Flanders: A haven for top scientists
Clever with head and hands, creative and innovative. Odysseus knew how to tackle a problem. He found his way out of every challenge or difficulty. Talents that did confine him to twenty years of roaming the seas before he finally arrived home.

Flanders will not waste so much time waiting for its brightest brains. The Odysseus programme invites the protagonists of modern science to come to and work in a region that has top researchers plenty to offer.
The odyssey of the top scientists: a quest for scientific discovery.

The odyssey of the top scientists is a long voyage along the world's best institutes and institutions. It is not only a quest exploring the boundaries of modern science, but also a search for the necessary means to conduct research optimally, for an inspiring and motivating environment in which they can explore new ground – together with fellow specialists in the same research area.
for the perfect environment to conduct their research.

On their wanderings, 'brain port' Flanders will hold a great attraction for top researchers. Fientje Moerman, Vice-Minister-President of the Flemish Government and Flemish Minister for Economy, Enterprise, Science, Innovation and Foreign Trade took the initiative to offer the world's best researchers, and people with high potential to become so, a position at a Flemish university, where they will be able to fully devote their attention to their work.

The FWO (Research Foundation – Flanders) provides the initial funding for a period of five years. The money allows the scientists to develop a research group or project. Thus, they create their own working environment, an ideal framework in which they can fully unfold their talents and establish themselves permanently as pioneers at the top of the scientific research world. Flanders is a haven for top science, a knowledge center in Europe.

Living and working in the heart of Europe

Living and working in Flanders means coming to the heart of Europe, to a region with a rich academic tradition. All main European institutions are located within a stone's throw. Here, fundamental research is inextricably bound up with innovation and economic trade. Flanders is a prosperous region in which a social economy has provided high living standards, an ideal place to devote yourself fully to your research work in an enjoyable living environment.
Flanders as a knowledge centre

Knowledge and knowledge development are crucial for Flanders as a region. That is why the Flemish government is fully committed to support and stimulate fundamental scientific research. Odysseus offers top scientists the ideal framework to practise their discipline. Three points of particular interest form the foundations for the Odysseus programme.

• an attractive position
To attract the best people, you need to offer security. And that is exactly what Flanders does. Each scientific Odysseus will be offered an important and secure position at a Flemish university in accordance with his or her qualifications.

• good infrastructure
Depending on the discipline, equipment and infrastructure are indispensable to work at the very top level. Flanders will provide for the optimal infrastructure within the university.

• sufficient means
The university pays for the top scientists’ wages, which means that the entire Odysseus funding is at the disposal of the science itself: the start-up, expansion or reconstitution of the research group, the necessary equipment and everything that is needed to work optimally. The researchers determine autonomously how the means are spend.
For which scientists has Odysseus been brought to life?

- Top scientists, internationally recognised as prominent in their field, occupying a position at a university abroad. They lead a research team with a permanent staff, various postdoctoral researchers and a number of PhD students (Type I).

- Researchers with international prominence potential. They have occupied a postdoctoral position abroad for at least three years and convinced prominent scientists in their field of their talents and abilities to become an internationally leading scientist (Type II).

The award

For type I scientists the total value of a project will range from 400,000 to 1,500,000 EUR per year (2,000,000 to 7,500,000 EUR for a five year period). The researchers of type II can count on 100,000 to 200,000 EUR per year (500,000 to 1,000,000 EUR for a five year period).

The application process

The Flemish universities will select the candidates. They introduce scientists worldwide to Odysseus. The application has to be submitted to the FWO (Research Foundation – Flanders), which will appoint an international, multidisciplinary jury, complemented with experts depending on the discipline. It is the jury that evaluates whether a scientist can be allowed to the programme.
For more information, the complete application process and all regulations you can contact one of the Flemish universities or the FWO (Research Foundation – Flanders).

All documents are available on www.fwo.be.