



Call for proposals

Quantum Delta NL
Cross-border projects
for Europe

Guidelines for Dutch consortium partners

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1 Background

The development of quantum technologies represents a significant scientific advance with the potential to benefit many. Quantum Delta NL (QDNL) fosters the growth of the quantum industry in the Netherlands and aims to contribute to a successful European ecosystem.

In doing so, international collaboration is key to making quantum technology a success. Future quantum applications in the area of computing, communications and sensing are likely to have a profound impact on society. In the coming years, we need the brightest minds to work on the technical challenges that still need to be tackled before quantum becomes a commercial reality.

International and European cooperation is an essential lever for addressing these issues and developing resilient quantum value chains. The combined investment of the European Union member states and the European Commission makes Europe the leading investor in quantum technologies.

In order to strengthen synergies between the Member States quantum strategies and European programmes, this call for proposals aims to stimulate cooperation between the French, German, Dutch quantum ecosystems (and all European partners) aiming to join the European effort to develop high value-added knowledge and technological building blocks with strong disruptive potential, and thus reinforcing the European quantum scientific and technological base.

2 Available budget and timetable

All cross-border projects must have at least €100.000 own contribution per consortium per country. The subsidy for NL partners comprises max. 2/3 of the total project amount (NL part of the project). The remainder is contributed by applicant(s), either in cash and/or in-kind. See also disclaimer at the end of this document.

The first phase will start with two rounds (2 open calls) with a total budget of €10.000.000 for the Dutch partners. The timetable is as follows:

Date	Time	Deadline
20 March 2024	12:00 noon	Submission application to all three partner countries (see templates online at www.quantumwithoutborders.org)
25 January 2024	10:00	Online information session
To be announced		Submission of detailed (budget) proposal to national funding agency (templates available to selected projects)

3 Aim and Scope

As quantum technology moves towards commercialization, this initiative accelerates cross-border collaboration for breakthrough initiatives in a bid to create resilient supply chains for Europe.

This programme supports innovative cross-border projects with contributions from French, German and Dutch quantum companies & research organisations, with a leading role for emerging players, start-ups and innovative SMEs. Consortia are encouraged to show realistic pathways towards commercialisation. Consortia must have at least one industrial partners, and no more than 8 partners.

The project can be carried out by a consortium identifying a "lead" company and bringing together industrial partners of any size, and research partners. A consortium must include at least one SME, as well as a research laboratory, and may include one or more large companies. Universities and RTOs cannot lead the consortium.

Submissions will be awarded in a two-step process. Each proposal will be evaluated by a trilateral commission. After a decision has been made about the awarded proposals, the consortia will then be invited to submit a national application with detailed budgets.

Submissions must align with the priorities stated within the Quantum Delta NL programme and its CAT priorities.

Relevant information is available from 17 January onwards at <https://quantumdelta.nl/trilateral-programme-with-france-and-germany>

After submission, each proposal will be checked for eligibility. One of the eligibility criteria is to fit within the three CAT themes of Quantum Delta NL. Project leads are strongly encouraged to contact the respective QDNL CAT lead after 17 January but well in advance to align with the CAT programmes (please send an email to trilateral@quantumdelta.nl which will then be forwarded).

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3.1 Software development

Software development particularly for either industrial or experimental purposes must adhere to the following conditions:

- it should be part of the development of an innovative physical process (control software) or;
- the development of the software carries a technical risk and the intended functionality cannot be achieved with existing techniques.

Software-related activities that are not eligible include:

- the development of business application software and information systems using known methods and existing software tools;
- adding user functionality to existing application programs;
- creating websites or software using existing tools;
- filling databases.

4 Duration

In principle, projects have a duration of maximum 4 years and are ultimately limited by the QDNL programme deadline of 31 December 2028. Projects are expected to start within 6 months of the decision date.

A grace period of 1 year is allowed in case of project delays related to calamities, sickness and/or parental leaves that affect employees assigned to this project. Project extensions must be applied for in writing 3 months prior to the initial project deadline, motivating the reason for extension. This can be sent to trilateral@quantumdelta.nl

In any event, all projects need to be completed by the QDNL programme deadline of 31 December 2028. This includes those that have been granted a grace period.

5 Who can submit for Dutch funding

Representatives of **Small and Medium sized enterprises** that adhere to the following definition:

(source: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-definition_nl)

Companies must be registered as a *Besloten Vennootschap* (BV) or a *Naamloze Vennootschap*

pany category	Staff in fte	Turnover	Or	Balance sheet total
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ € 50 m		≤ € 43 m
Small	< 50	≤ € 10 m		≤ € 10 m

(NV) in The Netherlands. Their activities in the Netherlands must be substantial.

Large companies that fall outside this SME definition are also eligible for funding, under the EU rules (maximum 50% basic contribution by Quantum Delta NL). SMEs can apply with partners in France and/or Germany, and can opt to include other SMEs and/or a knowledge institution/research organisation such as universities, medical centres and universities of applied sciences; as well as RTOs such as TNO.

SMEs, large companies, RTOs and knowledge institutions from other EU countries can be part of a consortium; they are not eligible for funding under this call. As part of the proposal submission, these partners have to submit a signed letter of commitment for their own contribution in the consortium.

In addition, the organisation SURF is also eligible to receive a contribution in partnership with consortium partners from NL or France/Germany. SURF is here labelled as SME (note table under heading 6 Cost Eligibility).

Knowledge institution/research organisations **cannot** submit as **lead** applicant.

Lead applicants who successfully submitted proposals in earlier rounds of this trilateral call are excluded from submitting a new proposal as lead applicant in the future. A lead applicant must have a central and steering role in the consortium. Applicants can be partners in more than one submission; but not as a lead in more than one consortium.

6 Cost eligibility

Project leads should keep in mind that there is a limited number of projects per round that can be awarded funding. The Quantum Delta NL contribution amounts to a maximum of 2/3 of the project costs per Dutch consortium partner (except for RTOs who receive 100%).

6.1 Labour costs

- For SME's: project related labour costs to be accounted for by applying either:
 - The *salary costs plus surcharge* method, whereby the direct wage costs per hour are increased by a fixed surcharge of 50% for indirect costs.
 - The *fixed hourly rate* method, using an hourly rate of max. €60.
- For RTOs and knowledge institutions - the *integral cost system (IKS-rates)*.
- The actual hours worked must be recorded in a timesheet.

6.2 Other costs

- Third party costs directly related to project activities are limited to a rate of max. € 125 per hour. Third party costs entail costs related to external services such as consulting- provided by companies or freelancers.
- The maximum budget that can be subcontracted is limited to 20% of the grant budget.
- Investments in equipment (only project-related costs).
- Cost for travel and lodging to relevant partner countries (if not already part of IKS) are based on the actual costs. Travelling by train is strongly encouraged; flights have to be CO2 compensated.
- Costs for buying the rights to patents necessary for the project, for the duration of the project.
- Costs directly related to the project, including materials budget, cleanroom use, etc.

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All third party costs stated may include VAT unless the beneficiary is VAT exempt. Only actual costs incurred post to the start and prior to the end of the project are eligible for (partial) reimbursement.

The maximum allowance for budget deviations between cost types is 15%. In case of an excess of this percentage, prior written permission is required. Requests for permission must be motivated and can be sent to trilateral@quantumdelta.nl.

Complementarity with European funding

Project proposals under the present call for projects must explain how they link to existing European funding such as EIC Pathfinder, EIC Transition, EIC Accelerator, Quantum Pilot-Lines, FPAs. Alternatively, project proposals must explain why their specific topic is not addressed by European funding and thus fills a "funding gap".

7 Deadline proposals

7.1 National application

The Dutch budget application comprises the following:

- a signed application form, provided the signatory is authorised to sign;
- a digitally signed copy of registration with the Dutch Chamber of Commerce, not older than 3 months;
- a completed project plan and project budget, including appendices;
- relevant support letters.

Allowed length of the project plan:

- a maximum of 20 pages (A4);
- project summary a maximum of 1 page (A4).

All relevant information, including a template for the application form can be found on the project's website www.quantumwithoutborders.org. Additional questions can be sent to trilateral@quantumdelta.nl.

8 Proposal evaluation

The selection process consists of two steps. Proposals will first be assessed by the QDNL programme office on admissibility. When a proposal is admissible it will be evaluated by a national selection committee appointed by the Quantum Delta NL Board. This advisory committee consists of research and innovation experts from science and business. In a second step, the three partner countries meet with representatives of each national selection committee (trilateral selection commission) and decide on a final ranking. Once the final decision has been communicated, consortium partners submit detailed budget proposals to their national funding agency.

To avoid a conflict of interest, the committee members adhere to a code of conduct. More information can be found on <https://quantumdelta.nl/cross-border-projects-for-europe>

8.1 Admissibility check

Upon receipt of an application, a check will be performed taking note of the following criteria:

- the application was submitted before the deadline;
- the application was submitted by an eligible organisation (see section 5) and authorised representatives;
- the project proposal has been drawn up correctly and completely;
- Project partner contributions are minimum €100,000;
- there is demonstrated alignment with the Quantum Delta NL Growth Fund proposal: <https://quantumdelta.nl/about-quantum-delta-nl>
- the project consists of at least one other partner organisation from France or Germany
- the budget meets the eligible costs requirements (see section 6).

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If the application is deemed inadmissible, the applicant will be notified and provided with one opportunity to make the necessary alterations to the proposal and resubmit within 5 working days. Upon receipt the admissibility check will be performed again.

8.2 Ranking

Applications will be evaluated and ranked based on the below criteria:

- Scientific/technical relevance
- Level of innovation and the quality of the scientific-technical approach
- Quality and robustness of the pathway towards commercialisation
- Contribution to the technological sovereignty of the EU and a resilient supply chain
- The consortia's effectiveness in achieving its objectives and goals

In addition to the qualitative assessment, the national selection committee will also assess the distribution of funds across the relevant technology domains.

8.3 Final Selection

Applicants will be duly informed about the final decision.

The trilateral selection committee may advise project leads to lower the requested contribution for certain eligible proposals.

In case of a decision-challenge, certain guidelines apply (see website: "Lodging a complaint").

9 Contribution terms

9.1 Payment

The contribution is paid out in 4 instalments to the lead applicant. The first instalment amounts to 40% at the start of the project and will be transferred after all the stipulated funding conditions have been met. This includes a signed acceptance of the contribution and the associated terms. A second tranche of 40% will be paid upon approval of the Mid Term Report. A third tranche of 10% will be paid at the end of the project upon approval of the End Term Report comprising a financial justification, which is to be sent to trilateral@quantumdelta.nl within 3 months of project completion and at least 3 months before 31 December 2028 at the latest. The final 10% will be paid at the end of the Quantum Delta NL programme.

Reporting guidance and templates will be provided in due course.

Schedule:

Instalment	Project fase	Requirement
40%	Project start	Proposal approved
40%	Project mid term	Mid-term report approved
10%	Project completion	End-term report approved
10%	Quantum Delta NL Programme End	Programme completion

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9.2 Reporting

Reporting is required in the form of providing input for the CAT activities reporting by QDNL. IP-related milestones must also be reported every 6 months. Reporting should cover the status of the goals and milestones pursued by the project as well as the financial status.

In case the project is discontinued prematurely, applicants will be required to justify such decision and report on the final status. This can inherently lead to a reduction in the eligible contribution (to be decided by QDNL on a case-by-case basis).

All project partners will have to finalise contractual obligations for the project within 6 months after the official start of the project.

Upon project completion, you will be required to provide a Financial Statement Audit adjacent to the End Term Report. A maximum of €10.000 per NL consortium partner will be provided by Quantum Delta NL, additionally to help cover these external costs. This item must be included in the filled-in budget template.

Reporting guidance and templates will be provided in due course.

9.3 Collaboration agreement and Intellectual property

The contribution recipient should apprise him/herself of the intellectual property (IP) policy pursued by Quantum Delta NL. The recipient will be expected to adopt said IP policy in so much as it applies to the scope of the proposal. Important starting points include:

- Consortium partners draft and sign a collaboration agreement after the project has been awarded and before the first payment by QDNL is transferred;
- A standard format collaboration agreement (CA) will be made available by QDNL. In this CA, agreements are made on confidentiality, publishing, rights to results, patenting, project governance and management agreements;
- In this CA consortium partners agree on the background IP every partner makes available for the execution of the project;
- All partners in the consortium have the right to use foreground IP resulting from the project for the execution of the project;
- IP inventors are also IP owners;
- Rules regarding IP licensing and startup deal terms will be published on the QDNL website in January. Results of the projects may be published; consortium partners establish a committee that has to approve publication. Details of this process will follow later;
- For the exchange of materials partners can sign a materials transfer agreement. QDNL will provide such an MTA after the project has been awarded.

Disclaimer:

The information provided here in 9.3 is for guidance only and may be subject to changes.

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9.4 Ethical aspects

The contribution recipient is responsible for determining whether an ethics statement or authorisation is required to conduct the proposed study and for obtaining it in a timely manner from the relevant ethics committee. If deemed a requirement, the necessary ethics statement or permit will need to be in place before the starting date of the project, after it has been awarded.

9.5 Manifesto

The contribution recipient should apprise him/herself of the Quantum Delta NL Manifesto: https://issuu.com/quantumdelta.nl/docs/quantum_delta_nl_manifest_artwork_19_for_issue. As part of the Quantum Delta NL community, the recipient will be expected to act in accordance with the values stated therein.

Disclaimer

This document takes its guidance from the [Kaderregeling betreffende staatssteun voor onderzoek, ontwikkeling en innovatie \(2014/C 198/01\) en algemene groepsvrijstellingsverordening \(Verordening \(EU\) nr. 651/2014\)](#). Any conflicting statements or misinterpretations arising from this document are superseded by this source reference. Quantum Delta NL cannot be held accountable for possible errors residing in this publication