Requirements

Longfonds Consortium Grant on Lung Regeneration 2027

Criteria for declarations of intent and full applications | Applicable to the 2027 Funding Round

Bringing together leading researchers in a four-year consortium to accelerate the development of pharmacological interventions that stimulate or enhance the lung's natural repair mechanisms and promote the regeneration of damaged lung tissue.

Longfonds applies the following criteria to determine whether your research proposal is suitable for submission:

1. Project duration and budget

The project duration is four years, with a total budget of €1.2 million available for the consortium.
Applicants must provide a detailed and substantiated budget, demonstrating that the requested resources are appropriate and proportionate to the proposed research activities, work packages, milestones and intended outcomes.
Any financial or in-kind contributions from private partners must be clearly described and distinguished from the funding requested from Longfonds.

2. Consortium composition

The application must be submitted by a consortium consisting of at least two research institutions. The Principal Investigator (PI) must be affiliated with a Dutch research institution.

International research partners are encouraged where they contribute relevant expertise, technologies, facilities or other resources that strengthen the consortium.

The consortium must bring together the complementary expertise required to advance the proposed intervention through preclinical development and prepare for subsequent clinical development.

Depending on the nature of the intervention, this may include expertise in:

- Lung biology and natural lung repair mechanisms;
- Pharmacology and drug development;

- Relevant preclinical models and experimental research;
- Translational research;
- Clinical research and the intended clinical application;
- Regulatory affairs and manufacturing, where relevant.

Applicants must clearly describe the roles, responsibilities and specific contributions of each consortium partner and explain how the combined expertise will support the objectives and development strategy of the project.

3. Research scope

The Longfonds Consortium grant for regeneration of damaged lung tissue supports the development of pharmacological interventions that stimulate or enhance the lung's natural repair mechanisms and promote the regeneration of damaged lung tissue.

To be eligible for funding, the project must focus on the development of a pharmacological intervention aimed at stimulating or enhancing the lung's natural repair mechanisms and promoting the regeneration of damaged lung tissue.

4. Scientific starting position and development stage

At the start of the project, applicants must present a clearly defined research question and a convincing scientific rationale for the proposed intervention, supported by relevant preliminary evidence.

This must include initial proof-of-concept data demonstrating the potential of the intervention to stimulate or enhance the lung's natural repair mechanisms and promote the regeneration of damaged lung tissue.

Applicants must demonstrate that the proposed intervention has sufficient scientific potential to justify further preclinical development.

5. Research requirements and expected outcomes

The proposed research should make substantial progress towards an advanced stage of preclinical development within the four-year funding period. Where feasible, the preclinical development phase should be completed within this period.

The research is expected to:

- Generate robust evidence of efficacy in relevant preclinical models, with a clear rationale for the models used and their translational relevance, including their ability to reflect relevant aspects of human lung biology.
- Improve understanding of the intervention's mechanism of action.
- Address key questions regarding its pharmacological properties, as relevant to the intervention.
- Generate relevant preliminary safety data, where appropriate to the stage and nature of the intervention.

- Establish a clear and substantiated pathway towards subsequent clinical development and testing in humans.

The proposed research should generate the evidence needed to inform further development decisions and support the transition towards clinical application.

6. Development plan and milestones

Applicants must submit a clear, ambitious and realistic development plan demonstrating how the proposed research will advance the intervention towards subsequent clinical development and testing in humans.

The development plan must:

- Describe the current stage of development and the available scientific evidence supporting the intervention.
- Identify the intended clinical application and the patient population expected to benefit.
- Identify the key scientific and development-related uncertainties that remain.
- Explain what evidence and information are needed to support further development towards clinical testing.
- Define clear and measurable milestones for the four-year funding period.
- Describe how the proposed research activities will address the remaining uncertainties and advance the intervention towards clinical application.
- Outline the next steps required after the project to progress towards clinical testing in humans.

The proposed milestones, activities, resources and budget must be aligned with the intended outcomes and the intervention's starting position.

Applicants must demonstrate that substantial progress towards advanced preclinical development is feasible within four years and present a convincing pathway towards subsequent clinical development. The organisation responsible for subsequent clinical development does not necessarily need to be part of the initial consortium.

7. Involvement of private partners

The involvement of private partners, such as pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, is encouraged where relevant to the objectives and development strategy of the project.

Private partners may contribute financially (cash) or in kind, for example through expertise, facilities, technologies or other resources.

The following requirements apply:

- Private partners must contribute using their own resources and are not eligible to receive a direct allocation of the €1.2 million grant budget.
- Their role, responsibilities, contributions and interests within the consortium must be clearly described in the proposal.

- Their contribution to the research strategy and intended outcomes must be explained.
- Their commitment must cover the entire project period.
- Their involvement and contributions must be transparent and consistent with the objectives of the project.

The roles, contributions, responsibilities and interests of all private partners must be formally documented in the consortium agreement. Their contributions must be secured for the entire duration of the research project to ensure continued commitment and prevent premature withdrawal.

All partnerships must comply with Longfonds' requirements regarding transparency, collaboration and intellectual property.

8. Intellectual property and financial return to Longfonds

Any intellectual property arising from the project, as well as any subsequent commercial exploitation of the research results, must be governed by agreements that safeguard Longfonds' interests.
In the event of commercial exploitation, Longfonds is entitled to an appropriate financial return, reflecting its contribution to the project.
The terms and conditions governing intellectual property rights and any financial return to Longfonds must be agreed upon in advance by Longfonds and the consortium partners and explicitly set out in the consortium agreement.

9. Requirements for patient involvement throughout the research process

User committee
The consortium is required to establish and involve a user committee as an integral part of its working structure.

The user committee must bring together a broad range of relevant stakeholders, including:

- People with lung disease and/or patient representatives;
- Respiratory physicians and other relevant healthcare professionals;
- Experts in drug development, healthcare innovation and valorization, where relevant;
- Other stakeholders who can contribute relevant perspectives to the project.

The user committee must provide input throughout the project and advise the consortium on the relevance, potential impact and practical applicability of the research. It should contribute diverse perspectives to key research and development decisions, help ensure that the proposed intervention addresses the needs and priorities of people living with lung disease, and support the translation of research findings towards future clinical application. Applicants must describe the proposed composition of the user committee, its roles and responsibilities, how and when it will be involved, and how its input will be incorporated into the research and development process.

Patient involvement
Patient involvement is expected from the development of the grant application and

throughout the research project.
The following requirements apply:

- People with lung disease and/or patient experts should be involved as early as possible and at relevant stages throughout the project.
- Patient experts should be given the opportunity to contribute in different roles, such as co-thinkers and advisors, depending on the needs and phase of research.
- Researchers must provide patient experts with appropriate information and support at the start of the project and throughout their involvement. Expectations and responsibilities should be discussed and agreed upon.
- Research progress and relevant information must be communicated in accessible language.
- Expenses incurred by patient experts for their participation must be reimbursed. These costs must be included in the projectbudget.

Applicants must describe how people living with lung disease and/or patient representatives have contributed to the development of the proposal and how their involvement will continue during the project. They should explain how patient experiences and perspectives will contribute to the relevance, quality and societal value of the research.
The user committee may provide an important structure for patient involvement, but applicants should clearly describe how meaningful patient input will be ensured throughout the project.

10. Data management

A data management paragraph must be included in the full grant application.
Applicants are expected to consider, before the start of the research, how the data to be collected will be organized and categorized to enable them to be made freely available. In many cases, measures will need to be taken before data are generated and analyzed to ensure that they can be stored and shared at a later stage.
If not all data generated during the project can be made publicly available, for example due to privacy, ethical or valorization considerations, applicants must explain and justify this in the data management paragraph.