

# AI for Health Call for projects (EWUU Alliance)

## Terms and Conditions

version 2021-09-23

*Accelerating research excellence in trustworthy AI  
to ensure healthy lives and improve well-being*

### 1. Introduction - AI for Health Working Group of the EWUU Alliance

Eindhoven University of Technology, Wageningen University & Research, Utrecht University and Utrecht University Medical Center entered into [a strategic alliance \(EWUU Alliance\)](#) in 2019 with the aim of working intensively together on a number of themes where the partners are complementary and can strengthen each other: Health, Food, Energy and Circular Society.

**AI for Health** is one of the working groups within the EWUU alliance. All four partners in the alliance have unique track records on the subject and represent a great framework to set up interdisciplinary collaborations, consortia and acquire grants in the field of AI for Health.

The ambitions of the AI for Health working group are:

- Gain a competitive position in the AI landscape for the Alliance by enabling shared scientific breakthroughs in trustworthy AI that improves whole-life health.
- Promote complementarity and create synergies in AI research within Alliance and with external partners.
- Develop a roadmap and common agenda for research and education.
- Ensure more effective use of resources, e.g. enable effective and appropriate research access to health data, support researchers with a common research infrastructure.
- The above activities should lead to AI innovations that improve the quality of life and care.

### 2. Purpose of the AI4Health Seed Fund

The purpose of this specific round of AI for Health is to facilitate and financially support cross disciplinary collaborations between the four institutions **that are geared towards large initiatives in the field of AI for Health**. Higher priority will be given to innovations that can provide matching funds, have the potential to have Intellectual Property (IP) and thus lead to value creation for the society.

To be more specific, **the seed fund can be used for activities that can support preparing a larger grant application related to AI for Health in the near future (e.g. Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, NL AIC calls, NWA, NWO, ZonMW, charitable funds ("collectebusfondsen"))** including but not limited to:

- Grant writing support (both internal and external support).
- Business plan writing.
- Conducting preliminary research to be able to successfully apply for such a grant in the near future.
- An applied research project aimed at societal added value for private or public partners who are willing to match funding to the seed fund. From the external partners (both profit and non-profit) we require an in-kind contribution (in the form of hours of an employee of the external party) to ensure that the research will generate value for the external organisation. In addition, we expect a cash contribution from profit partners that is at least equal to the amount that is paid by the AI for Health Seed Fund (from non-profit organisations we only expect an in-kind contribution).

Funds may be used for:

- Salary of faculty staff and student assistants.
- Consultation fees for organisations who support grant writing (both internal and external support).
- Travel directly associated with the research activity (for example travel to match-making events related to grant application).

The seed fund **cannot** be used for:

- Matching in a grant application (this refers to the situation where the alliance fund amount is used as a matching amount in a grant application, without involving research activities).
- Financing (the extension of) the contract of a PhD student.
- Salary costs of general staff or administrative support.
- The purchase of software, hardware or other devices. If such items are crucial to the execution of the research project and cannot be obtained through the regular support services of the institution where the researcher has been appointed, then these items can be included in the budget of the research proposal with a well-defined justification.
- Attending courses or conferences not directly related to the research project.

### 3. Possible research themes in AI for health

The proposal must address the main themes of AI for Health: **Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment, Care** and the cross-cutting theme **AI building blocks**. See below for possible themes that might be addressed.

#### **A. AI for Health themes: Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment, Care**

- A1. Healthy and safe food supply chain
- A2. Precision/personalised health, nutrition & behaviour
- A3. Healthy living environment/Smart cities
- A4. AI in clinical decision support
- A5. Medical imaging

#### **B. Cross-cutting themes – Building blocks for AI**

- B1. Ethics & Legal AI, trustworthy AI, explainable AI, human-centered AI
- B2. AI methodology and algorithms
- B2. Data quality, data measurement error, data biases
- B3. AI infrastructure: Data sharing, storage, harmonisation

*If you are unsure whether your project fits into the scope of the grant, please contact the Liaison Officer of your institute (See Section 7 below).*

### 4. Eligibility criteria

1. At least 3 partners within the Alliance are involved in the proposal. Higher priority will be given to proposals in which all 4 partners within the Alliance are involved.
2. The main applicants are tenured researchers (assistant professor, associate professor, professor) at the institutes of the Alliance, with a track record in research themes related to AI (or building a track record based on preliminary research), preferably with application in the health domain. Members of the AI for Health working group (programme team and steering committee) are not entitled to submit applications.
3. The seed fund is used to work towards larger initiatives and/or a larger grant application in the field of AI for Health. Higher priority will be given to innovations that can provide matching funds

and have the potential to have Intellectual Property (IP), and thus lead to value creation for the society.

4. The proposal must address at least one of the AI for Health themes (See Themes A) and at least one of the cross-cutting themes (See Themes B) outlined in Section 3.
5. The proposal must adhere to the values of safety, privacy, security, trust, fairness, explainability, human-centered, and Open Science.
6. The maximum duration of a project is 12 months, and the start date is no later than 1 December 2021.

#### **Selection / prioritization:**

7. Clear advantage by the specific collaboration within EWUU AI for health context.
8. The experts involved in the project show a clear complementarity.
9. Fit with national and international research agendas and chances of receiving external funding.

#### **5. What amount can be requested?**

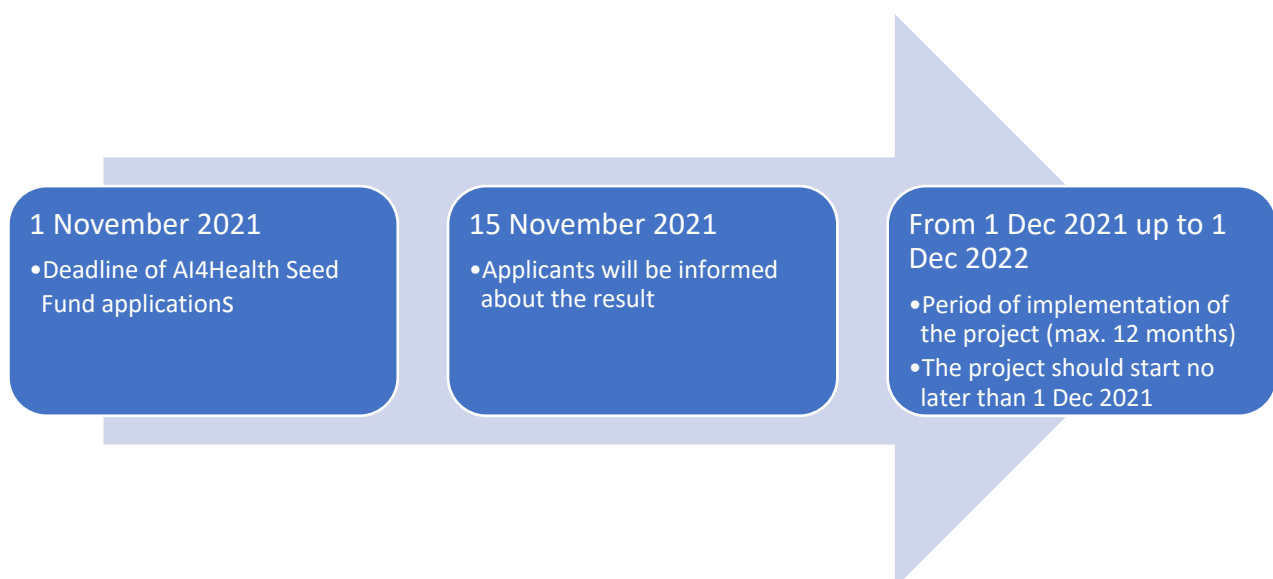
The total budget for 2021 is around 120K and the application amounts to a minimum of 15K and a maximum funding amount of 40K.

#### **Complementing the available research budget with IT services**

In the research proposal submitted to the AI for Health working group, the following additional IT services can be requested, depending on the availability of these services through the regular support services of the institution (e.g. Digital Competence Centre, Research Support, IT Departement).

- Support, for example, in the field of data management and data protection. This is free of charge, unless it concerns more than a few hours, then a data manager can be outsourced.
- Computing power at SURFsara.
- Advise for best computing solutions, consultancy.
- For complex AI projects, support from a data engineer might be available under certain conditions.

#### **6. AI4Health Seed Fund Call process**



## 7. Submission guidelines and contact details

Applications can be submitted (using the enclosed application form) to the following email address: [R.Looije@umcutrecht.nl](mailto:R.Looije@umcutrecht.nl). The deadline of the submission is **1 November 2021 at 6 PM**. The applicants will be informed about the result of their applications **on 15 November 2021**. Applications that do not meet the minimum requirements (eligibility criteria and submission requirements) will not be considered.

### Contact

For questions about this call, please contact the liaison officer of your Institute:

WUR: Priska Prasetya ([Priska.Prasetya@wur.nl](mailto:Priska.Prasetya@wur.nl))

UU, UMCU: Laurence Frank ([L.E.Frank@uu.nl](mailto:L.E.Frank@uu.nl)) or [L.E.Frank@umcutrecht.nl](mailto:L.E.Frank@umcutrecht.nl))

TU/e: Patricia Jaspers ([P.J.A.Jaspers@tue.nl](mailto:P.J.A.Jaspers@tue.nl))

## 8. Review procedure and criteria

The scientific manager of the AI for Health working group coordinates the proposal evaluation process. The proposals will undergo a scientific review and, if applicable, will have to obtain approval of a Ethics Review Board at the institute of the main applicant.

The [members](#) of the working group AI for Health will perform the scientific review of the proposals. If necessary, they may ask experts outside the working group to review the research proposals. Working group members who have a conflict of interest (for example, because of involvement of direct colleagues in a proposal) are exempted from decision-making. The scientific manager aims to inform the applicants of the decision on 15 November 2021.

Funding will be dispersed by the finance team directly following the notification to the applicants. If ethical approval is needed for a project, the amount can only be transferred after the applicants have handed over the approval of the Ethics Committee to the scientific manager. After this approval, the amount will be transferred and the project can start (no later than 1 December 2021).

### Review criteria

The proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

1. The composition and qualifications of the team to complete the project. The extent to which the research team makes effective use of the complementary expertise of the different Alliance partners, beyond the traditional computational and clinical disciplines to form new collaborations and innovate in AI research. Higher priority will be given to proposals in which 4 Alliance partners are involved.
2. The extent to which the seed fund is used to work towards larger initiatives and/or a larger grant application in the field of AI for Health. Higher priority will be given to innovations that can provide matching funds, have the potential to have Intellectual Property (IP), and lead to value creation for the society.
3. The likelihood the project will make use of AI to create an impact on Health in alignment with the themes mentioned under Section 3.
4. Scientific quality, rigor and the ethical acceptability of the proposed approach and methods. The extent to which the proposal adheres to the values of safety, privacy, security, trust, fairness, explainability, human-centered, Open Science, and legal aspects such as GDPR, AI Act.
5. Innovativeness and creativity of the proposed AI project, balanced by the project's likelihood of success. Are the objectives achievable with clear deliverables and realistic within the given timeline and is the intended budget in balance with the intended result of the application?
6. If applicable, the feasibility of obtaining the approval of an Ethics Review Board by 1 December 2021.

Note that during the evaluation, the working group AI for Health can adjust proposed budgets if deemed reasonable, also to be able to fund a additional proposals.

### Requirements for awardees

Awardees must be willing to attend future AI for Health events and present their results there. By the project end date (12 months after receipt of the seed money), recipients must provide a final report of the research results including a financial account and a summary of the deliverables.

### 9. Organisation

The Steering committee AI for Health has the following members:

- Paul Merkus, TU/e
- Patricia Jaspers, TU/e
- Willem-Jan Knibbe, WUR
- Guido Camps, WUR
- Peter van der Heijden, UU
- Rick Grobbee, UMC Utrecht
- Duco Veen, UMC Utrecht

The Program Team AI for Health has the following members:

- Diederik Visser, Program Manager
- Rosemarijn Looije, Scientific Manager
- Laurence Frank, Liaison Officer UU / UMC Utrecht
- Priska Prasetya, Liaison Officer WUR
- Janneke Voskamp, Marketing & Communications Officer