



CALL FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS 2026

The Fund for scientific research in rheumatology (FWRO-FRSR) supports research on rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases. The Fund is managed by the King Baudouin Foundation, with the help of a scientific jury and a steering committee.

The Fund launches an annual call for projects.¹

SUBJECT OF THE CALL

The research should focus on rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases. Priority is given to clinical, multidisciplinary or multicentre programs, either in academic or non-academic Belgian institutions, that respond to a clearly identified need of patients and/or caregivers.

Projects that are open to collaborations with other interested centres and which cannot easily be supported through other existing national or international programs are particularly invited.

Seeding money for innovative translational or basic research in a preparative phase for more established funding opportunities, can also be requested.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Organizations

The Foundation will only fund not-for-profit organizations. For-profit organizations (e.g. pharmaceutical companies) can be part of a research team but are excluded from funding.

Main applicant

The call is open to

- all health professionals and researchers in Belgium with an interest in clinical or translational rheumatology research.
- Trainees in rheumatology and young rheumatologists in particular are encouraged to submit an application.
- Collaborative projects involving researchers as well as clinicians and patients are encouraged.
- Laureates of previous calls may reapply if they have submitted all activity reports related to the previous call(s) as required by the agreement.
- The main applicant may not apply to this call more than once as main applicant but may apply as a co-applicant on more than one application.

¹ On the occasion of the centennial anniversary of the Royal Belgian Society of Rheumatology, the Fund launches an **exceptional call to support collaborative research addressing patient trajectories** in rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs) within the Belgian healthcare system. More information on our [website](#).



- Applicants may apply to both the FWRO-FRSR 2026 annual call and the KBVR-SRBR “100 Years” call, but may serve as Main Applicant on only one project overall. Submitting the same project to both calls is not permitted.¹

Scientific support

The application should be formally supported by an established researcher (e.g. holds PhD or had demonstrable research experience).

SELECTION CRITERIA

Scientific quality of the project

- Design, including a timeline, statistics, sample calculation
- Feasibility of the proposed study, including feasibility to complete the study within the proposed timing
- Innovative approaches

Relevance/added-value of the research to existing knowledge/clinical practices

- The project addresses clearly identified medical, allied health issues related to rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases.
- The rationale why the patient perspective is taken into account (or not taken into account) in the design of the project, is clearly explained in the proposal.

Involvement of stakeholders

- List of key stakeholders and clear description of how they will be involved in the research and how their expertise will be taken into account.

Potential of the main applicant and research team

- Previous research achievements of the main applicant since the start of their career.
- Career potential of the main applicant (creativity, management skills, (inter)national visibility...)
- Potential of the research team & collaborating teams: scientific environment, competence, experience, added-value from the collaboration.

Potential impact

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

Perspective of implementation of the results

- The proposal has to include a clear plan for the implementation of the study results.

Dissemination of the study results

- The proposal has to include a plan for the communication of the study results, including negative results.

Justification of the budget

Ethical questions & gender issues

- A description of how ethical issues, if any, are taken into account. If the project has to be submitted to an Ethics Committee, researchers should send the ethical approval before the project can start (but not before the introduction of the application).
- A description of how gender/diversity issues, if any, are taken into account.



GRANT

A total budget of € 150.000 has been allocated to this call. Maximum 20% of this total amount can be dedicated to translational research. Target amount for grants: € 30.000 per project.

No overhead can be taken on grants of € 50.000 or less. For higher amounts, the overhead can't exceed 17% and must be included in the budget.

In case of insufficient high-quality projects, the jury and the Steering Committee reserve the right not to spend the full amount available.

PROCEDURE

If interested, please submit an online application in English via the [website](#) of the King Baudouin Foundation.

The applications should be submitted by **24th June 2025** at midnight at the latest.

Candidates will receive an acknowledgement of receipt.

SELECTION

Applications will be submitted to an independent international scientific jury.

The jury will assess the projects and will draw up recommendations for the Fund Steering Committee managed by the King Baudouin Foundation, which will make the final decision.

The decision will be published in October 2025.

CONTACT KING BAUDOUIIN FOUNDATION

- For technical assistance during applying:
Contact center – Tel +32 (0)2 500 45 55 – proj@kbs-frb.be
- For information regarding the call:
Scientific secretariat of the Fund for scientific research in rheumatology FWRO-FRSR, Annemie T'Seyen -
Tel +32 (0)2 549 03 03 - tseyen.a@kbs-frb.be



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King Baudouin Foundation

The King Baudouin Foundation's mission is to contribute to a better society in Belgium, in Europe and elsewhere in the world. It is an actor for change and innovation, serving the public interest and increasing social cohesion. It seeks to maximise its impact by improving skills in organisations and for individuals. It also stimulates effective philanthropy by individuals and corporations. The King Baudouin Foundation was set up in 1976, on the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign.

With thanks to the National Lottery and its players, and also to our many donors for their ongoing commitment.

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