TKI Life Sciences & Health

TKI LSH SME Call for public private partnerships in 2025
Round 2

Call to submit applications for PPP-Subsidy at the Topsector Life Sciences & Health

1. Abstract

The Top Sector Life Sciences & Health (LSH) promotes innovative research by providing financial support for public-private partnerships (PPP) within the LSH sector. Through this grant call, research organizations and enterprises are encouraged to engage in joint research and development (R&D), with the aim of developing sustainable and innovative products and services within the sector.

The Top Consortium for Knowledge and Innovation (TKI) office serves as the implementing body of the Top Sector LSH and may provide financial support to collaborative projects by allocating PPP-Subsidy.

In this second SME Call round of 2025, the Top Sector LSH has made approximately €5 million in PPP-Subsidy available. The objective is to facilitate the involvement of one existing or new R&D full-time equivalent (FTE) in an industrial public-private partnership project.

Core conditions

- The research must align with one of the Growth Markets and one of the Key Enabling Technologies (KETs) within the National Technology Strategy (NTS).
- The research must align with the central mission and one of the five specific missions contributing to the central mission, as outlined in the Knowledge and Innovation Agenda (KIA) 2024–2027 for the Societal Theme Health & Care.
- The consortium must comprise at least one for-profit enterprise and one research organization. The project must be carried out for joint account and risk, and all consortium partners must make substantive in kind contributions into the project.
- The project must involve industrial research (Technology Readiness Level 4 to 6).
- The principal applicant must be an SME established in the Netherlands.
- The project has a maximum duration of two years.
- Each project year, the SME may apply up to a maximum of €150,000 in PPP-Subsidy.
- For each project, research organizations may apply up to a maximum of €150,000 in PPP-Subsidy.
- The PPP-Subsidy for the SME must primarily be used to finance one existing or new R&D full-time equivalent (FTE) per year (one FTE equals 1,650 hours). Any remaining subsidy may be used for other eligible costs (including materials, additional personnel, etc.).

The deadline for submitting the full application is July 1st 2025, 17:00 CET. Grant awards will be determined based on the following criteria and corresponding sections of the application form:

- Alignment with the PPP Innovation Regulation;
- Scientific quality (Section B);
- Feasibility (Section C);
- Economic value and alignment with the National Technology Strategy and Growth Markets (Section D);
- Societal value and alignment with the LSH objectives (Section E).

In the run-up to the deadline of July 1st, consortium-specific questions may be directed to the Health~Holland team. Requests for consultations can be submitted **up to one week prior to the application deadline** by sending an email to tki@health-holland.com with the subject line: *Advice SME Call – <name of principal applicant>.*

Index

2. Background information

2.1 Background Topsector LSH

In 2011, the then Rutte III administration reformed Dutch enterprise policy through the launch of the Top Sectors policy. The success of this approach led the Rutte III Cabinet to designate the topsectors as instrumental within the Mission-Driven Top Sectors and Innovation Policy (MTIB).
Within the MTIB framework, the Top Sector Life Sciences & Health (LSH) is involved in the mission for Health & Care, with a focus on, among others, societal earning capacity, digitalisation, key enabling technologies, circularity, and energy.
Implementation is carried out by LSH-TKI (Health~Holland), which facilitates collaboration between businesses and knowledge institutions through the renewed PPP Innovation Regulation (PPS-I), with the aim of achieving socially and economically relevant innovations.

2.2 Growth Markets

At the end of 2023, Dialogic and SEO mapped the promising growth markets for the Netherlands on behalf of the Ministry of Economic Affairs[1]. To give the Netherlands an innovative, sustainable and strong economy, the Ministry of Economic Affairs believes it is important to invest in growth markets where there are the greatest opportunities in the future to strengthen Dutch earning capacity and where the Netherlands is good at. Within the LSH sector, 'medical technology' and 'innovative and high-quality molecules in the biotech sector' are described as promising growth markets.

2.3 National Technology Strategy (NTS) and key enabling methodologies

In the National Technology Strategy (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2024)[2], ten priority key enabling technologies have been defined as the building blocks for a strategic technology policy. These technologies offer the Dutch research and business sectors opportunities to generate positive global impact and are essential for future innovation. In nearly all of these key technologies, application, further development, and commercialization in the medical domain play a significant role. The most prominent examples for the Life Sciences & Health (LSH) sector include the key enabling technologies Biomolecular and Cell Technologies, Imaging Technologies, and Artificial Intelligence and Data Science. However, the remaining seven technologies are also of great value to the LSH sector. Every submitted programme is therefore expected to actively contribute to the further development of at least one of the ten priority key enabling technologies identified in the National Technology Strategy. These ten technologies are as follows:

- 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

[1] https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2023/12/05/dialogic-seo-groeimarkten-voor-nederland
[2] https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/beleidsnotas/2024/01/19/de-nationale-technologiestrategie

2.4 Social theme 'Health & Care'

The societal theme Health and Care focuses on six missions formulated by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS). These consist of one central mission and five specific missions. The central mission aims to increase healthy life expectancy by five years and reduce the health disparities between individuals with high and low socioeconomic status by 30%. The five specific missions address changes in the living environment, providing more care in the right place, offering better prospects for people with chronic illnesses, addressing dementia, and improving protection against socially disruptive health threats.
The missions run until 2040 and align with focus areas such as digitalisation, key enabling technologies, circularity, and energy. The Knowledge and Innovation Agenda 2024–2027 (KIA) describes how public-private innovation contributes to these aims[3].

2.5 SME

In previous years, a substantial portion of PPP-Subsidy was awarded to knowledge institutions collaborating with companies on fundamental research projects. However, innovative SMEs have a greater need for research that is closer to market application and supports the commercialization of their products or services. The PPP Innovation Regulation addresses this need by placing SMEs in the lead and by promoting industrial research. Under this call, SMEs may, subject to certain conditions, obtain funding for at least one R&D full-time equivalent (FTE) within a public-private partnership project. In doing so, the scheme strengthens R&D capacity and contributes to increasing national R&D expenditure to 3% of GDP, without reducing the private sector's share.[4]

[3] https://www.health-holland.com/publications/useful-documents/kia
[4] Kamerbrief innovatie en impact van de Ministers van Economische Zaken en Klimaat en Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap van 11 november 2022, p.6

3. Terms and conditions

3.1 Conditions

The application must meet several conditions. Key requirements include:

- The main applicant must be an SME established in the Netherlands.
- The main applicant and any other Dutch SMEs applying for PPP-Subsidy must not be classified as Enterprises in Difficulty.
- The consortium must comprise at least one Dutch for-profit SME and one research organization[5].
- Foreign enterprises and research organizations are also encouraged to participate in the consortium, provided that the outcomes of the research project benefit the Dutch knowledge infrastructure and economy.
- The project is a genuine public-private partnership: this means, among other things, that the project is carried out for joint account and risk, and all consortium partners must make an substantive contribution to the project.
- All consortium partners must contribute in-kind. This entails, among other things, that all partners must incur salary costs, reflected as an in-kind contribution, and these costs must be visible in the budget form (Excel).
- The project must involve industrial research (Technology Readiness Level 4 to 6). Appendix A, available on our website, provides sector-specific guidelines on the types of research eligible for funding.
- The project must align with one or more of the defined Growth Markets and at least one of the ten priority Key Enabling Technologies listed in the National Technology Strategy. Definitions for each Key Enabling Technology can be found in Appendix B on our website.
- The project must contribute to the central mission and at least one specific mission within the Health & Care theme (KIA 2024–2027).
- The research must be of high scientific quality.
- In addition to the in-kind contribution, cash contributions are permitted. A cash contribution must be used within the project to cover the costs of another partner. The consortium must jointly decide for which and whose costs the respective cash contribution will be used.
- Financially creative constructions are not permitted; improper use of PPP-Subsidy by consortia is prohibited (this includes, among others, the provision of a cash contribution and the use of PPP-Subsidy by the same party).
- Consortium partners are not allowed to invoice each other for services or products within the project. However, third parties may be contracted for services and are not considered as consortium partners.
- The project may not commence before 1 January 2026 and must start no later than 1 May 2026.
- The maximum project duration is two years.
- SMEs may apply a maximum of €150,000 in PPP-Subsidy per project year (for a project lasting 1.5 years, the SME may therefore use a maximum of €225,000).
- Research organizations may apply for a total maximum of €150,000 in PPP-Subsidy.
- An SME may only participate in one application within this call. Note: applicants that are part of the same corporate group are considered a single entity; in such cases, only one company within the group may submit an application.
- Per project year, the company must incur at least 1650 hours of salary costs (for a project lasting 1.5 years, at least 2475 hours). These hours must appear on the company's payroll; payment from another entity (e.g., a different private BV or holding) is not permitted.
- The SME's subsidy must be primarily used to finance one R&D full-time equivalent (FTE); the remaining subsidy may be used for other eligible costs, including material costs and additional personnel.
- Only the formats specifically prepared for Round 2 of the SME Call 2025 will be accepted. Outdated versions will not be accepted.

[5] Definition of research organization according to the Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (Chapter 1.3, article 16.f)

The main applicant is excluded from participating in this round of the TKI-LSH SME Call under the following circumstances:

- An ongoing project awarded in a previous SME Call has not yet been completed.
  → Participation is only permitted once the project has been fully completed, and the substantive and financial reports have been approved by Health~Holland.
- The application was rejected in Round 1 of the TKI-LSH SME Call 2025.
  → The main applicant may apply again in the SME Call round of 2026.
- The project has been substantively rejected twice in previous SME Calls.
  → The project is fully excluded from further participation. However, the main applicant is permitted to submit a new project on a different topic. In such cases, please contact tki@health-holland.com.

3.2 Composition of the consortium

Applicants for PPP-Subsidy must form a consortium consisting of research organizations and enterprises, preferably supplemented by relevant public sector organizations. These parties jointly carry out the project, maintaining their own identity and responsibilities, based on a clear and balanced division of tasks and risks. All partners must contribute equally, both financially and substantively.
The consortium shall appoint a project coordinator/main applicant, who will act as the primary contact for Health~Holland. The main applicant must be an SME established in the Netherlands; all other parties are considered co-applicants. An SME may submit a maximum of one application per round. Enterprises that are part of the same corporate group are regarded as a single entity; in such cases, only one SME within the group may submit an application.[6]
Foreign research institutions, companies, or other public/private parties are permitted to join the consortium, provided that the project demonstrably contributes to the Dutch knowledge infrastructure and economy.

3.3 Intellectual Property Policy

The consortium must establish clear agreements regarding the intellectual property (IP) arising from the products and services developed within the project. These agreements must be documented in writing in the consortium agreement. Agreements on IP must follow the Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation (specifically article 2.2.2.) and the PPP Innovation Regulation (Staatscourant October 20, 2023, 28651). Health~Holland provides a model consortium agreement in which the consortium may choose from the following options:

Option A: Allocation of Intellectual Property Rights Based on Contribution
Under this option, the IP-rights resulting from the project ("Foreground") are proportionally distributed among consortium partners based on:

- The substantive contribution of each partner (e.g. which partner is responsible for which work package);
- The financial contribution of each partner;
- The relevance of the results for each partner.

The consortium can fulfil this requirement by following Article 8.4 of the consortium agreement. In doing so, it must:

- Provide a clear explanation of the roles, activities, and resources contributed by each partner, thereby substantiating the proportional allocation of Foreground;
- If applicable, prepare a parallel research agreement in accordance with Article 8.10 of the consortium agreement.

[6] For the full definition, please advise EU-recommendation 2003/361/EG Artikel 3, lid 3

Option B: Market-Based Compensation for Intellectual Property Rights
Under this option, participating enterprises within the consortium may acquire the Foreground from research organizations for a market-based fee (less any prior investments in the project). Results that are not subject to intellectual property rights must be widely disseminated. Articles 8.6, 8.7, and 8.8 of the consortium agreement govern the right of enterprises to exercise an option to:

- Obtain a license to the Foreground owned by research organizations;
- Acquire ownership of the Foreground if the original allocation is not in proportion to their contribution to the project.

The model consortium agreement specifically for the SME Call is available on the website. If the consortium opts to use an existing agreement or drafts a parallel research agreement for this specific project, the agreement must be submitted no later than 1 July 2025, along with the full application.

Note: *Use of the model consortium agreement provided for the SME Call is mandatory. Only minimal modifications to the template are permitted. Any such modifications must be clearly indicated using 'track changes' so that they are immediately recognizable by Health~Holland.*

3.4 What amount of PPP-Subsidy can be applied for?

Within this call, funding (PPP-subsidy) can be requested by Dutch SMEs and research organizations. Dutch SMEs may request a maximum of €150,000 per project year. Research organizations may collectively request a maximum total of €150,000 per project.

Dutch SMEs (both for-profit and non-profit enterprises) may finance up to 60% **of their own costs** with PPP funding[7]. Research organizations, such as universities, university medical centers, universities of applied sciences, TO2 institutes, KNAW institutes, and other organizations meeting the definition of a research organization, may finance up to 70% **of their own costs** with PPP funding. Table 1 provides an overview of all applicable percentages.

Foreign research organizations, large companies (Dutch and foreign), foreign SMEs, Enterprises in Difficulty (EID), and other Dutch and foreign entities are not eligible to receive PPP funding; the costs they incur must be equivalent to their in-kind contribution. If a research organization is located abroad and/or does not fall under one of the aforementioned categories, we request that you contact Health~Holland directly at tki@health-holland.com to verify whether the organization can be classified as a research organization.

Additionally, the project must meet minimum contribution requirements at the project level. Enterprises must contribute at least 15% **of the total project costs** in-kind. For research organizations, the minimum in-kind contribution must be at least 10% **of the total project costs**. Table 2 provides an overview of all relevant percentages. Section 5.1 of this call text provides two calculation examples for clarification (page 17).

[7] All eligible costs per partner, excluding *in cash* contributions.

Table 1: PPP-Subsidy coverage based on eligible costs

Type partner	Max % PPP-Subsidy based on eligible partner costs	Example
Dutch Research organization(s)	max. 70%	The research organization incurs €200.000 in own costs and may receive a maximum of €140.000 in PPP-Subsidy.
Dutch SME	max. 60%	The enterprise incurs €200,000 in own costs and may receive a maximum of €140.000 in PPP-Subsidy.
Enterprises in Difficulty, Foreign enterprises, foreign research organizations, large corporations and other parties	0%	The incurred costs must correspond to the in-kind contributions.

Table 2: Minimum contribution based on total project cost

Type partner	Minimal contribution based on total project cost	Example
Research organization(s)	min. 10%	The total project costs amount to €700,000; research organizations must collectively contribute at least €70.000 in kind.
Dutch SME	min. 15%	The total project costs amount to €700,000; SMEs must collectively contribute at least €105.000 in kind.

3.5 Calculating project costs

Eligible costs

Only those costs that are directly related to the R&D activities within the project (eligible costs) can be entered on the budget form. Examples include: scientific staff, technicians, support staff, consumables and the use of equipment specifically required for the project (depreciation system). Historical cost should be used when entering the cost of consumables. Entering commercial rates is not permitted. For an explanation of the (calculation of) eligible costs see the Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 of June 17, 2014, Article 25 and the Framework Decision National EZK and LNV Grants, Chapter 4, Article 10-14.

Parties that use PPP subsidy are obliged to use one of the payroll costing systems prescribed by the Framework Decision on National EZK and LNV Grants. Parties that do not use PPP subsidy are not required to use one of the payroll costing systems prescribed by Framework Decision on National EZK and LNV Grants. These parties may also use their own hourly rate. A condition is that the calculation of the costs takes place on the basis of a customary and verifiable method and is based on business principles and standards that are considered acceptable in society and that the participants in a collaborative project apply systematically. On the budget form, these parties should choose "fixed hourly rate" and adjust the standard hourly rate of €60 to an hourly rate that is customary and verifiable for them.

Examples of ineligible costs

The following are examples of ineligible costs. Therefore, these costs should not be entered on the budget form.

- Applying for and maintaining patents (costs for patents purchased on arm's length terms from or licensed from outside sources are eligible);
- Auditor's statement;
- Benchfee (note: costs for consumables are eligible);
- Travel within the Netherlands;
- Support staff, not directly related to the R&D activities, such as: project controller, business developer, administrative officer;
- Research aimed at establishing the business case. These include:
    - Competition analyses;
    - Market research;

  - Comparison studies with product of competition or 'gold standard';
  - Satisfaction studies;
  - Cost-effectiveness analyses;
- Costs related to implementation of the developed innovation;
- Carrying out effectiveness studies (Health Technology Assessment, HTA);
- Overhead;
- Non-scientific dissemination. However, scientific dissemination, including attending a scientific congress or publishing a scientific article, is eligible*;*
- Project management tasks, not directly related to the specific R&D activities, such as: escalation to a steering committee, preparing a risk management model, preparing reports to meet funding obligations, administrative accountability. Project management tasks that do relate directly to the R&D activities (e.g., discussions with staff, analyzing technical risks, preparing research reports, preparing specifications) are eligible.

Costs attributable to third parties.
If some of the activities are subcontracted, those costs due to third parties can be allocated to the project and entered on the budget form. Care should be taken to ensure that the costs due to third parties are in proportion to the rest of the budget. Should this cost category be particularly high, this could influence and become part of the evaluation committee's assessment.

Instructions Budget Form
A specific budget form will be used within this SME Call. The budget form uses multiple built-in functions and redirects. Therefore, it is important to follow the instructions of the budget form (see the "Instructies" tab of the budget form).

3.6 Data management

Open access
Health~Holland strives to ensure that research results that are (partially) funded with PPP-Subsidy (i.e. public funds) are freely accessible worldwide. All scientific publications resulting from research funded through PPP allowances must therefore be made immediately and globally accessible upon publication (open access). Through the website http://www.openaccess.nl/nl/node/644, you can check whether your organization has made arrangements with traditional publishers regarding open access. This website includes an overview of more than 8,000 journals in which corresponding authors affiliated with Dutch universities and university medical centers (UMCs) can publish open access free of charge or at a discount. Costs associated with open access publishing are considered eligible project costs.

FAIR
Health~Holland encourages optimal use of research data and therefore requires that such data be stored according to the FAIR principles: **Findable**, **Accessible**, **Interoperable**, and **Reusable**. This means that data generated in the projects must be discoverable, interpretable, and usable by both humans and machines. The process of making data FAIR is explained by the GO FAIR Foundation in its three-point FAIRification framework. Health~Holland intends to expand its policy on FAIR data management in the future and will increasingly monitor the FAIR compliance of research data.

Data management plan
Health~Holland also aims to raise awareness among researchers regarding the importance of responsible data management. Upon final approval of the grant application, applicants are required to submit a data management plan based on the Health~Holland template. Approval of this plan by Health~Holland is a prerequisite for the disbursement of PPP funding.

3.7 Evaluation of health and care innovations

This option is only applicable if the innovation falls under the MDR/IVDR and it is likely that the innovator/consortium will apply for CE marking in the future or already has CE marking.

Collaboration Health~Holland and Health Innovation Netherlands

Health~Holland believes it is vital to analyse the actual impact and possibilities for implementation of innovations, i.e. while these are still in the R&D phase. Performing such an analysis for MedTech innovations is complex and involves many stakeholders. Therefore, Health~Holland collaborates with Health Innovation Netherlands (HI-NL). HI-NL is a multidisciplinary infrastructure initiated by several prominent parties, including The National Health Care Institute, The Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centres, Health~Holland, and The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. Through its activities, HI-NL facilitates an early, tailor-made dialogue (Animation) between innovators/entrepreneurs and all relevant stakeholders in the healthcare system, supporting and directing the development, evaluation, implementation, upscaling and reimbursement of promising and sustainable (health)care innovations for patients and citizens.

Insight into the innovation development path

The HI-NL innovation procedure provides innovators/entrepreneurs with expert support and multistakeholder advice about the development path of their specific innovation, tailored to the innovation type and development phase. The aim is to give innovators/entrepreneurs insight as early as possible into how their innovation will fit into the healthcare or prevention landscape and to provide them with concrete next steps for the further development path of their innovation. The HI-NL innovation procedure consists of four consecutive tailor-made phases:

- **The intake**, in which the fit, scope, direction and timing of the HI-NL innovation procedure is discussed. For scope and direction, examples are (not exhaustive): the intended claims, the target population, the strength of the current evidence and the required evidence, the comparison with the current standard in healthcare, the application and integration in the current healthcare context, CE, reimbursement, implementation and upscaling.
- Extensive **scoping & synthesis** of the innovation and its targeted context and setting by a team of health(care) innovation experts (a so-called case team) in collaboration with the innovator. This phase requires about 4 meetings (over a period of 8 weeks) between the case team and the innovator, which may also require some preparation time from the innovator/entrepreneur.
- A **Round Table session** with all relevant stakeholders (e.g. patient, medical specialist, health insurer, CE expert, policy makers etc.). In this phase, all relevant stakeholders in the healthcare domain that may play a role in the specific innovation are selected and brought together in the Round Table session to provide innovators with consensus advice about their innovation and necessary follow-up steps.
- Innovation guide; The gathered knowledge from the scoping & synthesis phase together with the multistakeholder advice is then compiled into a final comprehensive Innovation Guide and delivered to the innovator. The Innovation Guide is discussed through a close-out call and is a confidential document and the property of the innovator.

Which steps should the consortium undertake?

If the consortium is interested in learning more about HI-NL and the HI-NL innovation procedure and is considering including it as part of the project application, the consortium can contact HI-NL no later than three weeks before the closing of the Call deadline. An intake interview will then be scheduled, in which HI-NL will explain the innovation procedure in more detail and how it could serve the innovation/project. Before the intake takes place, the consortium is requested to complete the intake form, so that HI-NL will get insight into the current status of the innovation and its development (also in the context of the project application) and questions / desired topics. If, after contact with HI-NL, it appears that a HI-NL innovation procedure is of added value, this may be indicated on the SME call application form (section *E.3. Innovation guidance*). In addition, the project coordinator may include an earmarked budget of € 33.275 (incl. VAT), covering the costs of the entire HI-NL innovation procedure, on the budget as part of the total requested PPP subsidy. This amount can be included under the heading “costs owed to third parties” together with the specification “HI-NL Innovation procedure”.

The evaluation committee will independently assess whether the HI-NL innovation procedure will be of value to the success of the application. After the application for PPP funding has been (conditionally) awarded the consortium will be asked to elaborate on the plans related to the HI-NL Innovation procedure in the application. The details of this elaboration will be included in the award letter.

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

4. Procedure

The full procedure is divided into two sections, comprising five phases:

Section A: Application and Evaluation Procedure

- **Phase 1:** Preparation and submission of the full application (May/June)
- **Phase 2:** Selection of applications by the selection committee (July/August)
- **Phase 3:** Evaluation of applications by the evaluation committee (September through November)

Section B: Award Decision and Further Administration During Project Execution

- **Phase 4:** Award/rejection letter and subsequent administration leading up to the first PPP-Subsidy payment (December/January)
- **Phase 5:** Procedures during the project and final reporting

Below, each phase is explained in detail, outlining the necessary steps from submission to completion of a PPP-project.

4.1 Section A: Application and Evaluation Procedure

- *Phase 1: Preparation and submission of the full application – deadline July 1st 2025, CET 17:00*

To complete the full application, the consortium must submit the following documents.
All templates, appendices, and supporting documentation are available on our website.
Note: Outdated versions of the documents listed below will not be accepted.

- **Application form.**
- **Pitch –** This video serves as a brief presentation of the project. The requirements for the pitch are detailed in Appendix D. The pitch will be assessed during the selection phase (Phase 2).
- **Budget form**.
- **Letters of commitment.** Each consortium partner (excluding the main applicant) must submit a letter of commitment confirming their participation in the project and specifying the in-kind and/or cash contributions. Letters of intent will not be accepted.
- **A signed 'Declaration of being a non-Enterprise in Difficulty'** for all SMEs that use PPP-Subsidy within the project to cover their cost.
- **Confirmation of SME-status for all SMEs within the project:** this requires completing the SME self-assessment questionnaire. The outcome of the SME check must be submitted with the application.
- **Consortium agreement** – This must be an unsigned draft version; an empty template is insufficient. Use of the model consortium agreement provided by Health~Holland is mandatory. Only non-essential amendments and changes that do not conflict with the Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation (specifically article 2.2.2.) are permitted. In case of doubt, the consortium should consult an expert, such as the research organization's technology transfer office (TTO) or a legal advisor. If the project is awarded funding, the signed consortium agreement must be submitted as soon as possible, but **no later than four weeks after the award date.**
- Existing IP-arrangements – If the consortium has previously established agreements concerning intellectual property (e.g., via a license agreement or a parallel research agreement), such existing agreement(s) must be submitted together with the draft consortium agreement.

- *Phase 2: Selection of applications by the selection committee*

Phase 2.1 Eligibility check

Upon receipt of the application, Health~Holland will assess its completeness and admissibility within two working days. During this admissibility check, it will be verified whether the application complies with the conditions set out in Appendix C on our website.

If the application is found to be incomplete, the consortium will be granted one working day to make the necessary corrections and submit the requested information. If the application is deemed inadmissible, this will be communicated to the applicants within two working days.

Phase 2.2 Assessment by external selection committee

All applications deemed admissible in Phase 2.1 will be submitted by Health~Holland to an independent selection committee. This committee evaluates the applications at a high level and selects the most promising projects. Before reviewing any application, selection committee members are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. The committee will assess the following components of the application:

- Pitch
  - According to the guidelines in Appendix D, available on our website
- Related questions in the application form
  - Section D: Question 1 – Innovative technology development and adherence to the NTS
  - Section D: Question 3 – Project value for collaboration between consortium partners
  - Section E: Question 1 – Societal context
  - Section E: Question 2 – Involvement of end-users in the development process

These elements will be evaluated using the assessment form provided in Appendix E on our website. The resulting scores will generate a ranking of all projects based on their relevance and innovativeness.

In September, all applicants will receive a notification from Health~Holland. The 30 highest-ranked projects will be informed that their application will advance to **Phase 3**. This notification will be informative only; no further action is required from the consortium at that point.

Applicants whose projects are not selected for further assessment will be notified accordingly. These projects were deemed less relevant in comparison to those progressing to Phase 3. Consortia that do not advance to Phase 3 are welcome to submit a new application in the next SME Call round.

- *Phase 3: Full assessment of application by external evaluation committee*

The projects selected in Phase 2 will be reviewed by Health~Holland for compliance with the conditions described in Section 3: Terms and Conditions. In addition, the applications will undergo a substantive evaluation by an expert and independent evaluation committee. Evaluation committee members must first sign a confidentiality agreement before they may assess any PPP funding applications.

The evaluation committee provides with a recommendation regarding the application's suitability under the PPP Innovation Regulation to the Board of Stichting Life Sciences & Health-TKI. The evaluation considers scientific quality, feasibility, economic and societal impact—each of which is weighed equally in the overall assessment. Only the most relevant and promising applications will be approved. For Round 2 of the TKI-LSH SME Call 2025, approximately **€5 million** in PPP-Subsidy is available.

The final decision on whether or not to award the grant is made by the Board of Stichting Life Sciences & Health-TKI. Applicants will receive the decision by letter around mid-December 2025.

Note**:** Where necessary or desired, applicants may request that Health~Holland sign a non-disclosure agreement.

Evaluation criteria
The evaluation committee assesses project proposals based on the following substantive criteria. These are grouped into three main categories: scientific quality, feasibility, economic and societal value.

1) *Scientific quality*
   a) The research is clearly described, and the project goals are well defined.
   b) The project is innovative and is expected to generate new insights that lead to significant improvements in a product or service (TRL 4–6).
   c) The work plan is sufficiently detailed, including a timeline, milestones, and deliverables. The work packages are connected and well-coordinated.
   d) Clear success indicators are defined for the project.
   e) The project risks are well assessed, and mitigation strategies have been considered.

2) *Feasibility*
   a) The consortium possesses the required expertise, network, human resources, facilities, and means to successfully execute the project. The roles of the consortium partners are complementary and clearly described.
   b) The proposed methods for assessing feasibility are appropriate and well justified.
   c) The project timeline is realistic.
   d) The project budget is realistic (including personnel hours per organization, costs for materials and equipment, and reasonably estimated "third-party expenses").

3) *Economic and societal value*
   a) The economic impact of the project is clearly described, supported by a cost-effectiveness analysis and a competitive analysis.
   b) Further business development during and after the project is adequately described and appears realistic, supported by a business case.
   c) The steps required to move toward market introduction (TRL 9) are sufficiently detailed and supported by a financial projection and commercial strategy.
   d) The project clearly addresses societal needs and target groups.
   e) End-users are clearly identified and demonstrably involved in the development process.

4.2 Section B: Award Decision and Further Administration During Project Execution

- *Phase 4: Award/rejection letter and subsequent administration leading up to the first PPP-Subsidy payment*

Phase 4.1: Decision letter regarding approval, rejection, or request for further information
In December, the consortium will receive a letter containing the decision of the Board of Stichting LSH-TKI. This letter communicates one of the following outcomes:

- Conditional approval of your application
  - The Board conditionally approves your application. The letter will include comments from the evaluation committee that must be addressed through a rebuttal. These modifications are intended to strengthen the approved proposal. In addition, the consortium will receive remarks from the Health~Holland office concerning the conditions of the call.
- Additional information required for your application
  - The application may be approved, **provided** that additional questions from the evaluation committee are answered satisfactorily via a **rebuttal letter** and amendment of the application. Please note: If the questions are not adequately addressed to the satisfaction of both the evaluation committee and the Board, the Board will reject your application. Additional information by the consortium cannot be provided beyond that point.

- Rejection of your application
    - The application is rejected. The reason for rejection will be explained in the letter.
      → The main applicant will be excluded from participation in the next **TKI-LSH SME Call of 2026**.

Phase 4.2: After approval of your PPP-Subsidy application

- Health~Holland is responsible for registration of the project in the RVO project portal. After grant approval, the consortium will receive a RVO registration template and is requested to complete and return it as soon as possible, preferably together with the final draft of the consortium agreement.
- Within four weeks of the grant approval, the project coordinator (main applicant) must submit an unsigned final version of the consortium agreement, agreed upon by all partners, to Health~Holland for review.
    - Once the consortium agreement is approved by Health~Holland, the consortium will have two weeks to obtain signatures from all partners.
- Once the consortium agreement has been approved and fully signed, and the registration form for the RVO portal has been submitted, Health~Holland will prepare an implementation agreement (PPP Subsidy Agreement). This agreement is a contract between Health~Holland and all consortium partners, outlining the rights, obligations, and financial contributions of each partner. The PPP Subsidy Agreement must be signed by all partners within four weeks.
- Along with the signed PPP Subsidy Agreement, a datamanagement plan must be submitted, tob e reviewed by Health~Holland.
- Health~Holland publishes information about all approved projects on the project section of the website. A completed project profile must be submitted together with the signed PPP Subsidy Agreement.

Once Health~Holland has received and approved the signed PPP Subsidy Agreement, the data management plan, and the project profile for publication on the Health~Holland project page, the first payment of PPP-Subsidy can be issued. Subsequent payments will be made annually, following the receipt and approval of a progress report and, ultimately, the final report.

All payments will be made to the institution employing the project coordinator (main applicant), who bears responsibility for the financial distribution to the other consortium partners as well as for the collective accountability regarding the use of funds.

- *Phase 5: procedure gedurende de looptijd van het project en na de einddatum van het project*

Phase 5.1 During the course of the project

- All employees must keep a **time registration** during the project period.
- Each year, RVO will request progress information. At the beginning of each year, the main applicant must submit data regarding the consortium, project progress, and any changes.
  → Health~Holland will prefill a form, which must then be reviewed and supplemented by the consortium where necessary (e.g. realised costs).
- A progress report must be submitted within four weeks after the end of each project year (a template will be provided by Health~Holland).
  → only a final report is required for projects shorter than 18 months.
- The consortium must organise a steering group meeting annually. The main applicant must invite a representative from Health~Holland to attend. Health~Holland receives the invitation at least one month prior to the meeting.
- In the following situations, the consortium must contact Health~Holland as soon as possible via tki@health-holland.com:
  - Budgetary changes
  - Changes within the consortium (e.g. withdrawal or replacement of a consortium partner)
  - Budget-neutral extension request

Phase 5.2 After the end date of a project

Within **eight weeks** after the end date of the project, the project coordinator must submit the following documents to Health~Holland:

- A **final report** (the format of this will be provided by Health~Holland).
- A **board of directors' statement** must be submitted regarding the total project costs of that consortium partner, if the consortium partner has used no PPP subsidy or less than €125.000 PPP subsidy.
- An **auditor's statement** must be submitted regarding the total project costs of that consortium partner if the consortium partner has used €125.000 or more of PPP subsidy.
- An **updated project profile** including the results of the completed project.

The final PPP subsidy payment will take place when the aforementioned documents are received and approved by Health~Holland[8].

4.4 Intended timeline

Publication SME-call	1 May 2025
Deadline full application	1 July 2025; 17:00 CET
Eligibility check	Within 2 workdays after the application deadline
Notification from Health~Holland regarding the selection committee's decision	Mid September 2025
Award or rejection letter	Mid December 2025
Submit final unsigned Consortium Agreement	Within 4 weeks of receipt of (conditional) approval of application
Submit signed Consortium Agreement	Within 2 weeks after approval of the final version by Health~Holland
Submit signed version PPP Subsidy Agreement	Within 4 weeks of receipt PPP Subsidy Agreement

[8] Please note that de documents required for the final report may be subject to change depending on any new requirements of RVO

5. More information

5.1 Calculation examples

Calculation example 1 - Research organization and Dutch SME.

Consortium partners	Costs
Research organization X	€ 200.000
Dutch SME Y	€ 500.000
Total	**€ 700.000**

Consortium partners	Max. % PPP subsidy	Max. € PPP subsidy
Research organization X	70%	€ 140.000
Dutch SME Y	60%	€ 300.000
Total		**€ 440.000**

**Percentage of PPP subsidy is calculated over the total cost of the partner in question.*

Minimal required contributions	% of total cost**	Minimal contribution (€)
Research organization(s)	10%	€ 70.000
Enterprises (for-profit and non-profit).	15%	€ 105.000
Open amount to be freely funded based on cost and minimum required contribution	***=€700.000 (cost) - €440.000 (max. PPP subsidy) - €175.000 (min. contributions)***	**€ 85.000**

*** Percentages for minimal required contributions are calculated over the total cost of the project.*

Funding per partner

Consortium partners	Total cost	In kind	In cash	PPP subsidy
Research organization X	€ 200.000	€ 70.000	€ 0	€ 130.000***
Dutch SME Y	€ 500.000	€ 200.000	€ 0	€ 300.000
Total	**€ 700.000**	**€ 270.000**	**€ 0**	**€ 430.000**

**** The maximum PPP-Subsidy for the research organization is €140.000; however, the amount has been adjusted to €130,000 to meet the minimum in-kind contribution requirement of €70.000.*

Calculation example 2 – Multiple research organizations, one Dutch SME and one SME abroad

Consortium partners	Costs
Research organization X	€ 80.000
Research organization Y	€ 60.000
Dutch SME	€ 300.000
Non-Dutch SME	€ 150.000
Totaal	**€ 590.000**

Consortium partners	Max. % PPP subsidy	Max. € PPP subsidy
Research organization X	70%	€ 56.000
Research organization Y	70%	€ 42.000
Dutch SME	60%	€ 180.000
Non-Dutch SME	0%	€ 0
Total		**€ 278.000**

**Percentage of PPP subsidy is calculated over the total cost of the partner in question.*

Minimal required contributions	% of total cost**	Minimal contribution (€)
Research organization(s)	10%	€ 59.000
Enterprises (for-profit and non-profit).	15%	€ 88.500
Open amount to be freely funded based on cost and minimum required contribution	***=€590.000 (costs) - €278.000 (max. PPP subsidy) - €147.500 (min. contributions)***	**€ 164.500**

*** Percentages for minimal required contributions are calculated over the total cost of the project.*

Funding per partner

Consortium partners	Total cost	In kind	In cash	PPP subsidy
Research organization X	€ 80.000	€ 35.000	€ 0	€ 45.000***
Research organization Y	€ 60.000	€ 24.000	€ 0	€ 36.000***
Dutch SME	€300.000	€120.000	€ 0	€ 180.000
Non-Dutch SME	€ 150.000	€ 150.000	€ 0	€ 0
Total	**€ 590.000**	**€ 329.000**	**€ 0**	**€ 261.000**

**** The PPP subsidy for the research organizations is lower in order to meet the total minimum in-kind contribution of 10% (= €59.000)*

5.2 Downloads

All documents can be downloaded through **our website**

Documents necessary for full application:
- TKI-LSH MKB Call application form
- TKI-LSH MKB Call Budget form
- Model consortium agreement PPP Subsidy – Standard
- Model consortium agreement PPP Subsidy – Clinical study
- Template Letter of Commitment Dutch
- Template Letter of Commitment English
- RVO: declaration 'non-enterprise in difficulty'
- SME self-assessment questionnaire

Support documents for the full application:
- Appendix A: Technology Readiness Levels
- Appendix B: Health~Holland tool - National Technology Strategy (NTS)
- Appendix C: Eligibility check criteria
- Appendix D: Pitch instructions
- Appendix E: Beoordelingscriteria voorselectie commissie
- Appendix F: Definition value inflection point
- Appendix G: Conflict of Interest

Documents for Reference
- Nationale Technologie Strategie (NTS)
- Missiedocument 2024-2027
- Kennis- en Innovatieagenda 2024-2027
- Kennis- en Innovatieconvenant 2024-2027

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

5.3 Questions
For questions regarding the SME Call, you can send a mail to tki@health-holland.com

When sending your email, please take the following into account:
- Please include in the subject line: *Advice SME Call – <name of main applicant's company>*
- Provide an explanation of the work package(s) for which there is uncertainty regarding the classification. It is not possible to request an assessment of your entire application in terms of research type.
- We will provide advisory feedback on points to consider. This advice is not a formal decision, and no rights can be derived from it.

5.4 Submission
A link to upload all documentation will be available on our website no later than 1 June 2025. This link will remain active until the close of the call on 1 July 2025, 17:00 CET.