



International Seed Money Projects (SMPs) 2024 for Top sectors Agri & Food and Horticulture & Starting Materials

The final date for submitting an application is Friday 15 December 2023.

Introduction

A Seed Money Project is a tool used by top sectors Agri & Food and Horticulture & Starting Materials. Seed Money Projects serve to initiate (or act as the 'seed' for) development of **international partnerships** that contribute to the objectives of the Knowledge and Innovation Agenda (KIA) '*Landbouw, Water, Voedsel*', as well as the earning capacity of the Dutch agri-food & hortibusiness. These partnerships consist of Dutch and foreign companies, including SMEs and knowledge providers.

Scope

An international approach is necessary to fulfill KIA missions, because:

- certain challenges in the KIA require a cross-border approach, for example for raw material flows and emissions that transcend national borders;
- knowledge and innovations available abroad can be of great relevance to Dutch issues and require translation and further development in the Dutch context;
- (further) development and extrapolation of existing knowledge and innovations under different socio-economic and climatic conditions contributes to globally sustainable and socio-economically resistant food systems, and strengthens the position of the Netherlands as knowledge provider.

Objective

The main objective of a SMP is international cooperation on a particular challenge in the KIA. To achieve that, certain activities are required such as building a relevant consortium, doing a feasibility study or an exploratory mission or exploring (financial) resources for a follow-up step, etc. The study aims to act as "seed" and the outcome will preferably initiate next steps.

Impact

The impact of the SMP project should be a contribution to the challenges of the KIA. More specifically, SMP proposals are requested that have an impact on one or more of the following themes: more sustainable / transparent / circular agri-food and hortichains, improving global food security and food safety, strategic autonomy, increasing supply chain resilience and reducing the ecological footprint.

Expected Result

The result of a Seed Money Project is a study into the feasibility of international cooperation, and a new or improved consortium, focused on a particular research or innovation question in the KIA. This may include the development of new knowledge as well as the translation of existing knowledge and innovations to different socio-economic or climatic and/or physical circumstances. The study is targeted towards initiating next steps, such as a public-private research proposal (Topsector PPS) or a project supported by RVO instruments (f.e. Impact Cluster) or other international donors.

Remuneration and available budget

This Seed Money instrument allows stakeholders in Dutch agribusiness to call on the expertise of Wageningen University and Research to shape the need for international cooperation that contribute to the challenges of the KIA. A Seed Money Project has an indicative value of €40k including VAT.

For 2024 there is a budget of € 600k (*including VAT*) for hiring Wageningen Research capacity. (Note: this budget can therefore not be spent freely). This means that approximately 15 SMPs can be funded. Private stakeholders are expected to contribute to the project by financing their own travel expenses and the hours that businesses devote to the project. No minimum is set to this so called 'in kind' contribution. However, since the SMP aims to support Dutch companies, businesses are asked to actively participate in the project.

When does your application qualify for an SMP?

- Your proposal clearly specifies how it fits in with one of the themes (MMIP's) in the KIA and how this theme benefits from this international cooperation;
- Your proposal is innovative and focused on R&D cooperation and/or new knowledge development for international cooperation. This cooperation promotes new market opportunities for Dutch companies;
- Prerequisite for achieving impact is the participation of a local problem owner and relevant stakeholders (company, knowledge institution and/or government) who can demonstrate a demand and necessity for the project (demand driven);
- Your proposal involves a consortium with a minimum of 2 (but preferably more) (SME) companies registered in the Netherlands, as well as at least 1 local foreign partner. The consortium may be further extended during the project. Other stakeholders such as industry associations, foundations or NGOs are welcome to participate as well.

Conditions

- The proposal must be submitted by a business/company registered in the Netherlands as lead organisation, together with a project manager of Wageningen Research;
- The agricultural attaché/counsellor at the Netherlands Embassy is connected and involved in the initiative, which is shown by a support letter or commitment note;
- The business/companies must invest their own time in the project and fund their own travel expenses;
- In the event of the proposal's acceptance, the lead organisation will be asked to give a final presentation in December 2024. The exact date will be decided later.

Assessment and criteria

The application will be assessed by an independent committee. This committee will rank the proposals according to their average scores on the following criteria:

1. Contribution to the (International) KIA priorities of the top sectors: indicate clearly to which KIA priority the project contributes.
 2. Quality of the consortium: involvement and commitment of all partners that are needed to achieve the objectives of the project, including business community and local stakeholders (through own input in terms of time & money).
 3. Quality of the proposal: description of the challenge, clear explanation of the proposed activities and approach, output and role of partners, and how the project is an addition to and builds on existing bilateral cooperation, justification of the budget;
- Your application may not exceed the length of four A4 pages. Applications lengthier than four

A4 sheets will score lower on quality of the proposal.

- Innovation: The proposal must be innovative, focusing on international cooperation contributing to the challenges of the KIA, and fit in the following combinations of market demand and Dutch supply:

	Demand	Existing demand in country	New demand in country
Supply			
Existing innovation in NL portfolio		–	2 (R&D, adaptation)
New innovation in NL portfolio		3 (R&D, co-creation)	4 (R&D, co-creation)

- Impact: does this proposal have an impact on one or more of the following themes: more sustainable / transparent / circular agri-food and hortichains, improving global food security and food safety, strategic autonomy, increasing supply chain resilience and reducing the ecological footprint. Does the proposal build on and link into relevant networks, fieldlabs, and existing consortia? What is the expected impact if the consortium set-up is successful (technological, economic, social and ecological)? How does the SMP contribute to the future positioning of the sector? What is the involvement of green education (through own contribution in terms of time & money)?

Important notice:

- The top sectors endorse cooperation with agricultural educational institutions in the Netherlands (AOC, HAO). Educational institutions can provide added value by facilitating and spreading international innovations and connect to SME. This allows new concepts to gain value more quickly. Inclusion of an educational institution in the consortium is an advantage in the review procedure. There is, however, no separate budget available for educational institutions.
- The top sectors want to foster international cooperation and Public Private Partnership. This is why a strong involvement of 2 or more in the Netherlands registered (SME) companies and an active contact with the counsellor for Agriculture / Dutch consulate is an advantage in the review procedure. We strongly recommend you to attach a short recommendation letter of involved private sector partners. In this letter, which can be uploaded as a separate file in the submission form, the applicant (with input from the counsellor) elaborates on:
 - the importance and innovative nature of this 'seed' project;
 - the aim for the next step for which this 'seed' is needed.
 - the composition and excellence of the consortium;

Applications and explanatory notes

- To view the format, please visit the [KIA website](#) (scroll down to Seed Money Projecten).
- The application will be submitted with a digital form through this [link](#)

For further information on the knowledge and innovation agenda: www.kia-landbouwwatervoedsel.nl
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For queries and further information please contact info@landbouwwatervoedsel.nl.