

Order of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of 12 July 2021, no. Min-BuZa.2021.8511-33, laying down administrative rules and a ceiling for grants awarded under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 (Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities)

The Minister of Foreign Affairs;

Having regard to articles 6 and 7 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grants Decree;

Having regard to article 5.1 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006;

Orders:

Article 1

The administrative rules appended as an annexe to this Order apply to grants awarded under article 5.1 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 within the framework of the Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities, with a view to financing activities in the areas of flood prevention and water security, which combat the impact of COVID-19.

Article 2

A grant ceiling of €500,000 applies to grants awarded under the Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities from the date on which this Order enters into force up to and including 31 December 2021.

Article 3

Eligibility for grants under the Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities is limited to organisations that have already been awarded a grant in previous rounds of the Sustainable Water Fund.¹

Article 4

Applications for grants under the Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities can be submitted from the date on which this Order enters into force until 15:00 (CEST) on 27 August 2021, using the form made available by the Minister and accompanied by the documents stipulated in the form.²

Article 5

The available funds referred to in article 2 will be allocated in accordance with an assessment based on the criteria set out in the annexe to this Order, on the understanding that, of the applications that meet the criteria, those that meet them best will be given priority.

Article 6

This Order enters into force on the day after the date of the Government Gazette in which it appears and lapses with effect from 1 January 2022, with the proviso that it continues to apply to grants awarded prior to that date.

¹ Order of the Minister for European Affairs and International Cooperation of 21 March 2012, no. DJZ/BR/0311-2012, laying down administrative rules and a ceiling for grants awarded under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 (Sustainable Water Fund (FDW)), Government Gazette 2012, no. 6036; Order of the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of 27 February 2013, no. MinBuza DME/MW/2014.88626, laying down administrative rules and a ceiling for grants awarded under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 (Sustainable Water Fund (Second Call)), Government Gazette 2014, no. 6294; Order of the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of 18 July 2016, no. IGG-2016.380605, laying down administrative rules and a ceiling for grants awarded under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 (Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme), Government Gazette 2016, no. 44953; Order of the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of 25 September 2017, no. MINBUZA-2017.1033708, laying down a ceiling for grants awarded under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 (Second call of the Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme), Government Gazette 2017, no. 55384.

² <https://english.rvo.nl/subsidies-programmes/sustainable-water-fund-fdw>.

This Order and its accompanying annexe will be published in the Government Gazette.

K. van der Heijden
Director-General for International Cooperation
For the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Annexe

1. Background

The Sustainable Water Fund (FDW) contributes to the implementation of the Dutch agenda for aid, trade and investment (set out by a previous government in 'A World to Gain', published in April 2013). Problems relating to flood safety and water security are complex and often involve wide-ranging interests. As a result solutions cannot usually be provided or funded by a single organisation. That is why the Sustainable Water Fund (FDW) encourages the formation of public-private partnerships (PPPs), made up of public bodies, businesses, NGOs and knowledge institutions. By combining their individual strengths they can develop innovative and sustainable solutions to water-related problems.

The FDW funding rounds³ held in 2012, 2013/14, 2016/17 and 2017/18 aimed to encourage:

- partnerships with projects that will have a stronger sector-wide impact;
- projects that contribute more strongly to the following policy themes: sustainability (including climate-related issues), inclusion of vulnerable groups, and women's economic independence;
- projects that provide businesses with the opportunity to undertake activities on the interface of the public and private domains;
- a more balanced project portfolio in terms of the FDW themes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly had a negative effect on the locations where FDW-funded projects are being carried out, and on the intended beneficiaries – vulnerable groups, low-income households and small enterprises (including farmers).

Support is therefore available for existing FDW partnerships to implement new activities aimed at mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on these beneficiaries.

2. Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities

The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly had a negative effect on the beneficiaries of FDW projects. This can be counteracted by using existing FDW partnerships to reduce the spread and impact of COVID-19 at the project locations, with a focus on vulnerable groups and low-income households.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs has therefore decided to make additional funding available for current FDW grant recipients to carry out new activities with a view to helping to mitigate the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the intended beneficiaries of FDW projects (hereinafter: projects that support opportunities). From the date on which this policy framework enters into force up to and including 31 December 2021, a total of €500,000 will be available for this purpose, with a maximum of €100,000 per project.

Grants are intended specifically for new activities that can help mitigate the consequences of COVID-19 for the target groups of FDW projects and that will deliver a positive impact on the partnership and the envisaged beneficiaries (with a focus on low-income households and vulnerable populations).

³ Order of the Minister for European Affairs and International Cooperation of 21 March 2012, no. DJZ/BR/0311-2012, laying down administrative rules and a ceiling for grants awarded under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 (Sustainable Water Fund (FDW)), Government Gazette 2012, no. 6036; Order of the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of 27 February 2013, no. MinBuza DME/MW/2014.88626, laying down administrative rules and a ceiling for grants awarded under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 (Sustainable Water Fund (Second Call)), Government Gazette 2014, no. 6294; Order of the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of 18 July 2016, no. IGG-2016.380605, laying down administrative rules and a ceiling for grants awarded under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 (Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme), Government Gazette 2016, no. 44953; Order of the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of 25 September 2017, no. MINBUZA-2017.1033708, laying down a ceiling for grants awarded under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 (Second call of the Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme), Government Gazette 2017, no. 55384.

The allocation of the available funds will take place by means of a call for proposals. After the deadline for submitting applications has passed, all applications received on time will be assessed as they stand against the qualitative criteria set out in chapter 6 of the grant policy framework and will be ranked according to their score on this assessment. Applications must score at least 60 points on the qualitative criteria in order to be eligible for a grant under the Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities. The applications that best meet the criteria will be given priority in the award of grants. The Minister will award grants in accordance with this ranking until the available budget is exhausted.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs has mandated the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) to implement the grant programme.

3. Organisations that qualify for a grant

Eligibility for a supplementary grant is limited to organisations (lead parties) that were awarded a grant in one of the previous FDW funding rounds⁴ for activities that have not yet been completed. They can receive a supplementary grant on top of the grant already awarded to them.

The provisions of the General Administrative Law Act, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grants Decree and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grant Regulations 2006 are fully applicable to the assessment of applications and the award of grants. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the above legislation and the criteria set out in these administrative rules.

4. Eligible activities

Grants for projects that support opportunities are intended for new activities, consisting of medium-sized adjustments to supply chains and production units in order to boost water and hygiene capacity at the project locations. The aim is to use existing project capacity, particularly in relation to water, sanitation and hygiene, to better protect the beneficiaries against COVID-19. Examples include enhancing water points with extra hygiene products, or producing products that prevent or reduce the spread of coronavirus. The activities must be new and pursue new results, and be implemented using the project's existing capacity.

The activities must also be realistic (both in the local context and to the partnership's original plans) and have impact. The activities must be tangible and contribute to the protection and safety of project results, as well as mitigation of the negative effects of COVID-19 on the FDW project. This must lead to the formulation of new intended results, supplementing the intended results of activities for which a grant has already been awarded. In other words, activities for which an FDW grant has already been awarded and which were delayed or have not yet been implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic are not eligible for a grant from the Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities.

5. Threshold criteria

To qualify for a supplementary grant in the framework of the Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities, the application must at least satisfy the following criteria:

1. The application is submitted by the lead party of a partnership that is currently implementing a project which receives funding from the FDW and which has a remaining duration of at least 9 months on 1 September 2021.
2. The application concerns activities aimed at combating the impact of COVID-19 on the beneficiaries of the FDW project.
3. The applicant must have a track record of implementing similar interventions.
4. The application must not concern the implementation of activities for which an FDW grant has already been awarded, and other funding is not already available for the proposed activities.
5. The proposal must demonstrate that any hardware (machines and equipment) necessary for the supplementary activities will be used sustainably and properly maintained.

⁴ See footnote 3.

6. The supplementary activities will end no later than 1 June 2022.

Applications that do not meet all of these criteria will be rejected.

6. Assessment criteria

Applications for a supplementary grant will be ranked based on the outcome of an assessment against the criteria set out in this chapter. Applications must score at least 60 points in order to be eligible for a grant under the Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities. The applications that best meet the criteria will be given priority in the award of grants.

Applications can attain a maximum score of 100 points.

Assessment criteria	Projects that support opportunities
1. <i>Description of impact of COVID-19</i> The extent to which the COVID-19 crisis has affected the intervention, partners, results and beneficiaries.	10
2. <i>Relevance and feasibility</i> The extent to which the supplementary activities are relevant and feasible in the context of the intervention and the project location.	10
3. <i>Expected impact</i> The extent to which the activities are expected to successfully alleviate or reduce the negative effects of the COVID-19 crisis.	35
4. <i>Status of the ongoing FDW project</i> The extent to which the ongoing FDW project is already achieving success; the results that have already been achieved.	35
5. <i>Size of and support for the target groups</i> The extent to which the activities help to reduce and alleviate the negative effects of the COVID-19 crisis on the beneficiaries, with a special focus on vulnerable groups, low-income households and small enterprises (including farmers).	10

7. General requirements that applications must meet

Applications must be submitted using the form supplied to potential applicants by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) for this purpose. The form must be accompanied by the documents specified in it, in the format prescribed by RVO.⁵

Applications for a project that supports opportunities must set out a detailed plan, not exceeding 10 A4 pages, containing the following information:

- Brief description of the status of the ongoing FDW project;
- Brief description of the proposed new activities, describing in any case:
 - their desired and expected results, clearly and precisely, for the partnership and for the intended services/products for the beneficiaries;
 - the expected impact and synergy between the capacity of the partners and local needs;
 - longer-term potential in terms of results and expected impact, taking account of how the intervention will be deployed after the project ends;
 - any risks, and a plan to mitigate those risks;
 - synergy between the capacity for public-private partnership and local needs;
 - partners' budgeted costs and if applicable, activities to be carried out and costs to be incurred by any third parties involved, as well as an activity plan;

⁵ <https://english.rvo.nl/subsidies-programmes/sustainable-water-fund-fdw>.

- A completed COVID-19 Risk Management Tool (CRMT) form or a similar report of the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and mitigation measures.

The lead party and other partners must also declare that they are aware of and will comply with the OECD Guidelines (<http://mneguidelines.oecd.org/guidelines/>) and that the activities for which a grant is being requested are not listed in the FMO Exclusion List (<http://www.fmo.nl/exclusion-list>).

The deadline for submitting grant applications is 15:00 CEST on Friday 27 August 2021. The complete application, including appendices, must be *received* by RVO before this deadline.

With regard to the application procedure, particular attention is drawn to article 7, paragraph 3 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Grants Decree. If an incomplete application is submitted, the Minister may request a supplement. In this case, the date of receipt of the application will be the date on which the supplement to the application is received, which should in any case be no later than 15:00 CEST on 27 August 2021. The shorter the time remaining between submission of the application and the deadline, the greater the risk that, if the application is incomplete, the Minister will not use her discretionary powers to request a supplement; this in connection with the time required to check all applications are complete. In this case, no supplement will be requested and the application will be assessed as it stands. This may lead to a lower ranking or even rejection of the application.

When filling in the form, it is not sufficient to refer for the sake of brevity to other parts of the application, websites or annexes, unless the application form states that this is wholly or partly acceptable. Incomplete applications may be rejected.

Applications should preferably be submitted in digital form (by email, no larger than 10 MB), with the subject line 'Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities: grant application', no later than 15:00 CEST on Friday 27 August 2021 to the Netherlands Enterprise Agency: fdw@rvo.nl.⁶

Written applications should be addressed to: Netherlands Enterprise Agency, Postbus 93144, 2509 AC Den Haag, the Netherlands, with reference to 'Supplementary Sustainable Water Fund Grant Programme for COVID-19 Activities – New Opportunities: grant application'. RVO's visiting address: Prinses Beatrixlaan 2, Den Haag.⁷

⁶ The time at which the email is received on the RVO server will be considered the time of submission. Please note that the email system will reject files larger than 10MB. Larger files should be split up into smaller files that are sent in separate emails. In this case, the time at which the last email is received will be considered the time the application is submitted. If an application is split into several files which are each sent separately by email, the emails must be numbered, with both the email number and the total number of emails clearly indicated in the subject line (e.g. 'email 1 of 5', 'email 2 of 5', etc.). Any technical issues relating to electronic submission are at the applicant's own cost and risk.

⁷ If an application is sent by standard post instead of registered post, the sender bears the risk of it being received late or not at all. Applications sent by post (apart from those using a 'postage paid' envelope) and postmarked on a date before the application deadline are considered to have been submitted on time, provided they are received no later than one week after the deadline for applications has passed. Applications sent by post using a 'postage paid' envelope are considered to have been submitted on time if they are delivered to the Ministry before 15:00 CEST on Friday 27 August 2021. An item is not considered received until it has been recorded by the Ministry's mail department. Incoming mail is not recorded in the evenings or at weekends.