

General rules - Fundamental research Grants

The Foundation Against Cancer (FAC) funds grants to encourage fundamental research in oncology in Belgium.

Project selection entails **two phases**:

- The **first phase of selection is based** on a **Letter of Intent (LOI)**, submitted by the lead applicant of the FAC within the prescribed deadline. **Projects will be preselected, based on the LOI**, by members of the Scientific Committee. All applicants will be notified personally by mail of the results of this preselection. The preselected candidates will then be invited to submit a Full Application Form to the FAC within a prescribed deadline.
- In the **second phase** the members of the Scientific Committee and three external international referees, appointed by the FAC's Scientific Committee, will analyze the **Full Application Forms (FAF)**. The final selection will be made by the Scientific Committee in a plenary session.

Requisites for participation

All researchers affiliated **to a research or hospital facility** subordinate to a nonprofit association, a public utility foundation or a private foundation, are authorized to submit a research proposal insofar as the research, will be conducted in **Belgium** and with no direct commercial purpose.

A team that has an ongoing funding from the FAC in the same research category **after December 2022 cannot** put in a new request (except for extensions allocated in the context of the pandemic health situation COVID 19).

Letter of Intent (LOI)

A Letter of Intent can be submitted by a single lead applicant or several research teams (co-applicants from different Belgian universities or hospitals) jointly. The applicant is not allowed to submit the same research project simultaneously to the Fundamental Scientific Committee as well as to the Translational and Clinical Scientific Committee.

The applicant is allowed to submit **only one fundamental research project** as lead applicant¹ (principal investigator) or co-applicant² (principal investigator from another Belgian university or hospital other than the lead applicant).

¹ **Lead applicant** : The lead applicant is the person who actively applies for a Grant. He/She is the leader of the project and he/she has the primary responsibility for the intellectual direction of the research. He/She assumes also financial responsibility for the Grant.

² **Co-applicant** : The co-applicant is a researcher participating in a **multicentric grant application** and who makes a significant contribution to the intellectual direction of the research. He/She also has the responsibility for the financial

Only a lead applicant and co-applicant with a permanent postdoctoral position³ in a Belgian research facility or hospital can submit a research project.

The lead and/or co-applicant may each add the name of one copromotor in the application.

The **copromotor** has to work in the same university or institution as the concerned lead or co-applicant. He/she may supervise the project but has no financial responsibility in it.

The initial choice by the applicant for one or the other Committee (i.e. Fundamental **or** Translational & Clinical) is essential, as the Letter of Intent cannot be transferred from one Scientific Committee to the other.

The Letter of Intent should be written in **English**.

Full Application Form (FAF)

The lead applicant will be notified personally if his/her Letter of Intent has been preselected. The lead applicant is then invited to submit a Full Application Form (FAF) to the FAC within the prescribed deadline.

Research project

The project should contribute to a better understanding of cancer mechanisms, aiming at possible long term improvements in cancer diagnosis & treatment. Its scientific value should be of the highest quality. Its objectives and approaches should be original. It should be a major research project of the researcher and his/her team.

The Full Application Form must be written in English except the lay summary which should be written in French or Dutch.

Duration of the grant

Applicants may request for a period of two to four years. The Fundamental Scientific Committee reserves the right to reduce the duration of the grant when appropriate.

After acceptance of the research project, a possible extension of the project's time schedule can be granted for a period not exceeding one year and without impact on the total amount of support, if duly motivated. Any request to prolong the project

and scientific aspects of the research conducted in his/hers university/ clinical institution but belongs to a different university or clinical institution as the lead applicant.

³ **A permanent postdoctoral position** is occupied by a permanent research worker holding a PhD in a research institute or at university level, with scientific and financial autonomy.

for more than one year will have to be submitted to the Fundamental Scientific Committee.

Scientific evaluation of the project

The scientific evaluation of the project falls under the jurisdiction of the Chairmen and the members of the Scientific Committees of the FAC. As mentioned above, each project will also be submitted to 3 external international reviewers appointed by the Scientific Committee. The final selection will be based on the external international referees' and Scientific Committee's evaluations.

The principal criteria for quality during the evaluation of the project are:

- the project's scientific pertinence and original character;
- results of previous research and publications of the applying team;
- track record of the applying team and scientific environment.

By submitting your research project for this call, you automatically authorized the FAC to transfer your application form with included all attachments to the international referees, except those you specifically refer in the LOI and FAF as "excluded" (conflict of interest, confidentiality of the results, ...)

Selection of the projects made by the Fundamental Scientific Committee cannot be challenged.

Costs covered by the grant

The funds granted by the FAC must be used to cover the execution costs of the project as detailed in the Full Application Form. This may include remuneration of the scientific and technical coworkers as well as working and equipment costs as stated and detailed in the request for funds, linked to the execution of the project (laboratory supplies and products; acquisition, installation and maintenance of scientific and technical devices and instruments, etc.).

No expenses in excess of the total amount will be authorized, but substantiated transfer from one allocation to another can be permitted pending authorization from the FAC.

Overhead

The research organization, whatever its legal status (nonprofit association, public utility foundation, private foundation, ...) **is not authorized to withdraw overhead⁴** from the funds granted by the Foundation.

⁴ **Overhead:** indirect costs as rent for labs, office and facilities internal access and use, luxury services including access to scientific journals and databases, general administration costs,

Maximum requested amount

The maximum amount of funding granted per project (unicentric or multicentric) may not exceed:

- € 600 000 (VAT inclusive) for a 4-years project;.
- € 450 000 (VAT inclusive) for a 3-years project;
- € 300 000 (VAT inclusive) for a 2-years project.

Beneficiary financial account

Upon submission of the funding request, the applicant must provide an account number of the beneficiary. This account must be **imperatively** allocated to an institution having the status of nonprofit association, public utility foundation or private foundation, with consent of the university head or the legal representative(s).

The applicant will attach to the application a duly completed and signed financial identification sheet (FIS).

The FAC reserves the right to request a copy of the articles of the account holder (nonprofit association, public utility foundation or private foundation).

Payment schedule

- *For two-year projects*

The first deposit will be made within the month following the signature of the agreement with the FAC, if all the conditions are met. The second deposit will be made halfway through the projects scheduled timeline.

- *For projects from two up to three years long*

The first deposit will be made within the month following the signature of the agreement with the FAC. The following deposits will be carried out annually up until halfway through the mandate.

Halfway through the mandate, continuation of the annual payments will be decided according to an intermediate report and the bank statement testifying to the use of at least 50 % of the already allocated amounts. This bank statement must be validated by the financial director of the research institution. If 50 % of the allocated funds have not yet been used at this stage, payments will be interrupted until an additional bank statement is received testifying that this expenses threshold has

been reached. One or several simultaneous installments will then be paid as not to modify the total duration of the granting.

- *For four-year projects*

The first deposit will be made within the month following the signature of the agreement with the FAC. The following deposits will be carried out annually up until halfway through the mandate.

Halfway through the mandate, the fundamental Scientific committee will evaluate the progression of the project and will decide on the continuation of the granting. The applicant does not have the possibility of obtaining an increase of the funds granted initially. The subsequent annual payments will be determined according to this evaluation based on the intermediate report sent by the beneficiary. The applicant will also provide a bank statement testifying to the use of at least 50 % of the amounts already allocated. This bank statement must be validated by the financial director of the research institution. If 50 % of the allocated funds have not yet been used at this stage, payments will be interrupted until an additional bank statement is received testifying that this expenses threshold has been reached. One or several simultaneous installments will then be paid as not to modify the total duration of the granting.

Commitment of the research team to the FAC

By submitting a request for funds, the applicant commits him/herself to honor the requirements of the granting regulations.

When retained by the FAC for funding, the beneficiary will be asked to sign an agreement, whereby he/she commits him/herself to:

- Provide an intermediary report halfway through the agreement, stating the progression of the research as well as detailing the forthcoming steps up until the end of the agreement. This report will come with a bank statement, validated by the financial director of the research institution, detailing the amount and nature of the expenses made thus far.
- Provide a final scientific report and a certified bank statement 2 months **after** the end of the agreement between the research institution and the FAC.
- The researcher is likely to contribute free of charge to the Foundation's media campaigns with the general public and donators.
- The contractors undertake to send to the Foundation, prior to their publication, any press release concerning the granted research project .
- The researcher undertakes to send to the Foundation, as and when accepted by an editorial board, any scientific article relating to the granted research project .

- The research will mention the funding by FAC in all oral and poster presentation related to the granted research project

Commitment of the FAC to the research team

FAC processes your personal data confidentially in accordance with the general data protection regulation (GDPR). You can consult our Privacy and Data protection notice, available on the application platform of the FAC, for more information.