

## GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS CALL 2022 FOR JOINT SCIENTIFIC MOBILITY PROJECTS NSFC – FWO

**From April 6<sup>th</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022**, the call is open for two-year joint mobility projects between research groups from China and Flanders in the framework of the Cooperative Programme developed by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO).

The proposals should meet the usual requirements for scientific research quality and meet the specific requirements for scientific cooperation projects of the funding organisation (FWO / NSFC) they are submitted to. **Please be aware that the guidelines as stated in this document are to be respected by the Flemish research team(s)**. For specific guidelines for the Chinese research team(s), we kindly refer to [the NSFC website](#) and the NSFC contact person (see below, section IX).

### I. Objectives

To strengthen collaboration in scientific research between China and Flanders, by funding joint scientific mobility projects with a **duration of two years**.

### II. Scientific Areas

The call is open for **fundamental research** in all fields of natural sciences and medical sciences. More precisely:

- Mathematical & physical sciences
- Chemical sciences
- Life sciences
- Earth sciences
- Engineering & material sciences
- Information sciences
- Management sciences
- Health sciences

Project proposals within humanities and/or social sciences are not eligible.

For more information please consult: [https://www.nsf.gov.cn/english/site\\_1/about/9.html](https://www.nsf.gov.cn/english/site_1/about/9.html) and <https://www.nsf.gov.cn/publish/portal0/tab1166/>.

### III. Eligibility requirements

A joint scientific mobility project means a program agreed between two or more research groups of both scientific communities (China and Flanders), with clearly defined objectives to be achieved within the established timeframe, implemented through the exchange of scientists and experts between both communities.

Projects must be endorsed by the Principal Investigators (PI's) (one Chinese and one Flemish) duly authorized to conduct research and providing the guarantees on the operational (financial) resources.

In Flanders: PI's are required to have a PhD degree and they must hold, throughout the entire period of the project, an appointment of at least 50% at:

- a university in the Flemish Community (including the academic programmes within the corresponding association), or to
- a federal or Flemish scientific institute as scientific staff of the Dutch-speaking community, or to
- a university hospital in the Flemish Community as scientific staff, or to
- a hospital with an academic character recognized as research center in the Flemish Community as scientific staff.

### **Good practices in international collaboration**

The FWO is keen on promoting international collaboration as a driver for excellence. However, a number of risks and challenges are present when collaborating internationally, regardless of the foreign funding partner. In order to safeguard fundamental values and avoid dual-use or military applications and to avoid breaches of academic freedom, integrity and ethics, the FWO is compelled to take some additional measures, also in its calls for joint mobility projects.

For the 2022 call for joint NSFC-FWO mobility projects, **Flemish research teams are obliged to consult their Research Coordination Office (or equivalent)**, before preparing their application, to learn more about the specificities of this particular call.

- In China:
  - Chinese PI's must have a senior academic rank (title) or a PhD degree, or a recommendation from two researchers who are in the same research field and have a senior academic rank (title).
  - Chinese applicants should already have an ongoing NSFC grant and there should be at least one year of overlap. For example: if the NSFC-FWO joint mobility project starts on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2023, the ongoing NSFC project should at least run until the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2023.
  - All the members of the Chinese research team (including the Chinese PI) have to be already members of an ongoing NSFC project that at least runs until the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2023.
  - Please consult the [NSFC call document](#) (only available in Chinese) for more specific details. Further announcements like “eligible proposal announcement” and “funded proposal announcement” will be at <http://bic.nsf.gov.cn/Show.aspx?CI=41>.

#### IV. Submission procedure

Applications should be **submitted simultaneously** to NSFC by the researcher(s) in China and to FWO by the researcher(s) in Flanders, respecting the submission deadline and by using the respective application forms of the Parties. **Lack of submission of the application to one of the Parties and/or reception after the deadline will cause the application to be considered ineligible.** Please note that the title, names of the Flemish and Chinese PIs, project description, methodology, work packages, etc. in the research proposal submitted by the Flemish and Chinese PI should be identical.

Each PI shall submit the duly completed form according to the regulations of each party:

- The Flemish research group should submit the form '*Application for joint mobility projects*' (to be found on the FWO website) to [interprog@fwo.be](mailto:interprog@fwo.be). Visits must be indicated in the application form, duly justified, including their duration, the estimated dates and names of the involved researchers.
- The Chinese research group should submit the project proposal and the project members' CV through the [online NSFC system](#) as well as the form '*Exchange programme agreement*', signed between the Chinese and Flemish PIs.
- **Please be aware:** all members of the Chinese and Flemish research teams (PIs as well as researchers/students who will perform the exchanges) should have or create an account on the [FWO e-portal](#) and keep their publication list up to date.

#### V. Exchange visits

**In the framework of two-year NSFC-FWO mobility projects, each Flemish PI can apply for an annual exchange quota of maximum 7 weeks for his/her entire research team (duly justified).** The unused exchange quota cannot be carried forward to the following year. The exchange quota can be altered every year according to the financial possibilities of FWO.

In addition, according to the internal regulations of NSFC, each allocated mobility project will receive a fixed total funding amount of 100,000 RMB for two years that can be used for international travel expenses of the Chinese researcher(s) and accommodation and living expenses of the Flemish researcher(s).

Since the individual missions need to obtain an approval from both Parties, in the course of the mobility project, the PI's shall present appropriate exchange files to their respective institution (FWO or NSFC). In order to obtain such a separate approval for the requested missions:

- In case of a granted project, the involved Flemish researcher needs to notify the FWO (through [interprog@fwo.be](mailto:interprog@fwo.be)) about his/her departure and stay abroad by using the '*Notification for a stay abroad*' form (to be found [on the FWO website](#)) at least two months before the actual exchange will take place. This request should include an invitation letter of the host institution of the receiving country.
- The Chinese PI is not required to submit any files to NSFC before the actual exchange will take place.

## VI. Financial provisions

The funding within the frame of granted NSFC-FWO mobility projects shall be used to cover the travel, accommodation and living expenses. Both Parties agree to immediately approve the funding for the complete two-year duration of the mobility project. Missions shall be funded as follows:

- The sending Party covers the travel costs from the city of departure to the city of destination as well as the return travel costs.
- For the Chinese researcher(s) travelling to Flanders, FWO foresees a daily living allowance of € 50 (or max. € 1,300 per month) + reimbursement of accommodation expenses.
- NSFC provides a fixed total amount of funding per mobility project for a fixed period of years, namely 100,000 RMB for 2 years. This funding can be used for the international travel costs of the Chinese researcher(s) and the accommodation and living expenses of the Flemish researcher(s). The amount of 100,000 RMB for 2 years is fixed and cannot be increased.

These amounts may be altered if necessary with the consent of both Parties. Daily allowances are provided to the researchers at the beginning of their stay in the host country.

<i>Type of support</i>	<i>For Flemish researchers travelling to China</i>	<i>For Chinese researchers travelling to Flanders</i>
Airfare tickets	In charge of FWO according to its internal regulations. Tickets are to be booked through <a href="#">a travel agency authorized by the FWO</a> (Uniglobe South West Travel and Omnia Travel).	In charge of NSFC according to its internal regulations.
Accommodation and living expenses	In charge of NSFC according to its internal regulations.	In charge of FWO according to its internal regulations. A daily allowance of € 50 for domestic travel and other costs, with a maximum of € 1,300 per month. In addition, accommodation expenses will be reimbursed.

During their travel and stay abroad, all researchers (from the Flemish as well as from the Chinese research teams) involved in an allocated NSFC-FWO mobility project and independent of nationality, can rely on a **travel and assistance insurance** ('reis- en bijstandsverzekering') and repatriation covered by FWO. This insurance is not a health insurance. Regardless of the aforementioned insurance, all researchers should have a valid health insurance entitling the holder to free emergency medical treatment in the host country.

The responsibility for the provision of adequate **insurance against accidents** that may occur during the stay in the host country ('arbeidsongevallenverzekering') **rests with the research institution to which the researcher stays affiliated** during the joint scientific mobility project. The research institution to which the researcher is travelling, shall provide the visitor with all indispensable organisational assistance in situations requiring such steps.

## VII. Evaluation criteria

**At Flemish side**, the evaluation criteria for regular research projects are considered, yet with special attention for:

- Scientific quality of the proposal
  - Expected impact/importance
  - Originality
  - Feasibility
  - Focus
  - Methodology
- Scientific track record, output and other impact of the applicants (Flemish and Chinese)
- Collaboration of research teams
  - Added value of the collaboration
  - Complementarity of the research teams involved
  - Balanced contribution of research teams involved
  - Necessity of planned stays and exchanges

**At Chinese side**, the evaluation criteria that apply are the following:

- Relationship with the ongoing projects
- Role in creating cooperation
- Feasibility of exchange plan
- Justification of budget
- Expected results of cooperation

## VIII. Timetable

- April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022: launch of the call
- **June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022: deadline for applications**
  - **At NSFC: submission possible until 4 pm Beijing time**
  - **At FWO: submission possible until 5 pm Belgian time**
- July-October 2022: evaluation procedure
- October-November 2022: final joint decision on the funded mobility projects
- November-December 2022: communication of the results
- January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023: start of the joint mobility projects

**IX. Contact details**

Contact information at the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC):

Division for European Affairs  
Bureau of International Cooperation

**Mr. Xu Jin**

Program Manager  
Tel: +86-10-6232-5351  
[xujin@nsfc.gov.cn](mailto:xujin@nsfc.gov.cn)

Contact information at the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO):

Department International Affairs

**Tinne Jacobs**

Advisor International Affairs  
Tel: +32 2 550 15 44  
[Tinne.Jacobs@fwo.be](mailto:Tinne.Jacobs@fwo.be)

**Account administrators international mobility**

Tel: +32 (0)2 550 15 92  
[interprog@fwo.be](mailto:interprog@fwo.be)