

AiNed Grant Rules

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1 General

1.1 Definitions

1. **AIC4NL Foundation** The body or employee authorized to represent the AIC4NL Foundation in official matters.
2. **AI-hubs** Through the AIC4NL networking component, these are regionally connected organizations that promote collaboration around artificial intelligence between companies, knowledge institutions, and governments. They connect local initiatives with national AI activities. The program encompasses multiple regional hubs, each active in their respective geographic area.
3. **Applicant** The organization that requests a grant from the Foundation.
4. **Assessment Committee** A committee tasked with advising the AIC4NL Foundation on submitted applications.
5. **Call Document** Document containing the specific conditions of a funding instrument, also referred to as Call for Proposals.
6. **Call for Proposals:** Official invitation in which organizations are invited to submit grant applications within a specified period for projects that align with predetermined themes, objectives, and conditions.
7. **Co-financier** An entity that contributes to the project in cash and/or in-kind without receiving program funding.
8. **Collaboration Partner** Party that participates but provides no in-kind/cash contribution and receives no subsidy. Collaboration partners are not project applicants.
9. **Consortium** A collaborative arrangement without legal personality consisting of grant recipients aimed at achieving jointly endorsed objectives through project execution within the AIC4NL program, whereby each beneficiary contributes part of the required efforts and bears part of the associated risks.
10. **Consortium Agreement** An agreement between applicants forming a consortium for project execution.
11. **Enterprises** Definitions for enterprise types can be found on the relevant national business development agency website.
12. **Funding Instrument** An instrument arising from the AIC4NL's financing policy and established as a set of rules through which a certain amount of funding is made available.
13. **General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER)** Regulation No. 651/2014 as most recently revised on July 1, 2023, governing state aid exemptions.
14. **Grant Recipient** The legal entity that receives the grant funding.
15. **Investments** Assets deployed for the project that retain economic value after project completion and can be reused, including equipment, software with residual value, infrastructure, etc.
16. **IP Rights** All intellectual property rights, excluding copyright.
17. **Lead Applicant** The designated representative of the collaborative arrangement who serves as the primary contact point for the AIC4NL Foundation and relevant government agencies. For a complete overview of lead partner tasks and responsibilities, reference should be made to applicable government guidelines.
18. **Matching Funds** The total of own contributions and co-financing from private parties.
19. **Open Access** Free accessibility for everyone, without embargo period.
20. **Own Contribution** The portion of a grant recipient's costs that is not financed by the Foundation.
21. **Project Duration** The period within which the project must be completed.
22. **Project Leader** The person employed by the lead partner who bears substantive and financial responsibility for the project.
23. **Project Participant** An applicant who participates in project execution.
24. **Project Results** All inventions, outcomes, materials, methods, processes, products, programs, software, findings, or discoveries generated within a project.
25. **Publication** Disclosure of project results in any manner or through any means, excluding disclosure resulting from patent applications on results or other results for which protective measures are taken.
26. **Start Date** The date on which project execution begins, as stated in the project proposal or, if different, in the grant decision.
27. **State Aid Framework** The legal and policy framework within which the relevant government agency may provide subsidies or other forms of government support.

2 Introduction

The AI Coalition 4 Netherlands Foundation (AIC4NL) may, utilizing subsidy funds from the Ministry of Economic Affairs for the implementation of components of the National Growth Fund (NGF) AiNed, provide contributions to legal entities for activities that align with its statutory objectives: promoting the implementation of the "AIC4NL Foundation Strategic Investment Programme Artificial Intelligence" and programme-based projects supported by the National Growth Fund, as well as undertaking all activities that relate to the aforementioned in the broadest sense or may be conducive thereto.

This Rules Document provides a framework and guidance (insofar as known at the time of publication) to those organizations that are preparing an AiNed project proposal. This document follows the financing process: application, assessment and allocation, project implementation, and publication and utilization.

Please be advised that following the assessment and before AiNed financing is granted, the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) will review the selected proposals and prepare the decisions. Arrangements such as financing, conditions, general terms and conditions, legal agreements, and so forth, will be coordinated therein.

Outside the scope of this document are the financial and legal arrangements that apply once proposals have been selected. These are described in the decision that the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) enters into with the consortia.

Questions or comments regarding this Grant Rules Document may be submitted via the email address included in the Call text for the respective Call. The Call texts are published on the website of the AIC4NL Foundation (<https://aic4nl.nl/>).

This document was originally drafted in Dutch. In the event of interpretational differences between the English and Dutch versions of this document, the original Dutch version shall prevail.

The AIC4NL Foundation reserves the right to unilaterally modify, supplement, or revise this Rules Document at any time. Any modification shall take effect at the moment of publication of the updated Rules Document on the website of the AIC4NL Foundation (<https://aic4nl.nl/>).

3 Application

3.1 Applicant ('Who can apply')

1. A contribution may be requested by legal entities that have a principal establishment in the Netherlands, or legal entities that have an R&D department in the Netherlands at a physical location in the Netherlands, whereby the legal entity conducts activities at its own account and risk that benefit the Dutch economy or other Dutch interests.
2. No contribution may be provided to a governing body, such as a province, municipality, or public body as referred to in the Joint Arrangements Act.
3. The Lead Applicant may submit only one proposal per financing round of an AiNed programme in the capacity of Lead Applicant.
4. AI-hubs and AIC4NL working areas may not be formal (co-)Applicants, and employees of AI-hubs may not act as partners in an application.

3.2 Coordinator, project participants, cooperation partners and co-financiers

1. A contribution is requested by multiple Applicants who together form a collaborative partnership ('consortium'). The applicants appoint a Lead Applicant from among themselves.
2. The Lead Applicant and Project Participants are each individually a Contribution Recipient and thereby responsible for compliance with the obligations. The Lead Applicant oversees this compliance.
3. The Lead Applicant serves as the primary point of contact for the AIC4NL Foundation and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO). This does not preclude the AIC4NL Foundation and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) from directly contacting the Project Participants.
4. In addition to the elaboration of the activities of the Lead Applicant and Project Participants, the application indicates whether the collaborative partnership also includes Collaboration Partners and/or Co-financiers, which organizations these concern, and in what manner they contribute to the realization of the project.

3.3 Costs eligible for contribution ('what can be applied for')

1. Only project-specific costs - serving the project - are eligible for contribution, insofar as they align with the applicable State aid framework and the provisions in the Call text. These can be divided into the following categories, applicable to the costs to be incurred per Applicant:
 - a. Direct personnel costs: These are personnel costs incurred for the direct implementation of the project. The following 3 methods are accepted:
 - i. Integral cost methodology (IKS);
 - ii. Personnel costs + 50% overhead methodology;
 - iii. Fixed hourly rate of €60.

For a detailed explanation of these 3 cost methodologies, see the subsidy rules of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO): <https://www.rvo.nl/onderwerpen/subsidiespelregels/ez>.

- b. Project-specific costs of consumed materials: Costs of consumed materials include the costs of equipment, materials and tools, to be contributed from own inventory or yet to be purchased insofar as and as long as they are used for the project.
If equipment, materials and tools are not used for their entire lifespan for the project, only the depreciation costs corresponding to the Duration of the project are calculated according to generally accepted accounting principles.
 - c. Project-specific costs owed to third parties: These are costs of activities that you outsource, such as costs for contract research, the purchase of knowledge, patent research. For cost items >€50k, an explanation must be provided.
A Project Participant cannot outsource to another Project Participant while applying profit margins. This must be done at cost price. Furthermore, it must be ensured that the Project Participant executes its own activities for which a contribution is requested at its own account and risk and with integrity.
There is no maximum on third-party costs. However, it is not advisable to have the majority of project costs consist of third-party costs. This reduces the chances of positive assessment and demonstrates lower substantive ambition.
 - d. Project-specific costs for the use of equipment, apparatus and machines.
2. Each Application includes a budget regarding the activities to be executed, whereby - insofar as applicable - a distinction is made between the aforementioned cost categories at minimum.
 3. Per consortium member, a sub-budget is delivered according to the corresponding budget form for the respective programme. The budget forms are available on the website of the relevant programme component of the AIC4NL Foundation (<https://aic4nl.nl/>).

3.3.1 Project-specific costs

1. Costs are classified as project-specific costs if:
 - they are direct costs related to the objective described in the application and for the execution of the activities;
 - the costs are incurred during the Duration of the project and not before the Start date of the project;
 - they are reasonable;
 - in the case of material costs and third-party costs, if applicable for the respective Applicant, procurement is conducted transparently and in accordance with market rates;
 - the costs are not or will not be financed from other sources (prohibition on double financing of the same project costs).
2. Costs that are excluded in this Grant Rules Document, in the Call text, or in the decision are not eligible for contribution.
3. If costs for foreign travel are eligible for contribution, these are reimbursed exclusively on the basis of economy class.
4. If an Applicant collaborates with organizations that are not eligible for financing under article 3.1, then these organizations bear their own costs.

3.4 Co-financing

1. Co-financing can be provided both in cash and in-kind.
2. If co-financing is provided in cash, this co-financing is added to the project budget.
3. Co-financiers must commit their contribution to be provided in a legally binding letter of support to the Lead Applicant. A copy of this letter of support is submitted as an appendix to the application.
4. The value of in-kind co-financing must be properly substantiated, is new for the benefit of the project, and is based on cost price. The value of in-kind co-financing in person-hours amounts to a maximum of €150 per hour.
5. The Lead Applicant and the Project Participant must be able to demonstrate that the committed in-kind contribution has actually been provided by means of proper project administration and reporting in the final accountability. Upon request, the Lead Applicant shall send an overview of the contributed in-kind contribution(s) to the AIC4NL Foundation. The AIC4NL Foundation is entitled to have that overview audited.

3.5 Minimum Matching Requirements

The total of Own contribution and co-financing from private parties is called Matching. The Matching forms the corresponding counterpart to the AiNed financing that the project receives from the National Growth Fund. The AIC4NL Foundation must meet minimum Matching requirements across its entire programme. AIC4NL establishes minimum Matching requirements or a minimum percentage of Matching per programme component and per project.

For example: The AIC4NL Foundation establishes for project A that the minimum total size must amount to 1 million Euros, and also establishes that a maximum of €600,000 in financing will be made available for the project. In this example, this de facto means that a minimum of €400,000 in Own contribution and co-financing from private parties must be made available as Matching.

3.6 State aid

1. The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) is responsible for the assessment and compliance with European state aid regulation within the AiNed programme.
2. AiNed financing is provided exclusively for applications that comply with applicable European State Aid frameworks and requirements from the Call text.
3. The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) may request additional documentation or pronounce (partial) rejection.
4. In cases of subsequently proven unlawful aid, adjustment or recovery follows in accordance with applicable procedures.

4 Application and Assessment Procedure

The AIC4NL Foundation employs an application and assessment process to select AiNed project proposals for financing.

The application and assessment procedure consists of the following steps:

1. Phased submission process
2. Selection process
3. Contracting phase
4. Programme execution
5. Determination

The contracting phase and the (interim) determination are executed by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) and therefore fall outside the scope of this document. The conditions and obligations relating thereto are established in the agreement(s) that the Consortium concludes with RVO.

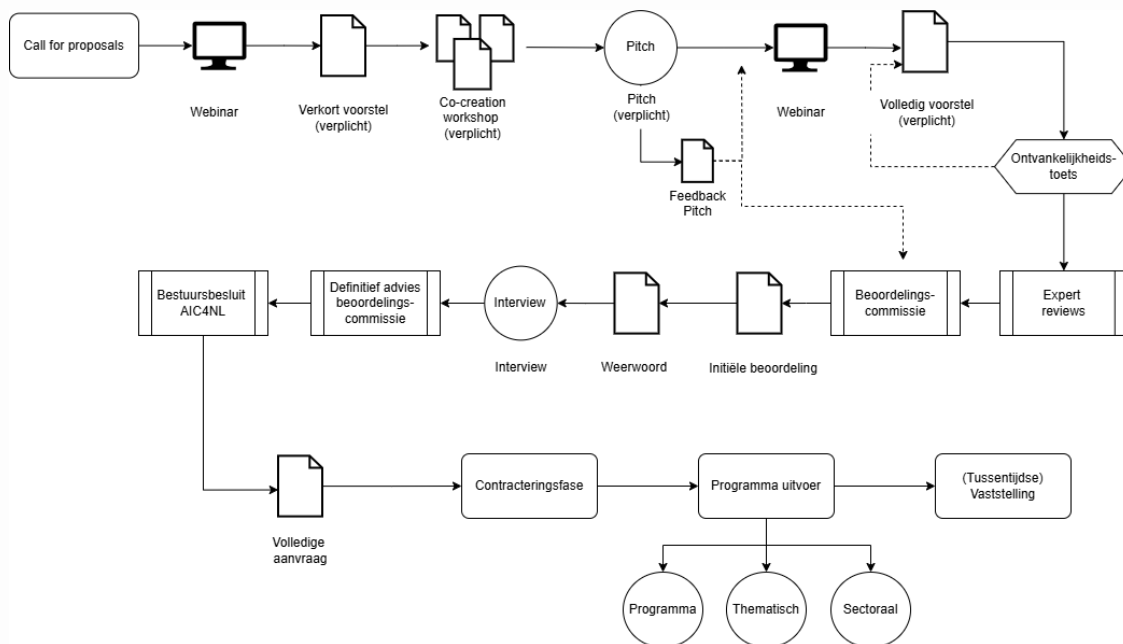


Figure 1: Schematic representation of the application and assessment process, including contracting phase, program execution and determination.

4.1 General Principles and Specific Criteria

4.1.1 General principles

1. The assessment of applications is non-discriminatory, independent and confidential.
2. These principles form the basis for this Grant Rules Document.

3. The principle of independent assessment entails that substantive, expert advice and decision-making are functionally separated.

4.1.2 Call Tekst ('Call for proposals')

1. On the initiation of an AiNed programme or Financing Instrument, the AIC4NL Foundation publishes a Call Text.
2. The Call Text contains, in addition to these rules, the relevant information about the financing instrument, including:
 - a. substantive objective and framework of the Call;
 - b. the maximum amount of financing and the maximum budget ('financing ceiling');
 - c. instructions, administrative requirements and obligations for preparing the application;
 - d. description of the assessment procedure and the intended timeline;
 - e. the assessment criteria, based on which the prioritization of applications is established and the minimum score to be achieved;
 - f. the minimum Matching requirements;
 - g. obligations regarding reports.
3. The AIC4NL Foundation may include additional criteria in the Call Text, which upon awarding of financing are incorporated into the Consortium Agreement or decision.

4.2 Phased Submission Process

4.2.1 General principles

1. Only applicants who have submitted a pre-proposal ('abbreviated proposal') and have attended the mandatory workshops ('co-creation' and 'pitch') may submit a complete proposal.
2. The phased submission process is handled in the manner as stated in the Call Text.

4.2.2 Pre-proposal ('Abbreviated proposal')

1. Applicants who wish to submit an application for an AiNed programme must register digitally via the designated channels of the AIC4NL Foundation, by means of a completely filled out pre-proposal ('abbreviated proposal').
2. The substantive and formal requirements for the pre-registration are established in the Call Text and include, among others:
 - a. the name(s) of those who wish to take on the role of Lead Applicant and/or technical project leader (if applicable);
 - b. the application area on which the abbreviated proposal focuses;
 - c. a publishable summary (abstract);
 - d. an initial indication of the parties that will form part of the intended Consortium (insofar as already known).
3. Applicants are obligated to register for participation in the co-creation workshop, which forms part of the application process.
4. Pre-proposals that are not submitted timely (i.e. before the deadline as specified in the Call Text) will not be processed.

4.2.3 Workshop and Intended Proposal

1. The co-creation workshops are organized per application area. It is possible that multiple workshops take place on the same day.
2. The co-creation workshops are accessible to parties who have not submitted an initiative themselves, but do have interest in participation in a Consortium and wish to explore the possibility of joining an existing Consortium. This must be made known in advance to the Impact Lead of the relevant AiNed programme component.
3. The purpose of the co-creation session includes, among others:
 - a. building upon the abbreviated proposals and promoting collaboration;
 - b. connecting abbreviated proposals with the AIC4NL Foundation objectives and other AiNed programme components;
 - c. merging strongly similar initiatives or offering the opportunity to find connections;
 - d. making applicants aware of ongoing initiatives that relate to the AIC4NL Foundation.
4. The AIC4NL Foundation facilitates, as organizer of the co-creation workshops, the substantive exchange between participants. The ultimate responsibility for whether or not initiatives merge, entering into collaborative partnerships, and establishing roles within a project lies with the participants themselves.
5. To promote the co-creation workshop, the AIC4NL Foundation may share the details of the Lead Applicant with the other Lead Applicants.

6. After the co-creation workshops, a pitch session is organized. Prior to this session, the Lead Applicant must submit the intended proposal ('pitch template') to the AIC4NL Foundation before the deadline specified for this purpose. During the pitch session, the intended proposals are presented. The AIC4NL Foundation may provide feedback on the intended proposals during the pitch session.
7. The following conditions apply to participation in the co-creation workshops and the pitch session:
 - a. From each submitted initiative, at least one representative must participate the entire day in the co-creation workshop;
 - b. If someone participating in the initiative has chosen the role of Lead Applicant or technical project leader in the proposal, then this person must be present at the co-creation workshop related to the application area of the initiative;
 - c. If someone participating in the initiative has chosen the role of Lead Applicant or technical project leader in the proposal, this person must be present at the pitch session.
8. Further information about the workshops and the intended proposal is announced on the programme page of the AIC4NL Foundation or in the relevant Call Text.

4.2.4 The Application ('Full proposal')

1. To submit the application ('complete proposal'), the designated application form must be used, available via the programme page of the AIC4NL Foundation. When preparing the proposal, the Applicant must adhere to the questions as included in the application form, the accompanying explanation, the Call Text, the rules document, and the requirements set regarding the maximum number of words and/or pages.
2. A complete application consists of at least the following components:
 - a. the complete proposal application form;
 - b. the budget form.
3. All forms must be completed fully and truthfully. The required forms are available on the website of the relevant programme component of the AIC4NL Foundation (<https://aic4nl.nl/>).
4. The application must be received before the deadline described in the Call Text. After this deadline, you can no longer submit a proposal. After submitting the proposal, the Lead Applicant receives a confirmation of receipt.

4.2.5 Consideration

1. The AIC4NL Foundation tests the administrative completeness of the application. If it is determined that an application is administratively incomplete, the Applicant is given the opportunity within a deadline set by the AIC4NL Foundation ('remedial period') to remedy this shortcoming, so that the application can still be taken into consideration. You receive one opportunity to make the corrections.
2. The AIC4NL Foundation and/or the Assessment Committee may conclude that an application does not fit within the framework of the Call or does not meet formal requirements as defined in the Call Text.
3. In the cases mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2, the AIC4NL Foundation may decide to reject the application.

4.2.6 Pre-selection

1. The AIC4NL Foundation may, if after submission of applications it is determined that the total requested financing amount exceeds the total available budget by more than four times, decide to conduct a pre-selection of submitted, complete applications and/or expansion of the Assessment Committee.
2. In case of pre-selection, applications are assessed globally by the Assessment Committee against the assessment criteria. The manner in which these criteria are weighted in case of pre-selection is further elaborated in the Call Text.
3. An alternative pre-selection may be a form of lottery of all applications to determine the order of processing. The AIC4NL Foundation may also, if deemed necessary, take additional measures for the purpose of pre-selection.

4.3 Selection Procedure, Assessment Procedure and Award

4.3.1 Substantive Assessment

1. For the assessment of applications taken into consideration within an AiNed programme, the AIC4NL Foundation establishes an advisory body, being an Assessment Committee.
2. The composition and working method of this external, expert Assessment Committee takes place in accordance with the rules established by the AIC4NL Foundation for this purpose and an evaluation model for a structured and consistent assessment of applications.
3. The Assessment Committee consists of at least three members.
4. The Assessment Committee may seek advice from one or more experts, if it deems this necessary for a careful, qualitative evaluation of an application.
5. The Assessment Committee may, if it deems necessary, ask questions to the Applicant regarding parts of the application for clarification or further explanation.

6. The task of the Assessment Committee is to assess the applications taken into consideration and the related documents on their own merits based on the assessment criteria. The following applies, unless deviated from in the Call Text:
 - per assessment criterion, a scale of 1 to 10 applies;
 - when an application receives less than six points on one of the assessment criteria, it is rejected;
 - applications that receive at least six points on all assessment criteria are deemed eligible for financing and are therefore ranked by final score;
 - in the final assessment, a weighting of the various assessment criteria applies, if determined as such in the Call Text.
7. The ranking is determined based on the final score of the applications and results in three categories in which the proposals to be selected are classified, namely:
 - a) Category I: Recommended for financing (within the available budget);
 - b) Category II: Financeable in case proposals in category I are withdrawn and the further conditions for award in the Call are met ('reserve list');
 - c) Category III: Not financeable.

4.3.2 Initial Assessment and Rebuttal

1. The Assessment Committee prepares an initial assessment. The initial assessment is brought to the attention of the Lead Applicant.
2. The Lead Applicant subsequently has the opportunity to formulate a refutation ('rebuttal').
3. The deadline for submitting the rebuttal is ten (10) working days, calculated from the date of dispatch of the initial assessment by the Foundation. The rebuttal must be received by the Foundation within this deadline. If the rebuttal is received after the expiry of the set deadline, it remains outside consideration in the further assessment and decision-making.

4.3.3 Interview

1. An interview or site visit may form part of the assessment process, taking into account the general principles of equality and transparency.
2. The invitation for an interview or the announcement of a site visit is sent in a timely manner, so that the Applicant can prepare.
3. Following the interview or site visit, documentation takes place of the facts relevant to the assessment of the application that occurred during the interview or site visit, for the benefit of the application file of the respective application. This report is added to the file.

4.3.4 Grant or Rejection

1. The Assessment Committee prepares a definitive recommendation based on all relevant documents from the application and assessment procedure.
2. For each application, a weighted total score is determined based on the assessment criteria. This weighted total score determines the priority of the proposals, relative to each other and within each application area.
3. The Assessment Committee prepares written recommendations for the board of the AIC4NL Foundation regarding the prioritization of the proposals. These recommendations are substantiated based on the assessment criteria mentioned in the Call Text.
4. An ex aequo situation may occur. By ex aequo, the AIC4NL Foundation understands the situation in which two or more applications cannot be distinguished from each other based on their weighted score. An ex aequo situation is relevant around the subsidy ceiling threshold or those that end as highest in the selection boundary. If applications also end equally then, the Assessment Committee determines the prioritization by means of an (anonymous) majority vote. If voting also provides no resolution, or is not desired, the ex aequo situation is forwarded to the AIC4NL Foundation.
5. The board of the AIC4NL Foundation assesses the followed procedure and takes note of the recommendation of the Assessment Committee.
6. The board of the AIC4NL Foundation subsequently determines the final qualifications and makes a decision on award or rejection of the applications, based on the procedure, the further rules in the Call Text and the available financing budget of the financing round.
7. Applications are in principle awarded or rejected entirely. However, the AIC4NL Foundation has the possibility to provide the budget associated with a proposal partially with justification or to reject the financing of a sub-project/work package or certain costs.

4.3.5 Notification

1. The AIC4NL Foundation notifies the Lead Applicant in writing of the outcome of the assessment of the application. The Lead Applicant is responsible for informing the co-applicants about this outcome.
2. The ranking and the individual assessment scores of the applications are not disclosed publicly.

4.3.6 Definitive Nature of the Decision – No Objection or Appeal

1. The decision of the AIC4NL Foundation regarding award, rejection or placement on the reserve list of a project proposal is final.
2. No objection, review, or appeal procedure is available against the selection, rejection or placement on the reserve list. By submitting an application, submitters expressly waive any (legal) remedy to contest the outcome.
3. By submitting a pre-proposal, submitters declare to have taken note of these rules and to agree unconditionally thereto.
4. Correspondence regarding the outcome of the selection is excluded.

4.4 Contract Phase

4.4.1 Grant Decision and Consortium Agreement

1. The AIC4NL Foundation reserves the right, where applicable, to request the Lead Applicant to make mandatory improvements to the entire proposal prior to submission to the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO).
2. The Lead Applicant is responsible for submitting the complete application to the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO), based on the full proposal as agreed with the AIC4NL Foundation.
3. For submitted complete proposals from category I, the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) prepares a subsidy decision. The agreements only become definitive after the decision has been signed by all parties.
4. The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) may require additional documents in order to reach a subsidy decision.
5. The Lead Applicant and Project Participants must enter into a Consortium Agreement for qualitative and timely execution of the project, taking into account the obligations arising from this rules document, the Call text, and the decision.
6. The Lead Applicant is responsible for coordinating the Consortium Agreement and ensuring that all project partners agree to the content of this agreement in a timely manner.
7. The Consortium Agreement contains at minimum agreements regarding: intellectual property and Publication, knowledge transfer, confidentiality, co-financing payments, and progress and final reports. Approval from AIC4NL Foundation is necessary before a project can start. The responsibility for reaching the Consortium Agreement lies with the Applicant. AIC4NL Foundation does not sign the Consortium Agreement itself.
8. The decision issued by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) takes precedence over the Consortium Agreement. In case of conflict between these provisions and documents from AIC4NL Foundation, the RVO provisions prevail.
9. AiNed financing for core partners is awarded for the complete duration of the AiNed program component. AiNed financing for co-partners is awarded per requested innovation trajectory or case.
10. At the start of the AiNed program component, AiNed financing can only be requested for core partners for the complete Duration of the project and AiNed financing for co-partners for the first innovation trajectory or first case. For subsequent innovation trajectories and cases, a new application must be submitted. A new decision is issued per innovation trajectory or case.

4.5 Program Implementation

1. The Lead Applicant and Project Participants jointly ensure timely and compliant execution of the activities as described in the Application. Deviations from the plan must be submitted in writing to the AIC4NL Foundation for prior approval.
2. AIC4NL Foundation supervises the project during the Duration. This supervision includes monitoring progress, substantive assessment, and where necessary, advice or intervention with a view to achieving the program objectives.
3. New Project Participants may join the Consortium after a request for admission to AIC4NL Foundation, accompanied by a proposal to adjust the activity plan and budget.
4. Throughout the complete duration of the AiNed program, consortium participants are obligated to actively participate in consultation structures organized by AIC4NL Foundation.
5. The Lead Applicant, technical project leader, or a written authorized representative shall participate in meetings of the application area or the thematic working area.
6. The meetings focus on connecting the various AiNed program components with emphasis on knowledge transfer, knowledge utilization and application of results, progress reports, and development of the Consortium and innovation trajectories.
7. The meeting frequency and agenda are determined by the working area lead.
8. Consortia actively participate in applicable consultation structures in accordance with specifications from working area leads.
9. Structural non-compliance may lead to reconsideration of funding allocation.

10. Agreements regarding consultation structures are mandatory to include in the Consortium Agreement and specify at minimum: the designated representatives per consultation structure and the internal coordination procedure.

4.6 Determination

1. The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) is authorized to determine the subsidy. The conditions and procedures for subsidy determination are established by RVO and are subject to the applicable legal and policy frameworks.
2. The determination moments are coordinated with AIC4NL Foundation and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) and include, among others, the moments after completion of a relevant innovation trajectory or case for co-partners and after the end of the complete Duration of the program for the core partners.
3. The conditions and instructions of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) as stated on the RVO website and/or in the subsidy decision apply to the subsidy determination. The project partners must comply with these provisions. In case of conflict between these provisions and documents from AIC4NL Foundation, the RVO provisions prevail.
4. The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) may require additional documents for the determination and verification.
5. AIC4NL Foundation provides, in cooperation with the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO), further guidelines for the manner in which the information in the substantive and financial final report must be delivered or demonstrated.

5 Project

5.1 General Obligations

5.1.1 Responsibilities of the Lead Applicant and Project Participants

1. The Lead Applicant of the collaboration serves as the primary contact person for AIC4NL Foundation and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO).
2. For a complete overview of Lead Applicant tasks and responsibilities, reference is made to the RVO guidelines: <https://www.rvo.nl/onderwerpen/subsidiespelregels/ez/Penvoerder>.
3. Change of the Lead Applicant is considered a changed circumstance as referred to in section 5.4.

5.1.2 Qualifications of Project Lead and Personnel

1. Personnel to be appointed to the project must possess at minimum those qualifications required for the work they are to perform.

5.1.3 Investments

1. Resources financed through the funding that can be classified as Investments (i.e. they have economic value after completion of the project and/or can be reused) are the property of the respective beneficiary, unless otherwise stipulated in the Call text and/or the decision.
2. Special obligations may be attached to the financing of Investments in the decision, including the obligation to make this equipment available for use by third parties upon instruction from AIC4NL Foundation.

5.1.4 Misuse, Damage and Liability

1. The Lead Applicant and Project Participants ensure adequate insurance for third-party damage arising from the execution of the project. Each beneficiary indemnifies AIC4NL Foundation against any liability in this regard.
2. The beneficiary(ies) shall make efforts and, where reasonable, take necessary measures that ensure the project and the results generated thereby do not (or cannot) contribute to terrorist activities, violation of human rights and/or other unlawful activities.
3. The execution of the project must comply with international and national sanctions laws and regulations. The EU Sanctions Map serves as guidance in this regard.
4. Additionally, take into account the policy measures from the National Knowledge Security Guidelines. When in doubt, consult the relevant department within your organization and/or the Knowledge Security Service Point.

5.2 Start of the project

5.2.1 Prerequisites

1. A project does not start earlier than the moment when the conditions set in the decision regarding the start have been met.
2. At the request of the Lead Applicant, the Start date may be postponed in exceptional cases.
3. The Consortium concludes the Consortium Agreement in principle prior to the start of the project.
4. AIC4NL Foundation may place an announcement of the award, the beneficiaries and/or the Start date of the project on the website, with a public summary of the project.

5.3 Progress

5.3.1 Reporting

1. During the execution of the project, AIC4NL Foundation will monitor progress through reports including financial reports. These reports form a central component of the final report of the Consortium and the audit at the end of the project. AIC4NL Foundation may also request interim project-substantive and financial reports where desired.
2. For annual, interim and final reports, the following applies at minimum:
 - a. these must be delivered via the electronic system indicated by AIC4NL Foundation and, insofar as required, in the format designated for that purpose;
 - b. a substantive report contains data on the purpose of the research, work plan, milestone planning, results, utilization, cooperation and contacts with users, and dissemination activities;
 - c. a financial report contains a financial overview of the hours worked and costs incurred and the co-financing provided up to that point, both in cash and in-kind;
 - d. these are signed digitally, as a signed PDF, by the Lead Applicant.
3. Following interim or annual reports received by AIC4NL Foundation, AIC4NL Foundation may provide further substantive instructions if there is cause to do so.

5.3.2 Phased Implementation: Request for Continuation

1. A project may be executed in phases. In case of continuation, the Lead Applicant must submit a request for continuation to AIC4NL Foundation within the deadline stated in the Call text or by AIC4NL Foundation.
2. In the explanation of the request for continuation, the project leader describes the progress, the work plan/milestone planning, the expected results, and the necessity of the remaining financing for the execution of the project.
3. If and insofar as applicable, the Lead Applicant also describes in the request for continuation the (additional) contribution of users, the possibilities for protection of results, and the possibilities for commercialization of the results.
4. AIC4NL Foundation may impose additional conditions on the content of the request for continuation.
5. Award of follow-up financing by AIC4NL Foundation for the continuation of the project takes place upon a positive assessment by AIC4NL Foundation of:
 - a. the results of the preceding phase(s);
 - b. the feasibility of the project objectives; and
 - c. the necessity of the remaining financing for successful completion of the project in accordance with the application.
6. Upon award, a new decision is issued and an addendum to the existing Consortium Agreement.

5.4 Changed Circumstances

5.4.1 Reporting Obligation

1. Any substantial deviation from the content or amendment of the application or budget requires the prior approval of the AIC4NL Foundation.
2. As soon as there is reason for the Lead Applicant or Project Participant to assume that the project cannot or cannot entirely be completed before the end date, the Lead Applicant must immediately report this to AIC4NL Foundation. In that case, consultation takes place as referred to in article 5.4.2.
3. A substantial deviation or modification occurs, among others, in the following cases:
 - a. when other financial support has been or is being promised for the project, insofar as this (co)financing has not already been included in the budget of the application;
 - b. changes in the composition of the Consortium, output and KPIs, and the planning from the application;
 - c. changes in the person of the project leader (temporary or permanent);
 - d. inability to fulfil obligations regarding Own contributions and/or co-financing;

- e. legally relevant changes regarding the Lead Applicant or Project Participant respectively, such as name change, takeover, bankruptcy, etc.

5.4.2 Consultation and Modification

1. Following the changed circumstances, consultation takes place between AIC4NL Foundation and the Lead Applicant regarding the manner in which the project can be continued and successfully completed.
2. If adjustment of the application is necessary, AIC4NL Foundation provides written approval for this.
3. If and insofar as the changed circumstances occur with a Project Participant, AIC4NL Foundation may also make further arrangements directly with the relevant Project Participant. These arrangements may have consequences for that portion of the financing awarded to this Project Participant. Any recovery or withdrawal of that portion of the financing takes place in accordance with the provisions in section 5.5.
4. Upon motivated request from the Lead Applicant, parties may agree that the remainder of the financing as well as the continuation of the project is transferred to another, joining Project Participant.

5.4.3 Shifts in Budget Items

1. Shifts between the budget items personnel and material require written approval from AIC4NL Foundation before a modification of the decision is requested.

5.5 End

5.5.1 Project Duration and End of Project Activities

1. The maximum project Duration is established in the Call text and/or decision.
2. The Lead Applicant ensures that the project is successfully completed within the Duration.
3. For determination of the definitive AiNed financing, the previously specified requirements apply.
4. Any project extension requires prior written approval from AIC4NL Foundation and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) and can only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

6 Publication and Utilization

6.1 Publications

6.1.1 Accessibility of Project Results and Time of Publication

1. Project results are published as soon as possible, in accordance with the planning of any dissemination activities in the application.
2. With a view to optimal distribution and application of the Project results respectively, these must be directly accessible via Open Access at the moment of Publication. Copyrights may only be transferred to third parties insofar as this does not block the possibility to publish via Open Access.
3. In case the project is (co-)executed by a Collaboration partner or third party, the Lead Applicant or the Project Participant must ensure that any copyrights and IP rights of this party(ies) do not form an obstacle to Publication of the Project results.
4. AIC4NL Foundation may, except for the protected results as referred to in the fifth paragraph, make use of the Project results for the purpose of Publication and dissemination within the framework of the AIC4NL program.
5. Project results that do not qualify for Publication due to protection through IP rights may be made available confidentially as know-how by the Project Participants to the other parties involved (including any users).
6. The publicity relates at least to:
 - a. Project results that are made public by the beneficiary(ies) in an (interim) Publication including the data as mentioned in the data management plan;
 - b. Project results that are made public, resulting from patent formalities for the protection of results;
 - c. Project results that must be made public pursuant to a decision by a court or a public law body. The beneficiary informs Foundation AiNed in writing about this disclosure.
7. When Publishing Project results, it must be indicated that AIC4NL Foundation has co-financed the project, mentioning the AIC4NL Foundation project number and the Financing instrument of which the project forms part. The AIC4NL Foundation logo is displayed.

6.1.2 Data Files

1. The data collected within the project must be properly and accessibly documented and stored for further use.

2. The beneficiary where the project was executed who can also be designated as the producer of a data file, and where applicable also the copyright holder, gives permission to AIC4NL Foundation to, with regard to the data file:
 - a. impose additional conditions on the copyrights and extraction rights with a view to promoting the (knowledge) transfer of results;
 - b. provide further instructions on the manner in which the data files should be made available for further use.

6.2 Utilization

6.2.1 General

1. The Project Participants make efforts during and after completion of the project for adequate and effective utilization of the results.
2. In the Consortium Agreement, agreements are made regarding the rights to the Project results, taking into account the provisions in the other paragraphs of this article.
3. In case the project is (co-)executed by third party(ies), the project leader or the Lead Applicant must ensure that any IP rights of these third party(ies) do not form an obstacle to utilization of the Project results.
4. Project results are freely available to all Project Participants during the project if necessary for the (further) execution of the project.
5. A beneficiary does not hold AIC4NL Foundation liable for damage resulting from the use of the Project results and indemnifies AIC4NL Foundation against any liability claims by third parties.
6. Where relevant, in the context of the determination, it may be indicated until which date the Lead Applicant and the Project Participants must report to AIC4NL Foundation about the utilization of the Project results.
7. The (sub)project leader and AIC4NL Foundation do not make agreements with a user or a third party about the results during the Duration of the project without prior written consent from each other, such as for example agreements whereby the third party receives ownership rights or usage rights to results, or about confidentiality of results, or about conditions imposed on a Publication.