

CALL FOR PROJECTS 2024-2025

Context

The Fund GENeHOPE has been set up by the King Baudouin Foundation at the initiative of a family who has experienced the loss of a child due to a genetic disease. Genetic diseases are the leading cause of death in developed countries among children under 1 year old. When inherited, they can affect patients and their families for a lifetime.

The Fund GENeHOPE focuses on supporting basic and translational research on genetic diseases to leverage insights in the molecular mechanisms underlying the diseases, and opportunities for improved diagnosis and treatment. The Fund acts on the principle that the alliance of different internationally recognized genetic centers and research groups will enable the synergy of all knowledge and expertise, thereby strengthening and accelerating research and translation of results, with maximum benefit to patients. In the initial phase, the Fund will support the collaboration between a research team (or a consortium of research teams) from Belgium and the Institut Imagine in Paris. The Fund aims to become a long-term, international, and impactful initiative that benefits society at large.

The Fund GENeHOPE is managed by the King Baudouin Foundation with the help of an international scientific jury, a Scientific Committee, and a Steering Committee.

The Fund GENeHOPE will launch Calls for projects to identify and support valuable research projects and researchers. The ambition is to launch two distinct calls each year, both aimed at encouraging and facilitating the alliance of expertise in genetic research. This is a first call in a series of project calls, of which the scope will be further refined depending on the available call budget and evaluation of the call modalities.

Call for projects

The Fund launches two distinct calls:

- one call for research project funding to strengthen an ongoing or envisioned collaboration. and
- one call for funding for training of a medical doctor (M.D.) in genetic research

1: Call for research project funding

Financial contribution to an ongoing or envisioned collaborative project between a research team / consortium of research teams from Belgium and a team from the Institut Imagine France.

The existing or envisioned collaboration must be motivated through minutes of meetings, mutual publications or meeting abstracts, preliminary research data or other.

The financial support should contribute to strengthening the collaboration, expand it, attract additional expertise, and thus contribute to accelerating research results and clinical translation.

The collaborative project must be submitted by one main applicant. If the grant is awarded, the contract is signed with this main applicant. The project leaders of the different teams decide together



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on the allocation of funding (participation in the salary of a post-doc or student, exchanges between laboratories, joint experiments, etc.). Further internal distribution of funds between teams is the responsibility of the main applicant. The partner teams must draw up a memorandum of understanding on cooperation. This signed document must be available on request.

2. Call for funding for the training of an M.D.

Financial support that allows an M.D. to develop (further) knowledge or technical skills in genetic research, thanks to targeted training at a centre of excellence in Belgium or at the Institut Imagine France. The M.D. must have completed her/his training or be engaged in a research or PhD track and show sufficient motivation to become proficient in genetic research. Through this initiative, the Fund aims to stimulate M.D.'s interest in genetic diseases and enthuse new talent to conduct (interdisciplinary) research in this field.

Budget

A total amount of € 200.000 is available for this call. This allows 4 applications to be honoured at € 50.000 per application. If not enough high-quality applications for project support or training are submitted, the Steering Committee may decide not to spend the full amount but to reserve it for a subsequent call.

No overhead can be deducted from grants up to € 50.000 included.

Selection procedure

If you are interested, please submit an online application (note that the application files for research and for training are different) via the website of the King Baudouin Foundation www.kbs-frb.be. Applications should be submitted in English by 21/01/2025 at midnight at the latest. Candidates will receive an acknowledgement of receipt.

The selection procedure will be carried out in accordance with the highest standards of quality, impartiality, and transparency and will consist of the following steps:

- Each application will be evaluated by at least 3 international independent referees. These referees will be chosen for their relevant expertise. They will work via an online selection procedure based on predefined criteria. (*)
- The project proposals and the evaluations of the referees will be shared with the members of the Scientific Committee and a plenary meeting with all the members of the Scientific Committee will be organized to discuss them.
- The Scientific Committee will make a selection of a total of maximum 4 collaborative project(s) or demand(s) for M.D. training to be considered for funding.

The chairs of the Scientific Committee will present the selection process and the conclusions to the Steering Committee of the Fund, that will ratify the selection.

(*) If there are more than 10 submissions, the scientific committee may decide to pre-select based on the pre-defined criteria.

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Selection criteria for research project funding

Scientific quality of the project

- High overall scientific quality of the research, incl. design and innovative approaches
- The project plan should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely) with clear deliverables in the short term, and should describe the envisioned outcomes in the longer term.

Relevance

- Relevance/added value of the research to existing knowledge/clinical practices
- The project addresses clearly identified medical, allied health or psychosocial issues related to genetic diseases

Collaboration

- Demonstrated ongoing or envisioned collaboration between a research team /a consortium of research teams from Belgium and a team from the Institut Imagine France.
- Added value of collaboration.

Track record

- Track record and career potential of the project leaders (scientific environment, creativity, management skills, international visibility etc...)
- Potential of the research team & collaborating teams

Potential impact

- of the research for patients, their family, and/or professionals
- of the results on diagnosis/treatment/quality of care/quality of life

Perspective of implementation of the results

- Communication & knowledge transfer steps
- Plan of implementation & follow up of the research results

Selection criteria for funding for training of an M.D.

Quality of the training

- Clear description of what will be achieved with the training and the actions that will be taken to achieve this action plan

Relevance

- The training contributes to better understanding, prevention, diagnosis, and/or treatment of genetic disorders

Collaboration

- Added value from the collaboration with Institut Imagine/a research team in Belgium.

Motivation

- Motivation of the M.D., competence, experience, embedding in a scientific environment

Training centre

- Track record of the supervisor and commitment of the supervisor and of the hosting institute

Budget

- Adequacy of the budget and availability of other resources to cover other costs related to the training



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Contact

- For technical assistance during the application process:
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- For information regarding the call:
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King Baudouin Foundation

Working together for a better society

The King Baudouin Foundation's mission is to contribute to a better society.

The Foundation is an actor for change and innovation, serving the public interest and increasing social cohesion in Belgium and Europe. We seek to maximize our impact by strengthening the capacity of organizations and individuals. We also stimulate effective philanthropy by individuals and corporations.

The King Baudouin Foundation is a public benefit foundation. The Foundation was set up in 1976 on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign.

With thanks to the Belgian National Lottery and to all donors for their valued support.

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