

**Policy Supporting
Research (PSR)**

2021

18-12-2020

Call for proposals



Belgium

partner in development

Summary

Budget	€ 629.995,97 (€370.428,30 ARES part, € 259.567,67 VLIR-UOS part)
Duration	April 2021 to December 2021
Eligibility	<p>Researchers of Belgian higher education institutions, both universities and university colleges</p> <p>Participation of an individual researcher is limited to a maximum of 1 proposal per theme.</p> <p>For ARES: minimum 75% of the budget for institutions of Federation Wallonia-Brussels.</p> <p>For VLIR-UOS: minimum 75% of the budget for Flemish higher education institutions.</p>
Country & themes	<p>Belgium (with case studies in countries in the South). Selected themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Harnessing the demographic dividend in Tanzania 2. How to better integrate the environmental dimension in the Belgian development cooperation in Morocco – Nexus development/climate 3. Integrating conflict prevention and mediation into the Belgian comprehensive approach in Mali 4. Tracks for the decolonization of the Belgian development cooperation 5. Preparatory work for the actualization of the strategic note for global citizenship education 6. Promoting sustainable sand mining in developing countries, taking into account transparency, governance and due diligence 7. Comprehensive approach to risk analysis and management for Niger
Launch of the call	18 December 2020
Deadline submission proposals	<p>15 February 2021, 17:00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For ARES: via the platform GIRAF – see the instructions in the submission section below. - For VLIR-UOS: annelien.gansemans@vliruos.be (ICOS/GEO of your institution in cc)
Communication of selection results	First week of March 2021

Table of contents

1. Context	4
<i>Framework of the Policy Supporting Research (PSR) programme</i>	<i>4</i>
2. Objectives.....	4
<i>Call 2021 for PSR</i>	<i>5</i>
3. Budget	5
4. Eligibility.....	6
5. Selection.....	6
6. Application and submission modalities	7
<i>Proposal</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Support during the formulation.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Submission.....</i>	<i>8</i>
7. Timeline	9
Annexes.....	10
Abbreviations.....	11

1. Context

Framework of the Policy Supporting Research (PSR) programme

Policy supporting research delivers research output on specific themes of interest to Belgian development cooperation on demand of the Belgian government. The goal is to **improve the relevance and performance of Belgian development cooperation policy** with regard to the international framework of sustainable and inclusive development.

As from 1 January 2019 and upon request from the government, the previous ACROPOLIS policy supporting research programme of ARES and VLIR-UOS were adjusted into the **Policy Supporting Research (PSR) programme** for a period of three years (2019-2021). The new approach to PSR remains an integral part of the 5 - year programme (2017-2021) for university cooperation for development of the umbrella organizations VLIR-UOS and ARES. This has been validated by the Minister of Development Cooperation on the 11th of June 2018.

The three-year period is regarded as an **experiment** in which new ways of working can be tried out broadening the expertise, opening up competition, varying the nature of questions, and varying funding modalities. The new approach will be assessed before the end of 2021 to determine whether the objectives of the new approach of policy support to the Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid were met and whether the new approach is effective, as compared to other forms of policy supporting research from the past. This internal evaluation will serve as an input for the preparation of the next programme for university cooperation for development (2022-2026). This call will be the last one of the three-year experimental period.

In principal once a year, a PSR **policy commission** (consisting of DGD, VLIR-UOS, ARES and the cabinet) meets to discuss current PSR projects, results and uptake, and discusses matters of general interest for PSR. The policy committee annually evaluates the functioning of the PSR and proposes adjustments if necessary.

2. Objectives

PSR is set up to meet the needs of the **Belgian development cooperation administration**, DGD. The aim is to deepen the knowledge on themes that are of prime importance for the Belgian development cooperation, linked to building knowledge and capacity of DGD. The PSR therefore also takes into account the inventory of the training needs and the training plans of DGD. Knowledge and capacity building in the universities in the subjects, is a positive element, but is not an end in itself of the PSR. The PSR is conducted in a hands-on and user-friendly way that enables practical applications in DGD (uptake), as well as dissemination and use by third parties (outreach).

Two types of policy supporting research are implemented: long-term PSR and short-term PSR. The current call considers a duration between the short term and the long term. Long-term PSR is closely related to the training, research and overall support needs of DGD and offers a wider range of services such as detailed advice, practical guidelines, complete training modules, scientific advisory services, etc. Short-term PSR serves to get advice quickly, without extensive research. The products may include background notes, comments and recommendations, possibly supplemented with presentations, short-term studies, expertise that is accessible to DGD, courses and workshops, etc.

Call 2021 for PSR

After an internal consultation of DGD, VLIR-UOS and ARES received on 15 December 2020 the Terms of Reference elaborated by DGD for PSR projects in the following seven **themes** (ToRs included in annex 1 to 7):

1. Harnessing the demographic dividend in Tanzania
2. How to better integrate the environmental dimension in the Belgian development cooperation in Morocco – Nexus development/climate
3. Integrating conflict prevention and mediation into the Belgian comprehensive approach in Mali
4. Tracks for the decolonization of the Belgian development cooperation
5. Preparatory work for the actualization of the strategic note for global citizenship education
6. Promoting sustainable sand mining in developing countries, taking into account transparency, governance and due diligence
7. Comprehensive approach to risk analysis and management for Niger

The term of PSR projects varies between **six and nine months**, depending on the days needed to finalise the research results mentioned in the ToRs. The results of all projects should be finalized, including restitution and distribution of results, **before December 31st, 2021**. Project extensions are not possible because a new five year programme (2022-2026) will start in 2022.

3. Budget

The available budget for this call is estimated at max. **€ 629.995,97**, of which € 370.428,30 is contributed by ARES and € 259.567,67 is contributed by VLIR-UOS.

A **daily fee of 1.000 EUR all-inclusive** is agreed upon. The PSR funding system is based on the daily fee, multiplied by the number of days which are deemed necessary for the implementation of the project. The number of days are to be explicitly justified in the project proposal on the basis of the plan of action and research methodology, and also need to be approved formally by DGD. Some ToRs require more days of work than a usual short-term project of 50 days, implying that these project proposals can indicate a higher budget than € 50.000 if justified in their plan of action (not exceeding the maximum term of 9 months). All-inclusive means that the implementing university receives the calculated budget (daily fee * number of days), from which all corresponding costs need to be paid : salaries, operational costs, mission related costs, possible institutional overhead, etc.

These costs are considered a **lump sum** amount in both budgeting and reporting, whereby the latter implies that, in principle, these expenses do not need to be accounted for by detailed supporting documents for individual expenses, since the PSR funding system has formally been accepted by DGD. The Belgian higher education institutions are accountable for these amounts and, if required during an external audit or control by DGD, supporting documents need to be available at the level of the Belgian higher education institutions in order to justify this type of costs. Specific costs, however, cannot be rejected since the DGD funding is a lump sum payment. Financial reporting will consist of a declaration

of receipt and an extract from the institution's analytical accounting system. The extract may follow the budget lines for investments, operational and personnel costs as used by the institution. The overhead cannot exceed 10% of the total expenditure.

4. Eligibility

Researchers of Belgian higher education institutions, both universities and university colleges, are eligible to submit for this call. The proposal must meet the application and submission requirements as described in section 6.

If the proposal is submitted by a lead researcher of an institution from the Federation Wallonia-Brussels (FWB), this additional rule will be applied: at least 75% of the budget will be assigned to HEI members of ARES. The collaboration with non-members of FWB is permitted within the limit of 25% of the budget. If the proposal is submitted by a lead researcher of a Flemish higher education institution, this additional rule will be applied: at least 75% of the budget will be assigned to Flemish HEI members of VLIR-UOS. The collaboration with non-members of Flemish HEI is permitted within the limit of 25% of the budget.

Participation of an individual researcher is limited to a maximum of 1 proposal per theme.

ARES and VLIR-UOS will check the eligibility of the proposals and submit the eligible proposals to DGD on the 19th of February 2021.

5. Selection

DGD is responsible for the selection of the proposals, whereby the quality of the intended output and the intended impact on development cooperation are the main objectives. Selection criteria include: the expertise and previous experiences, the proposed approach, both research methodology and plan of collaboration with DGD. DGD has elaborated the following evaluation grid:

- Quality of the team and network
 - o General references of the researchers
 - o Experience in the research topic
 - o Knowledge of the Belgian development cooperation, DGD and the partner countries
 - o Interuniversity and interdisciplinary cooperation, repartition of tasks within the team, networking with other instances outside universities, involvement of universities and researchers in the partner countries
- Quality of the research project
 - o Good and clear presentation of the project and the methodology/working methods
 - o Relevance of the project for the knowledge and capacity needs of DGD
 - o Concise description of the results which should be achieved and the deliverable products
 - o Realistic planning and budgeting

Collaborations are encouraged if they are an added value for the intended quality of the PSR: inter-university partnerships within Belgium, links with university partners from the South, collaborations with

other partners of the Belgian Development Cooperation and cooperation within global networks. Collaborations with non-university centres and networks is also encouraged in case it adds on quality. Collaborations are taken into account by DGD in case 2 projects are equally ranked.

Gender-balanced and diverse research teams are encouraged by ARES and VLIR-UOS. Research shows that diversity makes a research team stronger. Gender-mixed academic teams seem to be developing more creative and innovative solutions, achieving better results and producing more interdisciplinary and cited publications.

The institution of the lead researcher determines whether the proposal should be submitted to ARES or VLIR-UOS, and whether the proposal, if selected, should be funded by ARES or VLIR-UOS.

Selection and communication of results will be realised in the first week of **March 2021**. DGD will justify the reasons for selection and non-selection. Communication of selection will be done by VLIR-UOS and ARES respectively.

6. Application and submission modalities

Proposal

Proposals are elaborated in English. A proposal needs to be presented in the provided format (see annex 8). The proposal has to elaborate on:

- The presentation of the research team, and, in case of a consortium, the constituent parties (members, relevant expertise);
- The plan of action and the research methodology (objectives, methodology, results, products);
- The strategy for uptake and outreach (practical applications for DGD and use by third parties);
- The collaborations foreseen with other parties (university partners from the South, other partners of the Belgian Development Cooperation, global networks, non-university centres and networks);
- The budget.

Support during the formulation

Contact at DGD

For each theme, a responsible person (focal point) at DGD is appointed. These persons were responsible for the preparation of the terms of reference and will organize the selection committee that assigns the proposals. They will also supervise the execution (contacts with the researchers, technical guidance committee, organization of activities) and are responsible for quality control of the process and the products.

For more information, please contact:

1. jasmien.dewinne@diplobel.fed.be – focal point in the Embassy in Tanzania, Dar Es Salaam for ToR 1 - Harnessing the demographic dividend in Tanzania

2. Astrid.DeLaminneBex@diplobel.fed.be – focal point in the Embassy in Morocco, Rabat for ToR 2 - How to better integrate the environmental dimension in the Belgian development cooperation in Morocco - Nexus Development / climate
3. robin.thiers@diplobel.fed.be – focal point in the Embassy in Mali, Bamako for ToR 3 - Integrating conflict prevention and mediation into the Belgian comprehensive approach in Mali
4. geert.vansintjan@diplobel.fed.be – focal point at DGD, D0 for ToR 4 - Tracks for the decolonization of the Belgian development cooperation
5. Mara.Coppens@diplobel.fed.be – focal point at DGD, D3.1 for ToR 5 - Preparatory work for the actualization of the strategic note for global citizenship education
6. Christine.detaille@diplobel.fed.be – focal point at DGD, D5.2 for ToR 6 - Promoting sustainable sand mining in developing countries, taking into account transparency, governance and due diligence
7. laura.cogels@diplobel.fed.be – focal point at DGD, D5.2 for ToR 7 - Comprehensive approach to risk analysis and management for Niger

For specific questions about the terms of references, please contact the above indicated contact person per theme. Interested academics can contact the contact person to get a better understanding of the specific demands from the government, in order to know whether they can offer what is needed and in order to be better informed to formulate a tailor made proposal. For questions about financing, contracting or follow-up the programme managers of ARES and VLIR-UOS should be contacted.

Submission

For the first time, the submission modalities differ between ARES and VLIR-UOS. If you need more information or if you have questions about this call, you can contact the programme manager (see e-mail address in table below). The deadline for submission is 15 February 2021, 17:00.

Contact	Function
alisson.pechon@ares-ac.be	<i>Programme manager ARES</i>
annelien.gansemans@vliruos.be	<i>Programme manager VLIR-UOS</i>

For the Federation Wallonia Brussels universities - ARES: This year the proposals have to be submitted via the online platform [GIRAF](#). The proposal form (Annex 8) should be introduced in a PDF format through GIRAF by the lead researcher. To open the submission form on GIRAF, the lead researcher should use this link only once https://giraf.ares-ac.be/create-demand/psr_2021. Once opened, the form remains available for editing in “Mes tâches/My tasks” of the lead researcher. The form is accessible as long as the lead researcher uses the “Enregistrer en brouillon/Save and edit later” option. After clicking “submitting the proposal”, the proposal is considered by ARES. If you don’t have an account in GIRAF yet, please contact giraf@ares-ac.be to request the activation of your account. If you have any questions about the submission, please contact the programme manager ARES in the table.

For the Flemish universities: The proposals are to be sent by e-mail to the programme manager of VLIR-UOS : annelien.gansemans@vliruos.be. When submitting a proposal to VLIR-UOS, please add the following ICOS (Institutional Coordinator for Development Cooperation) in cc when submitting the proposal by e-mail to VLIR-UOS.

Contact	Function
tupac.calfat@kuleuven.be	ICOS KULeuven
jiska.verbouw@uantwerpen.be	ICOS UAntwerpen
veerle.devriendt@ugent.be	ICOS UGent
sara.schaeken@uhasselt.be	ICOS UHasselt
francoise.de.cupere@vub.be	ICOS VUB

For the Flemish university colleges: when submitting a proposal to VLIR-UOS, please add Charlotte Christiaens (charlotte.christiaens@vlhora.be) and the following GEO (Global Engagement Officer) in cc when submitting the proposal by mail to VLIR-UOS.

Email	Function
international@hzs.be	IGEO Antwerp Maritime Academy
geert.marrin@ap.be	GEO Artesis Plantijn University College Antwerp
severine.vanderstighelen@arteveldehs.be	GEO Artevelde University College Ghent
hilde.van.lindt@ehb.be	GEO Erasmus University College Brussels
goforimpact@howest.be	GEO Hogeschool West-Vlaanderen
maayke.nabuurs@kdg.be	GEO Karel de Grote University College
veerle.vandersluys@luca-arts.be	GEO LUCA School of Arts
nele.vermeulen@odisee.be	GEO Odisee University College
kristien.bauwens@pxl.be	GEO PXL University College
Inge.vervoort@thomasmore.be	GEO Thomas More University of Applied Sciences
international@ucll.be	GEO UC Leuven-Limburg
kathleen.vanheule@hogent.be	GEO University College Ghent
international@vives.be	GEO VIVES University of Applied Sciences

7. Timeline

Description	Deadline
Launch call for proposals by VLIR-UOS and ARES	18 December 2020
Deadline for submission at VLIR-UOS and ARES	15 February 2021
Selection of proposals by DGD	First week of March 2021
Communication of selection results	First week of March 2021
Start of the PSR	1 April 2021

Annexes

Annex 1 : ToR 'Harnessing the demographic dividend in Tanzania'

Annex 2 : ToR 'How to better integrate the environmental dimension in the Belgian development cooperation in Morocco – Nexus development & climate'

Annex 3 : ToR 'Integrating conflict prevention and mediation into the Belgian comprehensive approach in Mali'

Annex 4 : ToR 'Tracks for the decolonization of the Belgian development cooperation'

Annex 5 : ToR 'Preparatory work for the actualization of the strategic note for global citizenship education'

Annex 6 : ToR 'Promoting sustainable sand mining in developing countries, taking into account transparency, governance and due diligence'

Annex 7 : ToR 'Comprehensive approach to risk analysis and management for Niger'

Annex 8 : Proposal Format

Abbreviations

ACROPOLIS	Academic Research Groups for Policy Support
ARES	Académie de Recherche et d'Enseignement Supérieur
DGD	Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid
GEO	Global Engagement Officer (at University Colleges)
ICOS	Institutional Coordinator for Development Cooperation (at Universities)
PSR	Policy Supporting Research
ToR	Terms of Reference
VLIR-UOS	Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad (Flemish Interuniversity Council) - Universitaire Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (VLIR-University Cooperation for Development)