



## Call NWA Innovative Projects within routes 24 Route Regenerative Medicine: game changer moving to broad areas of application

**NOTE:** A full overview of project requirements that apply to each application and the full application form can be found in the [overarching Call for proposals - NWA Innovative Projects within routes](#). This document provides the framework and form for the mandatory pre-application in the Route Regenerative Medicine.

Regenerative medicine is the science of modelling and repairing diseased and damaged tissues and organs. This field offers unique opportunities for human tissue modelling and organ-on-chip technologies as well as the development of (stem) cell and gene therapies. Regenerative medicine promises cure instead of care for a growing group of patients suffering from a variety of chronic diseases and traumatic injuries.

The field is rapidly advancing and the first therapies have been launched. Working with new therapies such as stem cells and gene editing and their broad application, however, remains challenging. To make sure these developments are properly connected to society, interdisciplinary research is key. While some examples of this type of research have previously been supported by the NWA program (e.g. NWA ORC 2020 and NWA Small Projects 2022), we believe that the full picture of all relevant contextual questions is not complete.

We also still lack important fundamental knowledge about tissue development and there are many unanswered questions related to for example protein engineering, tissue/cell culturing or gene editing technologies, both fundamental and translational. In addition, globally many interesting developments in various technological and digital areas like AI and electronics appear, and the potential role of such developments for the field of regenerative medicine are still largely unexplored. There might also be totally unexpected combinations of disciplines and/or technologies that could contribute to the field. In short, the Regenerative Medicine route believes that answers to the challenges, and thus the future of the field, will come from interdisciplinary approaches.

For this call for proposals for the route Regenerative Medicine we are looking for previously un- or underexplored combinations of disciplines and/or technologies that will potentially initiate research lines that will contribute to the future of the field. Within the call NWA Innovative Projects within routes a maximum of €300.000 is allocated to each route. Within this call for proposals, researchers in the domain of Regenerative Medicine can apply for a project with a maximum budget of €100.000. The route management will endorse two research projects which can then submit a grant application through the NWO system (ISAAC). The remaining budget will be used by the Regenerative Medicine route core-team on a research project that will lead to a landscape analysis of the future field.

### **Purpose**

The projects should address research questions that are raised in the broad context of Regenerative Medicine, as described above. The approach to the questions needs to combine expertise from at least two different disciplines and/or technologies, the combination of which is new or underexplored in the context of regenerative medicine and might give rise to an innovative type of research line. We highly recommend to consider an interdisciplinary collaboration for your project, but a single researcher looking into a new interdisciplinary approach is also eligible. Close collaboration with a societal partner is obligatory to investigate or prepare for (the potential of) societal relevance.

If more than two projects have a positive advice after the selection process, the next generation researchers (e.g. assistant/associate professor) will get the preference.



### Who can apply

Projects need to involve at least one researcher with a permanent position or tenure track as main applicant and a collaboration partner (societal stakeholder, public or private). For more information on requirements for eligibility, see the overarching [Call for proposals – NWA Innovative projects within routes](#), section 3.1.

### What to apply for

The route management will select two research projects with a budget of max. €100.000. The maximum duration of the projects is two years. Please refer to section 3.2 of the overarching [Call for proposals – NWA Innovative projects within routes](#) for further requirements for the projects and budget.

### When to apply

Deadline for the pre-proposal of a research project for this call in the route Regenerative Medicine is **May 30th, 2024**. Submit your pre-proposal by sending the [pre-application form](#) by email to [NWA\\_reggen@LUMC.nl](mailto:NWA_reggen@LUMC.nl)

### Application and assessment procedure

Selection process:

1. Submission pre-proposal
  - Deadline: **May 30<sup>th</sup> 12:00 CEST**
  - Submission of [pre-application form](#) to [NWA\\_reggen@lumc.nl](mailto:NWA_reggen@lumc.nl)
2. Anonymous ranking by route network
  - Involves knowledge institutes and societal partners
  - Projects will be judged and ranked based on their alignment with the purpose of the call for proposals for the route Regenerative Medicine and their feasibility.
  - Results of selection process will be communicated by **June 13<sup>th</sup>**
3. Only if applicable: pitch session by top ranking projects
  - If it is not possible to make a clear selection for two projects based on the ranking, the route will organize a pitch session to decide between the top ranking projects. The applicants of those projects will receive questions/feedback that came up during the ranking process on June 13<sup>th</sup>.
  - Date pitch session: **June 26<sup>th</sup> between 13:00-17:00**.
  - 8 minute online pitch to the Reg Med Route steering group with 10 minutes of discussion time.
4. Definitive selection projects
  - Communicated within one week after pitch session: top 2 projects can write a full application
5. Mandatory feedback round
  - Applicants are always welcome to ask for input during writing, but it is mandatory to at least send a full draft for feedback once
  - Deadline: **Thursday August 29<sup>th</sup> 09:00 CEST**
  - Submission of full draft to [NWA\\_reggen@lumc.nl](mailto:NWA_reggen@lumc.nl)
  - The applicants will receive feedback on the full draft
  - The main applicants of the eligible two projects will receive a confirmation letter, written by the route management, after the draft has been approved by the route management. NWO will only take projects into consideration that are accompanied by such a letter.
6. Submit full proposal to NWO:
  - Deadline: **September 12<sup>th</sup>, 14:00 CEST**
7. Decision by NWO
  - December 2024

For more information on the criteria, please consult the overarching [Call for proposals – NWA Innovative Projects within routes](#) for this instrument.

More information on the process from the route Regenerative medicine: contact Mandy Segers, [NWA\\_reggen@LUMC.nl](mailto:NWA_reggen@LUMC.nl).