, please check the specific webpages of the relevant funding agencies for more information on the evaluators' profiles.
50. If FWO is the Lead Agency submission is through a Junior/Senior research project i.e. to a panel. Will it be the same panel that evaluates the Weave proposals as well as the standard research proposals?

Yes, in case FWO is Lead Agency, Weave proposals are evaluated in competition with regular junior or senior projects for fundamental research. They are as such evaluated by the FWO-panel of your choice in competition with the other junior or senior projects submitted in this panel. The evaluation process of a junior or senior project is as such identical to the evaluation process of a regular junior or senior FWO project. There are equal chances of success.

51. Can I submit at FNRS simultaneously provided the research subjects are different? Are both projects reviewed independently or will the FNRS commission only select one of the two? Both cannot be submitted to FNRS?

You can submit 1 PDR (with Weave partners) and 1 PDR-Weave proposal (PDR-Weave = proposal submitted to a partner agency). The PDR application will be reviewed by the F.R.S.-FNRS commission, and the PDR-Weave will be reviewed by the partner agency.

Funding decision – ratification

52. If the lead agency agrees on funding can it happen that the partner agency refuses it? If a lead agency grants the project the partner agency cannot overrule this decision anymore? Is this ratification just a formality and can our researchers be sure the project is awarded?

Within Weave all participating agencies have agreed to follow and accept the evaluation of the Lead Agency. The ratification should as such be a formality. There is in Weave only one evaluation, performed by the Lead Agency and respected by the partner Agencies; this is the core principle of the Lead Agency procedure.

53. Concerning the conditional approval with an Austrian partner when FWO is the lead: so there is a chance that the project is still not funded then?

No it is a formality at FWF. The partner agency is supposed to ratify the funding proposal not re-evaluate. This is why the funding proposal made by the lead agency has to be well motivated. The Weave program is based on trust between the funding agencies.

54. I do not understand what is meant with ratification by DFG can only be done in Spring 2023. Can you please explain?

DFG as a Partner Agency needs to approve the funding recommendation made by the Lead Agency. However, the DFG ratification process takes longer than that of other agencies. Therefore, the FWO and the F.R.S.-FNRS will already communicate in a conditional way.

55. for collaboration with DFG: how can the contract start on 1 Jan 2023 if the ratification by DFG only happens afterwards. Does it mean that only the budget received from FWO is already available on Jan 1 but the DFG budget only later? or is there still a chance that the whole project is cancelled?

All participating agencies have agreed to follow and accept the evaluation result of the Lead Agency. At FWO side the contracts are always dated on 1st of January but funding for staff and consumables can be used up to 2 years after the official end date of the project. So, there is this flexibility in case the project can only start in practice later than 1st of January.

At F.R.S.-FNRS, PDR projects that include DFG partners will start on the 1st of April.
56. Decision is half of December 2022 start of the contract is January 1st 2023? Is there a flexible starting date??

I have a question concerning the project start. Since the announcement of the results is in mid of December it might be difficult to find and hire the personal until the 01st of January. Can the starting date of the project be postponed to a later point?

At FWO: The 1st of January is the official starting date mentioned on the contract. In practice you can of course start later on. The budget will remain available until two years after the official end date of the project so no need to actually start on the 1st of January. This is identical to the regular FWO projects for fundamental research.

At F.R.S.-FNRS: the 1st of January is the official start date of all PDR and PDR-Weave projects (apart from PDR projects that include DFG partners). Please note that personnel costs can be used up to 6 months after the official end of the project and running costs up to 12 months after the end of the project.

57. If a weave project is funded what about the scientific reporting? Does this depend on the regulations of the lead Agency or is every involved research partner only responsible for reporting to the own funding agency (regardless of lead or partner agency)? or is there joint (scientific) reporting?

As soon as a Weave project is funded, each researcher has to follow the rules and procedures of his/her own funding agency (the agency of which they receive funding). There is no joint reporting.

Flemish researchers must report to the FWO. French-speaking researchers must report to the F.R.S.-FNRS.

58. The different countries have different submission dates. Eg. In Slovenia it is February and in Belgium it is April. Will the results be announced in the same time in these countries or will this also change for specific countries?

Announcement of the results will be decided according to the timeline of the Lead Agency. Please consult the slides of the FWO-FNRS info session (14/01/2022) for more details about when to expect results when FWO is Partner Agency. You can find all the necessary information on the websites of each Weave partner.

Budget

59. Do I understand correctly that for a joint Flanders-French speaking community proposal submitted at FWO: 1) FWO does evaluation but FNRS funds French speaking partners and FWO funds Flemish partners 2) the budget division between FWO/FNRS can be anything (50/50 30/70 ...) contrary to regular FWO project (max 10% for non-Flemish partners)?

Yes indeed. Each funding agency will fund its own researchers and the budget conditions and limits apply of the specific programme (being PDR at FNRS side and jr/sr regular projects fundamental research at FWO side). So yes, there are no guidelines set in advance for budget division between the partners involved in a Weave project. It can be anything 50/50 or 80/20, as long as the requested budget is scientifically justified and sufficiently motivated. The Lead Agency is evaluating all requested budgets, also the one(s) requested by the foreign researchers.

60. Does FWO offer a similar possibility to cover the final year of doctoral studies in case a partner only allows a 36-months’ project?

No, this is not possible at FWO. When ARRS (Slovenia) is Lead Agency: project duration is max. 3 years, at Slovenian as well as at Flemish side. Whenever German (DFG) researchers are involved: project duration is max. 3 years, at German as well as at Flemish side.
61. Senior FWO projects have a budget maximum of 130k x 4 years and 150k equipment from the summary. I can read Weave funds much less? => 80k x 4 years

Still regarding the budget with FWO as lead: what is the maximum that can be applied for? The max of FWO (130k/yr) PLUS the max of the partner agency?

At FWO side for granted Weave projects the same budget conditions applies as for the research projects fundamental research. For FWO staff and consumables: max 130.000 EUR/year/host institution and for FWO equipment: max. 150.000 EUR/project. On top of the budget requested for at Flemish (FWO) side, the other (non-Flemish) researchers involved, will also request for funding at the Weave funding agency for which they are eligible. For non-Flemish researchers the budget conditions and limits of their own funding agency will apply.

Within the FWO application for (FWO as Lead) you have to detail all budgets separately: there is a specific section to be completed for the budget requested at FWO side and there is also a section to be completed for each budget requested at the other Weave partners (funding agencies other than FWO). For each funding agency the specific budget limits and conditions apply. We kindly advise you to to have a look at how the application form is built in the FWO e-portal, because it will probably clarify how the different sections must be completed.

62. but if 2 Flemish partners apply - is it 2 x 130 k Flemish side plus max foreign

Yes indeed, this is similar to the regular FWO projects for fundamental research. The budget limit of 130k applies per Flemish host institution.

63. Is the maximum budget dependent on the country/region of each applicant or on the regulations of the lead country?

The budget limits are determined by each relevant funding agency as each funding agency is funding its own researchers. For FWO or F.R.S.-FNRS the budget limits for FWO or F.R.S.-FNRS always apply wherever you submit. So indeed, the max. budget depends on the country/region of each applicant. The budget conditions of the Lead Agency only apply to the researchers who are eligible to apply for funding at that Lead Agency.

64. In some configurations one can ask funding for the 4th PhD year in the project. For DFG the funding that can be applied for is strictly limited to 3 years (no matter whether FWO or DGF is the lead agency)? Does it mean that the FWO partner needs to find means for the 4th year if a PhD student is supposed to be employed in Flanders?

Yes indeed, in case German researchers are involved, the project duration is max. 3 years at German as well as at Flemish side. In this case, no funding for the fourth year can be requested to the FWO.

65. Question on budget: the FNRS rules state a max of 80000 for mono-university applications. But Weave is not mono-university by definition. Please explain. For pluri-university applications the budget is max 115000. Is this budget for the FNRS-related partner or for the whole consortium?

Regarding the budget what do you mean by single-institution and multi-institution considering that it’s a collaboration between at least 2 (and max 3) agencies? So does this mean that the budget mentioned also only refers the FNRS side?

Single- and multi-institution only refer here to the F.R.S.-FNRS side of the project. Participation of 2 French-speaking universities is considered as a multi-institution project. This denomination does not apply to partners from other countries/regions.
66. Concerning budget in weave FNRS+dfg: does it mean that you can only ask max 80'000 x 3years for the FNRS budget but that at the dfg side you can ask for a much more substantial financial budget

The 80 Keuros is only for the French-speaking (F.R.S.-FNRS) side. The German side will be financed by the DFG according to their own internal regulations and budget conditions. So yes, there can be some budget differences.

67. Concerning the budget: is there 1 budget for 1 Weave project e.g. only the one from the lead agency or will there be 2 or 3 budgets namely for each partner agency their own budget applies (meaning double or triple budget for 1 Weave project)?

Can you explain more how funding can be requested? Are the mentioned amounts (e.g. 80'000/year for FNRS single institution) to be requested for the whole project or only for the FNRS side of the project?

There is no overall budget per Weave project. For each partner, requesting budget at a specific funding agency, there will be a separate budget available after granting. Each funding agency is responsible for the funding of its own researchers.

For example, when submitting a Flemish-French-speaking project to the FWO (as Lead), the granted FWO budget should not be divided between the Flemish and French-Speaking partners, but you will receive two budgets (at FWO-side: max 130'000/year/host institution + at FNRS-side: max 80'000/year).

This maximum budget of 80'000 EUR/year only applies to the researchers at F.R.S.-FNRS side.

68. If your partner cannot have a budget for achievement of an equipment that they need in the cooperation can it be achieved via FWO and lend to the partner? is there an equipment budget for fnrs partner in weave?

All materials acquired under an equipment grant of the FWO will become property of a host institution at Flemish side and it is not possible to send the equipment abroad. Of course, other researchers involved in the project can come to Belgium and make use of the equipment. The host institution or principal host institution undertakes to neither sell nor lend out the material without prior permission of the FWO.

We kindly also refer to Article 32 of the regular FWO projects for fundamental research: The host institution or principal host institution undertakes to neither sell nor lend out the material without prior permission of the FWO.

There is also a possibility to request equipment budget to the F.R.S.-FNRS, as detailed in our PDR and PDR-Weave regulations.

69. If the evaluation can be performed by other agencies than in principle FWO has an unlimited budget which cannot be true. How does it work is there a final ranking only x highest will be funded?

The FWO doesn’t have an unlimited budget (unfortunately ;)). However, in the role of Partner Agency, the FWO has made the necessary arrangements with the other funding agencies to make sure we receive an overview of the total requested Flemish budget as submitted to the Lead Agency abroad before a certain date. That way and taking into account the Weave success rate capped at 20%, the FWO can make the necessary calculations (simulations) well in advance and reserve sufficient budget for the upcoming budget year. In addition, the FWO foresees a certain ‘buffer’ (back-up budget) for the Weave projects in which FWO is Partner
Agency. At the end of the year, when the evaluation of the regular projects is finalized (including Weave projects with FWO as Lead) and when FWO (as Partner) receives the specific funding recommendations of the Lead Agencies, we know exactly which budget is needed at Flemish side. Remaining budget from the 'buffer' will be transferred to the regular projects fundamental research so possible reserve projects within the regular jr/sr projects channel can still be additionally granted.

**EOS**

**70. Can you elaborate on the difference between EOS and Weave when considering a bilateral project between Dutch and French speaking community?**

The EOS programme is a separate programme with its own budget, rules and regulations and conditions while Weave projects are embedded in the regular channels for fundamental research at FWO and F.R.S.-FNRS.

There are several differences:

- EOS is a high-level program allowing huge consortia to submit top-level science for a substantial amount of funding. Weave projects are regular fundamental projects, probably less ambitious and high-level in comparison to an EOS proposal where more funding can be requested. Make sure you take this difference in 'scale' into account when you would 'recycle' a rejected EOS proposal for Weave submission.
- In principle, an EOS call is launched every 4 years. Weave projects are embedded in the yearly calls of each participating agency.
- The EOS programme is really targeted to promote joint research between researchers in the Flemish and French-speaking community (possibly in collaboration with federal and/or non-Belgian institutions). Weave is a bottom-up cross-European initiative to support excellent European collaborative research projects across national and regional borders.
- Within EOS projects more partners are allowed. Within Weave only bi- or trilateral projects are allowed.
- Within EOS, non-Belgian researchers can receive funding (as TYPE IV partners) but there is a limitation: up to 10% of the total budget of an EOS research project can go to all included TYPE II, TYPE III and TYPE IV host institutions. For Weave projects, bi- and trilateral projects can be submitted between researchers from different countries/regions. Each researcher (research group) can apply for funding at the funding agency for which he/she is eligible. There is as such no limitation of 10%, but of course the budget conditions of the funding agencies must be respected.
- EOS projects have a duration of 4 years. For Weave projects the max. project duration is decided by the Lead Agency. In case German researchers are involved, projects have a duration of max. 3 years for all partners involved.
- EOS projects are evaluated according to a specific two-step procedure with ad hoc panels: pre-proposals are evaluated by 3 EOS sub-panels and full proposals by the Final EOS Panel. Weave proposals are evaluated together with regular projects for fundamental research, according to the procedure of the Lead Agency.

**71. Can EOS project selected after step 1 but not step 2 be submitted as weave project?**

Yes, this is possible as long as you comply with all rules and regulations to submit a Weave project adjust your proposal and the added value of the collaboration is clearly scientifically motivated.
In addition, please be aware that within Weave only bi- or trilateral projects are allowed, as within EOS more partners were allowed.

72. Do you allow rebuttal responses to reviewers as in the EOS program?

**FWO**: when FWO is the Lead Agency, Weave projects follow the exact same evaluation procedure as the regular jr/sr FWO projects for fundamental research, so indeed a rebuttal phase is included.

**F.R.S.-FNRS**: When F.R.S.-FNRS is the Lead Agency, the submitted projects follow the exact same evaluation procedure as the PDR call. In that case, there is no rebuttal phase included in the evaluation process.

When the Weave proposal is submitted to a funding agency other than FWO/F.R.S.-FNRS, the evaluation procedure of this Lead Agency applies. Please consult the specific webpages of each funding agency for more information.

73. Concerning quota when you are in a EOS project does that mean that you can only apply to 1 weave?

**F.R.S.-FNRS**: EOS projects are not taken into account for the calculation of quota. If you have a running EOS project, you can therefore apply to a PDR-Weave project (when one participates in the call of a partner agency) and a PDR project (F.R.S.-FNRS is the lead and you may include Weave partners).

**FWO**: EOS projects are not taken into account for the calculation of quota at Flemish side.