

## FGGA policy Starter grants

### *Introduction*

In June 2022, Minister of Education, Culture and Science Dijkgraaf announced that **additional investments** would be made in higher education and research. These are the so called **starter and incentive grants**.

The aim of these grants is to reduce workload, competition and application pressure and to stimulate unfettered research. They fit well within the ambitions of the **university strategic plan 'Innovating and Connecting'**.

The additional investments are insufficient to actually award a grant to all lecturers and researchers who qualify for these grants. Within Leiden University, the Executive Board has decided to divide the resources among the faculties (including LUMC) based on student numbers. For FGGA, this means that a considerable number of grants can be awarded within the faculty in the coming 8 years, with the varying number of grants earmarked per institute. The grants are therefore not interchangeable between the institutes.

		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Number of grants
Starter grants	BSK	2	5	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	22
	ISGA	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	18
	LUC	1	2	1	1	1		1	1	1	9
		5	10	6	5	5	5	3	5	5	49

FGGA has chosen to separate the granting of both types of grants: starter grants and incentive grants. The current policy text only concerns the awarding of starter grants to Assistant Professors (UDs) who are starting at our institution.

### *Reduction of workload and deployment of team science*

The starting point for the distribution of the limited starter grants is to facilitate a procedure that is as inclusive as possible without causing a division within the community of starting researchers. We hope to achieve this by using the starter grants to actually reduce the workload and stimulate innovative research within the three institutes.

It has therefore been agreed within the faculty that these grants will only be awarded to projects that support 'team science'. These are projects that, within the research program of the institutes, involve several people with whom there is close collaboration in the context of the research. This could be a project in which a PhD student is appointed who is supervised by the UD together with others, or a project in which several people are given

time to contribute to the research. In addition, a joint project can also be considered, in which resources are mainly used for staff and other costs. It is essential that this collaboration includes other colleagues at assistant professor level who are not eligible for a start-up grant.

### *Procedure starter grants*

Applications can be submitted by Assistant Professors with an appointment of at least 0.7 FTE with a starting date of 1 January 2022 or later **and** who have been given permanent employment or who have the prospect of permanent employment in 2023. By 'the prospect' we mean assistant professors who will receive a permanent appointment within a year of their appointment. If this is not clear, it is wise to inquire with your institute's manager.

These are research projects for which a budget is proposed that can be used for direct and indirect (overhead) costs for research, with a term of 5 years.

The following **assessment criteria** apply to all applications:

- The scientific quality and innovative character of the project;
- Collaboration in the form of team science with at least 1 other Assistant Professor within the institute;
- The contribution of the project to the institute's research strategy.

The maximum amount available per a starter grant is €240,000 (with the mandatory payment for overhead costs, which consists of 10% for the Executive Board and 10% for FGGA, the grant amounts to €300,000) spread evenly over a period of 5 years. When awarding grants, the aim is to use resources within FGGA in such a way that as many employees as possible are given additional opportunities to conduct research. This means that we want to avoid the accumulation of resources: if a candidate is eligible for another internal research grant, for example based on sector funds, the candidate must choose between those grants. This also applies to other team members with a starter grant application.

The costs eligible for subsidy are personnel costs, material and other direct research costs.

With regard to **personnel costs** (in accordance with the NU Collective Labour Agreement), you can choose from the following categories:

- a. PhD student
- b. PhD fellow (0.4 FTE teaching, 0.6 FTE research for a period of 6 years)
- c. Postdoc
- d. UD replacement costs (applicant and/or other UDs in the project)
- e. Other academic staff
- f. Support staff (OBP)
- g. Student Assistant (SA)

Personnel costs should concern those who perform the work and may include exemption from educational obligations. In the event that the applicant, or other team members, is exempted from educational obligations, they will continue to teach at least 0.4 FTE. When exempting from educational obligations, the policy of the institute is followed. The applicant will contact the education director about this prior to submission.

A PhD candidate has an appointment for 4 years and, in addition to conducting research, will also teach, max. 0.2 FTE for an appointment of 1 FTE. A PhD fellow has an appointment for 6 years and, in addition to conducting research, will also teach, max. 0.4 FTE for an appointment of 1 FTE.

**Material costs and other direct research costs** include:

- costs of purchasing/accessing a dataset;
- costs of software and analysis costs;
- costs of experiments that are carried out;
- costs associated with the use of specific equipment required for the research;
- costs of using a laboratory or experiment room;
- costs of consumables that can be directly related to the project;
- costs of compensating participants in the experiment or research (such as travel and accommodation costs);
- costs of participation in a scientific conference (e.g. conference fee, travel and accommodation costs);
- costs of following a course/training (participation costs)
- costs for open access publications

An application round will be organized annually, during which a faculty selection committee for starter grants discusses and assesses the applications. This committee consists of 6 members, 2 from each institute (Institute of Public Administration, Institute of Security and Global Affairs, Leiden University College). The members are appointed for 2 years by the Faculty Board on the recommendation of the Scientific Directors of the institutes. The selection committee is supported by a secretary from the Department of Education and Research Policy and will elect a chairperson from among their number.

For the current round, the financial resources for the starter grants of 2022 and 2023 have been combined. There are 3 grants available for LUC candidates, 5 grants for ISGA, and 7 grants for the Institute of Public Administration.

The applications for the grants are assessed on 3 substantive criteria as well as the budget. The selection committee advises the Faculty Board, which then makes a decision. If there are not enough applications of good quality, the unallocated grants will be transferred to the next year/next application round.

### *Planning and communication*

The call for proposals will be communicated in Dutch and English via the faculty newsletter, the employee website and via the institutes. The institutes can also organize an information session for the employees.

For general questions about the starter grants, applicants can contact their institute manager or the faculty's Research Support Office. For questions about or assistance with drawing up the budget for a starter grant, applicants can contact Project Control of the faculty's FEZ department.

The timeline for the current round (2022-2023) is as follows:

Wednesday 29 March 2023	Publication of the call for applications in the faculty newsletter and on the employee website
April 2023	Information meetings within the institutes (optional)
Monday 15 May 2023	Deadline to submit a complete application for a starters grant via <a href="mailto:research-support@fgga.leidenuniv.nl">research-support@fgga.leidenuniv.nl</a>
Tuesday, May 16, 2023	Faculty RSO will send a confirmation of receipt to all applicants
Week of 29 May 2023	Faculty selection committee meeting and preparation of advice to the Faculty Board
Tuesday, June 6, 2023	Faculty Board adopts advice and determines the allocation of starter grants
Thursday 8 June 2023	Selected assistant professors will be informed by the secretary of the faculty selection committee about the starter grant award; applicants not selected will receive a rejection message with a brief explanation.