



PPP Call 2023 — Knowledge and Innovation Agenda for Agriculture, Water and Food

CALL FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPP) INITIATIVES FOR DEMAND-DRIVEN RESEARCH TO BE STARTED IN 2024

Specific focal area:	Knowledge & Innovation agenda Agriculture, Water, Food
Priorities	PPP call Priorities for new PPP proposals
Available public budget 2024:	14.5 million euros excl. VAT (indicative only)
Consultations (optional):	8 to 19 May 2023
Submission PPP proposals:	no later than September 1, 2023
Feedback to applicants:	from November 1, 2023
Submission:	https://kia-landbouwwatervoedsel.nl/regelingen/
Information:	info@landbouwwatervoedsel.nl

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- Guidance for new PPP proposals
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THIS DOCUMENT CONCERNS A TRANSLATION; IN CASE OF UNINTENTIONAL DISCREPANCY, THE DUTCH VERSION IS LEADING.

1. The Knowledge and Innovation Agenda for Agriculture, Water and Food

Within the framework of the Mission-driven Top Sectors and Innovation Policy, the Government has laid down its ambitions for a selection of major societal issues in a set of missions. In the field of Agriculture, Water and Food, six missions have been formulated:

- A. Circular agriculture
- B. Climate-neutral agriculture and food production
- C. Climate-proof rural and urban areas
- D. Appreciated, healthy and safe food
- E. A sustainable and safe North Sea and other waterways
- F. The Netherlands as the best protected delta in the world, now and in future

These missions are supported by two key technologies: ST1 Smart Technologies in Agri-Horti-Water-Food and ST2 Biotechnology and Breeding.

In 2019, the Top Sectors for Agriculture and Food, Horticulture and Starting Materials, and Water and Maritime have formulated a joint knowledge and innovation agenda (the KIA for Agriculture, Water and Food), in which they have set out how they will approach the knowledge and innovation challenges associated with the missions during the period between 2020 and 2023. The KIA was set up in close consultation with its stakeholders: government departments, the business community, research organisations, regional authorities and social organisations. As a result, this agenda is a widely supported document that sets the direction for a joint knowledge and innovation policy over the coming years.

Each mission consists of several Multi-year Mission-driven Innovation Programmes (MMIPs). Each of these MMIPs focuses on specific knowledge and innovation challenges and obstacles to be overcome. MMIPs have also been drawn up for each of the two key enabling technologies. A Theory of Change (ToC) has been drawn up per MMIP to clarify the exact requirements that need to be met to resolve each of the challenges.

In the implementation of the KIA, a major role has been reserved for the programme teams and advisory groups of the MMIPs, on which the aforementioned stakeholder base is widely represented. These bodies advise the TKIs and government departments about the priorities to be set, and about the contribution of the various projects to the realisation of the KIA.

Next to the KIA for Agriculture, Water and Food, there are three other thematic knowledge and innovation agendas, a KIA for Key Technologies and a KIA for Societal Earning Capacity, each of which are led by different top sectors. The various top sectors endeavour to cooperate on crossover programmes. As such, the focus of this PPP call is on joint projects with TKI Life Sciences and Health and TKI Logistics. The full text of the KIA for Agriculture, Water and Food, as well as the missions and key technologies, MMIPs and ToCs, can be viewed on <https://kia-landbouwwatervoedsel.nl>.

2. Call for PPP proposals

To ensure that the various parties in the field can be involved in the implementation of the KIA as part of an open process, the Top Sectors A&F, T&U and W&M are performing a call for public-private partnership initiatives (PPPs) in close cooperation with the Top Sectors Logistics and Life Sciences & Health in 2024. These PPPs must offer a response to one or more of the knowledge and innovation challenges in the KIA. Only proposals that contribute to the realisation of the missions and/or key technologies of the KIA will be considered. The PPP application must state exactly what this contribution will look like.

Wide scope for proposals

Parties are invited to submit proposals across the full scope of the KIA. The guiding principle for this is the “**KIA for Agriculture, Water and Food 2023 PPP Call Guidance**”, which can be found on the KIA website, <https://kia-landbouwwatervoedsel.nl/regelingen/>. This document lists the knowledge gaps that have been identified as part of recent portfolio analyses and the progress made on the KIA challenges. Urgent and/or structurally underexplored knowledge gaps have been marked as ‘priority’; good proposals in relation to these are

especially welcome and will, in case of equivalent suitability, be given priority during the assessment phase (see Annex 1 for more information).

Crossovers and internationalisation

Three top sectors are driving the implementation of the KIA for Agriculture, Water and Food. In addition, opportunities for collaboration in the form of crossovers are sought with other top sectors for specific topics. The TKIs in question are steering these crossover topics jointly, in terms of scope and finance. Specifically, the 2023 KIA for Agriculture, Water and Food call offers the option of **crossover projects** with TKI Life Sciences and Health (KIA for Health and Care) and TKI Logistics (an element of the KIA for Energy and Sustainability). The frameworks and conditions for these are described in the guidance document.

In addition, the issues involved in some of the topics request an international perspective or approach. Among other things, this offers opportunities for the development of **international** public-private partnerships.

Proposals of this nature can be submitted in one of two ways:

- Under the national MMIP priorities of the KIA, if the applicant is collaborating with international partners on an issue that (primarily) affects the Netherlands;
- Under the Internationalisation topic, if the specifics of the PPP touch on international chains, food systems or ecosystems. A separate text has been included in the guidance for these proposals.

Requirements for PPP proposals

- The primary focus of any PPP proposals must be on applied research with TRL levels ranging from 4 to 6 (TRL = Technology Readiness Level). For a toolset focused on other TRLs, please see <https://www.rvo.nl/onderwerpen/trl>. For a description of the TRL levels, please see https://www.rvo.nl/sites/default/files/2021/09/Toelichting-definitie-FO-IO-EO-20210801_v06092021.pdf.
- This applied research must be in the form of precompetitive research for which a contribution with public money is legitimate.
- All PPP proposals must clearly demonstrate how the knowledge and innovation developed will be disseminated to the relevant sectors and other parties. Publication of the results through appropriate channels¹ is a precondition to be eligible for public funding. However, restrictions apply to how much of the cost of this can be covered by the PPP allowance.
- The entity submitting a proposal must be a company, trade association or NGO based in the Netherlands. Any consortium must consist of at least one research organisation and two other parties, such as businesses or trade associations, NGOs or public organisations. Generally speaking, someone from a research institution will take the role of project manager during implementation/following the award of funding.
- PPP proposals must have a maximum term of four years. No minimum term applies.
- The budget must be balanced and properly substantiated. For the exact structure of the budget, please follow the guidelines in Annex 2.
- The proposal and the budget must be drawn up in line with the 2023 templates made available for that purpose. The use of older (or any other) templates is not permitted.

Available budget

The budget to be allocated as part of the 2024 PPP call is approx. **14.5 million euros, excl. VAT**, and consists of the following:

1. WR capacity via the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality: for 2024, approx. **8.3 million euros is available** for research to be carried out by Wageningen Research. Partnerships with other research organisations are permitted. In such partnerships, the partners will be bound by the applicable support and grant frameworks.
2. TO2 capacity via the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management: for the 2024 PPP call, approx. **1.2 million euros is available** (1.5 million euros incl. VAT) for water and soil-related topics. These resources must be used at TO2 institutions (TNO, Deltares, Marin, WR).
3. PPP allowance: for 2024, **approx. 5 million euros** is available for new PPP proposals (**approx. 19 million euros** across the entire project period). **Half of this amount is unrestricted PPP allowance via TKI Horticulture and Starting Materials and TKI Agriculture and Food, which can be used at all research organisations** (universities, universities of applied research, TO2, private research organisations). The other half is PPP allowance that knowledge institutions and businesses have generated with TKI Water

¹ Conferences, education (lecturers/guest lectures etc.), specialist literature and so on.

Technology, TKI Delta Technology, TKI Horticulture and Starting Materials or TKI Agriculture and Food. The relevant parties may use these resources as part of this call.

In addition to this, the TKIs LSH and Logistics will contribute a maximum of 1 million euros and 0.6 million euros respectively for financing proposals on the relevant crossover themes. This budget covers the total duration of projects. Decision-making on the allocation of these resources rests with the relevant TKI; a consortium that receives a PPP allowance is solely accountable to the financing TKI. The relevant TKI may request additional information for final allocation.

3. Public-private partnerships

The scope and complexity of the challenges in the KIA demands a joint approach involving public authorities, business, social organisations and research organisations. As such, the basic principle of this call is that applicants form public-private partnerships, in which parties in the field and public authorities fund the knowledge and innovation activities in question. Joint funding by public and private parties matters because it facilitates involvement and offers a framework for collaboration (those who pay get a say). The general frameworks for public-private funding of PPP projects are set out below. See Annex 2 for more detailed specifications.

Public-private funding ratio

As standard, the total co-financing amount in this call must be at least **50%** for industrial (applied) research. Of that 50%, at least 30 percentage points must consist of **private contributions**, of which at least 5% must be in cash. The remaining 20 percentage points may consist of contributions from public partners other than the Ministry for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, such as other government departments, provincial authorities, municipal authorities, water boards and land management organisations.

The following **exceptions** are applicable to this ratio (see also Figure 1):

1. Proposals with a strong societal focus or major collective approach that offer no direct interest to market parties for the time being (i.e. without any business model on the horizon)² are eligible for **70% funding** by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality or the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (**TO2 capacity**). Depending on the parties involved, part of this funding may consist of **PPP allowance generated at TKI Water Technology and TKI Delta Technology**.

The 30% share of co-finance must be provided by private partners, and at least 5 percentage points must be in cash. Another requirement is that interaction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality or the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (depending on which department the applicant is relying on) is necessary at an early stage in the preparation of the project proposal. As part of this interaction, the following must be discussed:

- whether the scope of the project proposal is sufficiently aligned with the policy challenges of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality or the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, so that the project demonstrably has a strong societal focus.
- whether the scope can be tailored more specifically to the willingness of private companies to invest, so that (when this is not possible) it can be demonstrated that there is indeed only limited competitiveness (i.e. a business model).
- whether sufficient involvement and co-financing has been organised by (public) parties that have an interest in working on the challenge in question.

This coordination has no effect on the eventual decision as to whether the proposal will be accepted; the procedure must be completed to assess whether that will be the case. Based on the complete project proposal, the government departments will decide whether or not it is eligible for 70% co-financing.

2. For proposals that align with **area programmes in the context of the National Programme for Rural Areas** (demonstrated by the participation of one or more provincial authorities and/or water boards) and for proposals that fall under **Mission F: “Best Protected Delta”**, the co-financing element may consist up to 40 percentage points (instead of 20) of cash contributions from public partners, such as provincial authorities,

² For example: the development of a rapid test for *Campylobacter* falls under the 50% share; the development of hygiene measures to prevent the spread of *Campylobacter* falls under the 30% share.

municipal authorities, land management organisations and government departments other than the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality or the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. The remaining 10 percentage points of co-financing must be private, of which 5 percentage points must be in cash. Please note: this exception relates to the structure of the co-financing; the maximum public contribution to be requested under the PPP call is 50%.

We recommend that applicants who wish to make use of one of the exceptions for funding urgently **seek advice** on this point in a consultation. Whether or not any definitively submitted project proposal with a different funding ratio actually fits within the exceptions will be assessed by the funders.

All PPP proposals — regardless of the funding option — must be funded **in cash for at least 75%** (financing + cofinancing). Contributions by public partners other than public research organisations must at all times be in cash, and all projects are subject to a minimum private cash contribution of 5% of the total project budget.

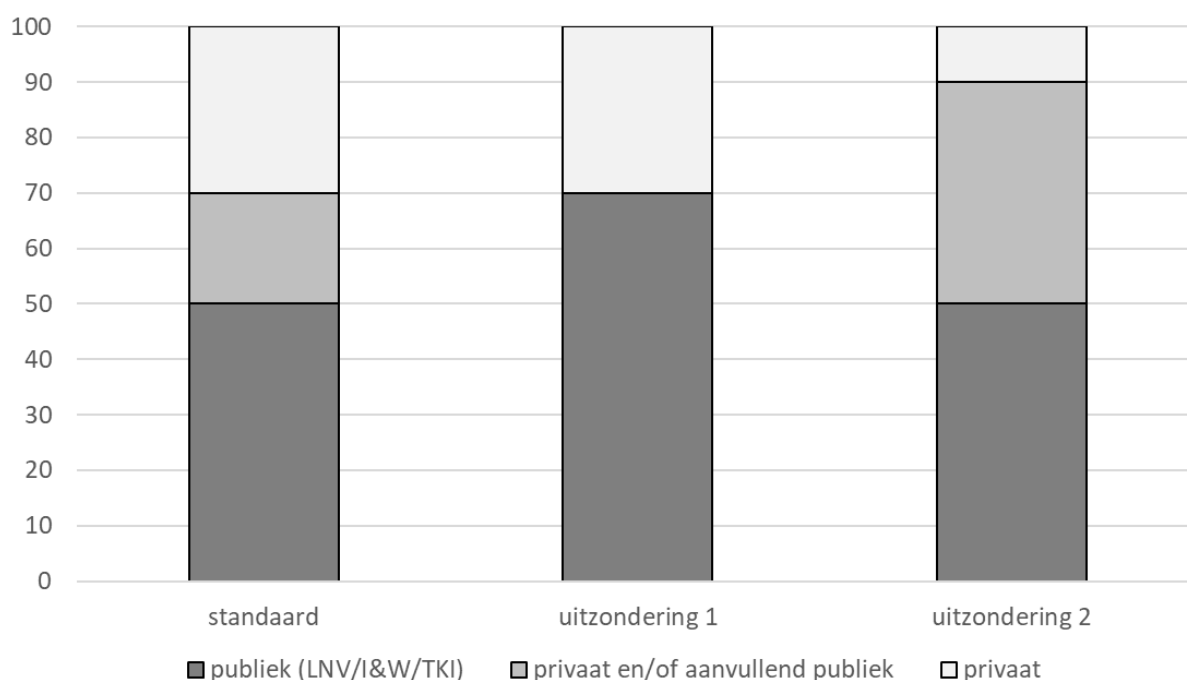


Figure 1. Diagram showing the possible funding options for PPP proposals relating to industrial (applied) research.

4. Procedure

PPS proposal submission

From mid-June up to and including September 1, 2023, PPP proposals can be submitted via the submission link on the KIA website. All PPP proposals must be submitted with an accompanying budget. The mandatory templates for both the proposal and the budget are available via <https://kia-landbouwwatervoedsel.nl/regelingen/>.

Consultation opportunity

Parties who intend to submit a PPP proposal have the option of arranging a meeting with delegates from the responsible TKIs and Ministries. The outcome of this conversation at the request of the applicant (i.e. on a non-mandatory basis) will never be more than a consultation on (a) whether the project fits within the KIA/MMIP or (b) the funding model. No rights can be derived from these consultations.

Applicants who would like a consultation can **sign up until 1 May** via the registration link on the KIA website (<https://kia-landbouwwatervoedsel.nl/regelingen/>). The consultations will take place between 8 and 19 May; time slots per KIA element can be found on the KIA website in due course.

PPP proposal assessment

The TKIs will assess the PPP proposals on whether they meet the administrative requirements, such as use of the template, completeness and sufficient co-financing. The content of the proposals will be assessed by

review committees consisting of a balanced representation of experts from the world of business, public authorities and research organisations.

The criteria used in the assessment are as follows:

1. Project fit within KIA and contribution to portfolio
2. Impact; contribution to the achievement of the KIA objectives
3. Quality of the PPP proposal
4. Quality of the consortium

A more detailed explanation of criteria is available in Annex 1.

Selection of proposals will be based on the ranking of proposals per KIA element (MMIP, key technology etc.). In principle, this ranking will be decided by the average scores of the proposals on the above criteria, plus the following conditions:

- Proposals that do not meet the required quality (criterion 3) will be excluded from consideration.
- Proposals that do meet the required quality score and that are fully funded by reserved PPP allowance of the participating parties will be placed at the top of the ranking.
- If a proposal contributes to one of the priority topics in the guidance document and is able to achieve substantial impact (= an adequate score on criterion 2), this proposal will be given priority if the score is (almost) equal to others.
- Diversity will be sought within each KIA element, and mutual overlap between project proposals to be considered will be avoided.

Based on the ranking of the programme teams, a decision will be made as to which PPP proposals can be funded using the various sources.

Recommendation and decision

The TKIs, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management will draw up a recommended programme for the allocation of the available resources. For the cross-over themes this will be done in close cooperation with the TKIs Logistics and Life Sciences and Health. The consortium will be accountable to the financing TKI.

This recommendation will be submitted to TKI executive boards and Top Teams, and to the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. The coordinators will be notified of the outcome of the assessment, with reasons, after November 1, 2023. No rebuttal is available against the decision of the TKIs on the assessment of the proposal.

Procedure overview

Date	Activity
3 April	Call opens
8-19 May	Consultations (if signed up, not mandatory)
Mid June	Online submission link
1 Sept	Final submission date for PPP proposals
Sept/Oct	Assessment by TKI office and review committees
19-31 Oct	Decision by TKI executive boards/top teams and Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality/Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management
After 1 Nov	Feedback to applicants
Nov-Dec	Assessment by programme teams and advisory groups
Nov '23 – March '24	Drafting of partnership agreements, allocation of resources
1 April 2024	Withdrawal from consideration if no partnership agreement has been concluded yet

For additional information about this call, please send an e-mail to info@landbouwwatervoedsel.nl.

Annex 1: Criteria for the assessment of PPP proposals

Complete PPP proposals will be assessed based on the criteria below.

1. Project fit within KIA and contribution to portfolio

- Does the proposal fall under one or more of the missions in the KIA?
- Does the proposal fulfil a knowledge requirement as specified in the guidance document? If not, does the process add value in any other way to the existing portfolio?
- Is it sufficiently clear what the proposal contributes to the change as sought in the KIA or the guidance document?
- Does the proposal relate to a promising innovation that would not be realised otherwise, or would be realised with a significant delay?

2. Impact

- Does the proposal make a significant contribution to the mission? This includes any technological, economic, social and environmental aspects.
- What does the implementation trajectory look like after completion of the project?
- Is there sufficient focus on disseminating/unlocking knowledge to third parties?
- If relevant, are connections established with (regional) networks, testing grounds, joint ventures or study circles?

3. Quality of the proposal

- Is the proposal well-written, and is the approach clear, logical and consistent?
- Is the state of the art well described?
- Is there a good connection to relevant existing knowledge and activities?
- Do the proposed activities lead effectively and efficiently towards the intended result?
- Are the activities proportional to the budget applied for (value for money)?

4. Consortium

- Are the parties that are needed to achieve the desired change on board?
- If these parties are not all on board, how will they be involved and will this lead to the desired result?

Annex 2: Budget, rates, co-financing requirements

A template with different tabs is available to help applicants draw up a budget. (The template is available on <https://kia-landbouwwatervoesel.nl/regelingen/>)

Participants tab: Fill in organisation name and CoC number. Use list boxes to fill in the type of organisation, hourly rate calculation method and VAT rate.

Cost overview tab: Offers an overview of costs and funding. Automatically filled in based on the other tabs.

Project partner costs tab:

- Tab 2a: costs of research organisations.
- Tab 2b: costs of other partners. These costs must include the in-kind costs for which you fill in the funding on Tab 3.

Funding tabs:

- Tab 3a: the contribution in-kind of the private partners (please also include this in the costs on Tab 2b).
- Tab 3b: the contribution in-kind of the research organisations (please also include this in the costs on Tab 2b).
- Tab 3c: the cash contribution of the private partners. Please fill in who this cash contribution will be going to.
- Tab 3d: the cash contribution of the public partners. Please fill in who this cash contribution will be going to.
- Tab 3e: the requested public funding, broken down into funding type. Please fill in who the requested public contribution will be going to.

Checks (by applicant and by TKI offices):

1. The total cost (Table 2a and 2b) must be equal to the total funding (Table 3a to 3e).
2. The costs of the research organisations (Table 2a) must as a minimum be covered by the public funding (Table 3e), plus any contribution in kind by the research organisations (part of Table 3a and 3b), plus (part of) the cash co-finance (from Table 3c and 3d).
3. Compliance with the requirement of 50% (or 30%) co-finance; at least 75% of the total project budget must be financed in cash.
4. Type of research according to Netherlands Enterprise Agency definitions: industrial (TRL 4) or experimental (TRL 5-6). For experimental development, 75% co-financing is required. For definitions of the different types of research, see part 2 of the main text 'requirements PPP proposal'.

Public funding and cash contribution for research organisations

Applicants must collaborate with research organisations on their projects. In this regard, a distinction is made between:

- Wageningen Research
- Other TO2: TNO, Deltares, Marin
- Universities and universities of applied sciences
- Other research organisations, including KWR, LBI, Vertify, SCFF

Innovative enterprises such as GD, Schothorst, NIZO or CLM are also eligible for grants, on the condition that they collaborate with one of the institutions listed above.

The purpose of the requested public funding for a project, as well as the cash co-financing by the partners, is to cover the costs of the research organisations or innovative enterprises (alongside any contribution in kind by the parties listed).

The WR capacity can only be used to fund Wageningen Research (funding stream 1).

The TO2 capacity can only be used to fund TO2 institutions (funding stream 2).

All research organisations and innovative enterprises may be funded using reserved and unrestricted PPP allowance (funding stream 3).

Co-financing

Private co-financing (in cash and in kind) may be provided by:

- Businesses and trade/producer organisations
- Societal organisations
- Public benefit organisations (ANBI's)
- Private research organisations

Public co-financing may be provided by:

- Water boards
- Public research organisations (including educational organisations)
- Provincial authorities, municipal authorities, civil service departments
- Ministries other than Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality or Infrastructure and Water Management

The following cannot be included in any public co-financing³:

- Contributions in kind by public partners
- Resources from other schemes, such as regional deals, field labs etc.

Definition of contribution in kind

It must be possible to allocate any contribution in kind to the research project/partnership during the project period. A contribution in kind is a cost incurred by a (private or public) party that adds value to the project. It is up to the parties who set up the PPP to indicate whether a project includes any contributions in kind.

The following contributions may be eligible to be considered as contributions in kind:

- Labour costs.
- Costs of consumables, tools and software (licences) that are directly related to the project, based on the original purchase price.
- The purchase and operational cost of equipment, machines and infrastructure, on the understanding that these are based on the depreciation costs to be allocated to the project, calculated on the basis of the original purchase price and a depreciation period of at least five years; consumption and maintenance costs during the period of operation.
- The provision of data to facilitate research on a project does not constitute a contribution in kind, but is considered a contribution of knowledge. As far as additional efforts are required in the context of the partnership to generate that knowledge, the additional costs may be included as a contribution in kind.

Cost calculation and rate structure

In this regard, a distinction is made between three parties:

1. Parties who receive PPP allowance and partners who are enlisted on the basis of grants.

These parties must calculate their cost of labour based on the standard methods as described in Articles 10 to 14 of the Framework Decision for National Grants by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy and Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. Costs will be accounted for exclusive of VAT if the grant recipient who incurred the costs is eligible to deduct VAT.

For the calculation of costs eligible for funding, participants may choose between:

- a. the integral cost system (Article 12 of the Framework Decision)
- b. the wage cost plus fixed allowance system (Article 13 of the Framework Decision), or
- c. the fixed hourly rate system (Article 14 of the Framework Decision).

Integral cost system

The system must be approved by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency. As a justification for the integral cost system, a declaration, notice or letter from the accountant of the participant must be supplied regarding the correct calculation of the rates based on the internal budgets.

Labour costs plus fixed allowance system or

The partners must supply an hourly rate calculation per employee used, i.e. including a cost component (gross wage cost, including employer contributions) and an hourly component (1,650 or less in case of part-time employment).

³ This requirement applies on top of the formal requirements of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency

As a justification for these costs, the partner must supply an accountant's declaration or a calculation of the rate (labour cost + employer contribution, divided by hours), the payslips and the employer contributions. The employer contributions for social security and pensions supplied by the partners will be assessed in terms of reasonableness. If these contributions are higher than 30% of the gross wage cost, further justification must be provided for these costs in the form of the exact calculations of the social security and pension contributions.

Fixed hourly rate system

The costs eligible for funding must be calculated by multiplying the number of hours the parties involved spend on the PPP by a fixed hourly rate of 60 euros (Article 3.1.1. of the Regulations for National Grants by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy and Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality).

2. Wageningen Research

The following WR rates apply for WR capacity. For the funding of third parties in a PPP from WR capacity, a distinction is made between:

- a. Outsourcing to third parties (subcontracting). The third parties in question are bound by the frameworks that follow from the subcontract and Public Procurement Act.
- b. Collaboration with research organisations who are part of the consortium. The partners are bound by the partnership agreements and the applicable support and grant frameworks.

3. Parties who are not receiving any grants

The hourly rates of parties who are not receiving any grants must be calculated on the grounds of a method that is customary for and controllable by the participants in a partnership project, based on business economics principles and standards that are considered generally acceptable and that are applied systematically by the participants in a partnership project (Article 3.2.1 of the Regulations for National Grants by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy and Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality).