

# Dekker Grants

## *Established Investigator*

The Established Investigator grant enables cardiovascular researchers to expand their research group and strengthen their research. In opposition to the Clinical Established Investigator, this grant specifically focuses on scientists who do not wish to combine research with clinical care. This grant increases opportunities for researchers to become appointed as professors. For young professors with a temporary position, this grant contributes to maintaining and strengthening their position.

*Brochure 2023*

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## 1. Mission of the Dutch Heart Foundation (DHF)

The Dutch Heart Foundation (DHF) is a charity aiming to improve heart health in the Netherlands. The DHF relies on funds from the general public and works together with scientists, medical doctors, patients, and many volunteers to find solutions for early detection and better treatment of cardiovascular diseases. The DHF funds research and innovation while providing support and information to patients and the general public. Our mission is a healthy heart for everyone - now and in the future.

To achieve this, the DHF has developed a research policy that focuses on making societal impact. We strive to stimulate high-quality research in the Netherlands, commit talented researchers to the cardiovascular research field, and strengthen collaborations between researchers and patients. In addition, through strategic collaborations we aim to attract additional resources for cardiovascular research.

Our research agenda is the core of our research strategy. The five research areas we focus on are:

- earlier recognition of cardiovascular disease;
- cardiovascular disease in women;
- better treatment for heart failure and arrhythmias;
- acute treatment of stroke;
- new ways to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

To achieve these goals, the DHF collaborates with the 22 partners within the Dutch CardioVascular Alliance (DCVA; <https://www.dcvalliance.nl>). Our collective goal is to reduce the burden of cardiovascular disease by 25% by 2030. Our main priority is to accelerate research outcomes for the benefit of patients. The participants of the DCVA are working towards this goal by investing in excellent science, valorisation and implementation, talent development and data infrastructure. The DCVA supports cardiovascular researchers in knowledge sharing, expanding networks, and offering guidance, training and support for data infrastructure, valorisation and implementation.

## 2. Dekker program

The Dekker program is the personal grant program of the DHF. The aim of this program is to attract talented researchers, engage them with the cardiovascular field and connect them to the DHF. The Dekker program enables researchers to pursue an academic career and start or strengthen their independent line of research.

The Dekker program is open to researchers from various disciplines. Both clinical and preclinical researchers contribute to reducing the cardiovascular disease burden. Technical innovations, behavioral studies, epidemiological studies, new therapeutics and improved diagnostics all play a vital role, therefore we invite everyone to apply. It is not a requirement that applications fit within the themes of the DHF's research agenda. If you are unsure whether your proposal is a good fit, please contact us.

Within the Dekker program, a distinction is made between grants for researchers with and without clinical duties. There is one selection round per year for each Dekker fellowship. Exceptions to this are the Clinical Established Investigator and Established Investigator fellowships, for which there is a selection round every other year. The Dekker student grant is provided for candidates who are nominated by their university. The Dekker program does not provide specific grants for doctoral training.

### Dekker fellowships for excellent researchers

#### → clinical researchers



#### → non-clinical researchers



### 3. Conditions for submission

#### Target group and aims

The Established Investigator grant enables cardiovascular researchers who are not, or in training to become, medical specialists to expand their research group and further strengthen their research. This grant increases opportunities for researchers to become appointed as professors. For young professors with a temporary position (maximum of 2 years after appointment), this grant contributes to strengthening and maintaining their position.

*In 2023, one Established Investigator fellowship will be available.*

#### Finances

This grant offers financial support for personnel and other research costs for a maximum period of 5 years.

#### *Size of the grant*

The total sum that can be requested is € 779,451.00 for a project with a duration of 5 years.

#### *Costs for personnel*

The maximum amount that can be requested for personnel is € 679,451.00. This can be used to appoint the following personnel:

- A PhD student (category A of F)
- A postdoc (category B)
- Supporting personnel (category C of D)
- Non-scientific personnel, academic (category E)

In the budget sheet you can describe planned personnel and other costs, and find the used personnel categories described above. These costs should be summarised under '*Description of Work*'. Please note you cannot file costs for personnel that are already covered by other grants and/or subsidies.

#### *Other costs*

A maximum of € 100,000.00 can be requested in total. Please specify in the budget sheet what this will be used for. If you have any question regarding the budget sheet, please contact us.

Only specific costs for the execution of the research project can be requested. The following costs would **not** qualify:

- Apparatus (computers, analysing machines).
- General (laboratory) facilities (overhead) and the resulting costs.
- Costs including METc – CCD requests, education costs, travel expenses or personnel.
- Publication costs.

#### Contribution to working visit and travel expenses

##### *Working visit*

For a working visit, additional funding can be requested with a maximum of € 10,000.00. The visit should be for a period of at least 2 weeks and a maximum of 6 months, which can be divided into multiple short visits. The DHF provides international travel expenses, specifically funds for a hotel or the rent of a room/apartment. Support is not provided for other costs related to the stay (e.g., food or drinks) or local travel costs. A working visit should be incorporated into the application, including a letter of invitation from the hosting institute.

### Conferences

Costs related to attendance of a conference can be applied for separately through the dr. W. Stiggelbout-program and do not have to be incorporated in the application. More information about working visits and conferences can be found at: <https://professionals.hartstichting.nl/samenwerking-en-financiering/financiering/beurzen-voor-aanvullende-kosten>.

### Contribution institute applicant

Through the Dekker grants, the DHF supports the development of talented researchers within the cardiovascular field. The DHF believes talented researchers should also be supported by their own institute. This is not only important for the scientific and/or clinical career of the applicant but also strengthens the cardiovascular research climate. What's more, being embedded within your institute is taken into account during the selection process for this grant.

In your application, describe how your institution supports your research project. This can be illustrated by your institution providing personnel, contributing to equipment costs or offering specific training that encourages professional development. If you or your research project are not supported by the institution, please outline this in your application under *description of work*.

## 4. Criteria and conditions

To create a fair and transparent process, in accordance with the scientific advisory board, the DHF has developed list of criteria and conditions which all Dekker grant applicants must comply with. These have been carefully formulated and are based on the most common clinical research career paths. If an applicant does not fit within these criteria for example due to an alternative career path, but is a good fit with the mission of the DHF and the Dekker program, please contact the DHF in advance of the application deadline to discuss further. The application will be discussed with the chairman of the scientific advisory board and the applicant may be offered the opportunity to apply.

### Criteria and conditions for the applicant

- If you are not appointed professor, you are eligible if you have obtained your doctoral degree between a minimum of 8 or maximum of 15 years ago. For the Dekker grants of 2023, you have obtained your doctoral degree between 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2008 and 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2015.
- If you are appointed professor, you are eligible if at the moment of application, you have been appointed a maximum of 2 years ago and obtained your doctoral degree a maximum of 15 years ago. For the Dekker grants of 2023, the appointment as professor is after 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2021. The DHF may extend these terms in specific situations with long-term leave such as pregnancy, parental leave, care leave or sickness after the doctoral degree was obtained. If this is the case, discuss this with the DHF at least **6 weeks prior to submission of the application**.
- As of January 2020, the DHF uses the following rules for extension. Extension rules cannot be combined.
  - Biological mothers
    - A maximum of 18 months per child, with a maximum of 36 months in total.
    - The above applies to children born from 6 months before the PhD defense date, the start of medical specialisation or appointment to professor.
  - Other parents
    - A maximum of 6 months per child, with a maximum of 12 months in total.
    - The above applies to children born from 6 months before the doctoral defense date, the start of a medical specialisation or appointment to professor.
  - Long-term care or sickness leave
    - A maximum of 36 months in total.
- You have a permanent position.
- Your research is well embedded within the research programs of the institute where the research will be carried out and the research line has a good scientific infrastructure.

- You have your own research group and supervise PhD students in their doctoral training.
- A proven track record of obtaining funding for research from the second and third flow of funding.
- The list of scientific publications supports why you as applicant are the best fit for this research project.
- You collaborate closely with other researchers and institutions. This is evident from collaborative publications and participation in national and international research projects.
- You are not only an excellent scientific researcher, but also motivated to bring new and innovative cardiovascular research findings to practice and widely implement them.
- Directors of institutions are not eligible for this Dekker grant.

#### **Criteria and conditions for the research project**

- The project focuses on the prevention, early detection or treatment of cardiovascular disease and contributes to reducing the burden of cardiovascular disease.
- The research project is embedded within a well-established research structure and research program of the institute.
- The research project consists of multiple projects that are related to each other.
- You work on the research project for a minimum of 0,2 fte.
- The research project starts 1 month and no later than 6 months after the written granting of the fellowship (mid-January 2024) or the fellowship will expire.
- If METC approval is needed for the research project, the project can only start when the approval has been obtained, which also applies to CCD approval for research projects with laboratory animals. Please take this into account when setting up the research plan. For instance, it is not possible to spend time obtaining the approval during the fellowship if this is the main part of your project. If it is not possible to obtain the approval on time, the DHF has the right to retract the funding.

#### **Criteria and conditions for submission**

- The institute/institutions where you work must confirm a contribution to the research project.
- You can apply to this fellowship up to two times.
- The application should be completed with all requested information. In case your application is lacking essential information, the DHF has the right to reject your application in the selection process.

#### **Conditions for financial support**

The DHF provides funds for projects that are not supported by other funders or parties. The DHF depends on funds from the general public, therefore our policy is also to engage other stakeholders to invest in our mission. Prior to writing the application, please consider whether the DHF is the most appropriate funder for your research project. For example, if you plan to collaborate with a company, it could be that your project could be eligible for public-private financing with resources supplied by Health ~ Holland. If you are unsure as to whether your application is eligible for DHF funding, please contact us. If your application does not fit within the funding criteria, the DHF has the right to reject your application.

## **5. Submission of the research proposal**

#### **Deadline and submission**

The deadline for submission of the Established Investigator Dekker fellowship is Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 14:00.

#### **Submission system Cavaris**

Applications can be submitted using Cavaris ([www.cavaris.nl](http://www.cavaris.nl)), the online application system of the

DHF, which uses a multi-factor authentication login. You can find the manual for Cavaris on <https://gms.cavaris.nl/files/471941/139913/Externe%20handleidingen>. In case of any questions, please contact [research@hartstichting.nl](mailto:research@hartstichting.nl). Cavaris requires you to fill in your personal details before submission can take place. Many fields of the submission are mandatory and specific for a Dekker call, therefore we advise you to create your draft proposal before the submission deadline. If any mandatory field is left empty, your proposal cannot be submitted.

### *General Information*

This section contains general information about the research proposal and applicant. Please upload your CV in PDF format, according to the provided template found under 'Documentation'. As applicant you sign for the application in this section under 'Acceptance Conditions' and confirm that you agree with the conditions.

### *Summary*

Provide an English abstract of your proposal, which will be used by reviewers to determine whether they can assess your application or not. After granting, we will publish this abstract on the DHF professionals website (<https://professionals.hartstichting.nl>). In addition, we will ask you to provide a Dutch layman summary that can be used for public communication and fundraising.

### *Budget*

Please use the excel template which you can download in Cavaris. In this file, you can find a 'tutorial' to help you complete your budget costs. Funding can be provided by the DHF (in cash), the institute (in cash and/or in kind) or private parties. Costs can be divided into personnel costs, other costs, animal studies and working visit. If you have questions or need any help, please contact [research@hartstichting.nl](mailto:research@hartstichting.nl).

### *Impact*

#### Healthcare impact

Please indicate what the relevance of your research project is, in relation to a specific cardiovascular health problem. Please also state if your research includes/does not include patients and the long-term vision for how your project will contribute to improving cardiovascular health.

#### Personal impact

Outside of high-quality scientific research, the DHF believes it is vital to be aware of how your scientific results can help you in your career as researcher. Why should you get this fellowship? And how do you envision your future in the cardiovascular research field?

### *Description of work*

A research proposal should be of high scientific quality and should contribute to the mission of the DHF. In this section, describe the hypothesis and objectives of your project, followed by a detailed description of your research plan. Provide a timeline on how you plan to carry out your research. In addition, outline the statistics you will perform including a power calculation. Your application also requires a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). You can upload supporting figures and references in 'additional uploads' (no more than 3 figures/tables and 2 A4 pages).

### Diversity

The research proposal must include differences in cardiovascular disease between men and women in both sex and gender. The term 'sex' refers to the biological attributes that distinguish male from female and the term 'gender' refers to men and women's socially constructed roles, identities and behaviours. Visit the website <http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/methods-sex-and-gender-analysis.html> for tools that can be used to integrate sex and gender aspects in research applications.



In addition, also consider other aspects of diversity, e.g., age, social background and ethnicity, in all project activities and describe them in the proposal.

#### *Working visit*

If you apply for a working visit abroad (as indicated on the '*General Information tab*'), please describe here which research group will be visited and for how long. Please also indicate the purpose of the working visit and what added value it has for the proposed research. Describe how the working visit contributes to talent development, strengthening lines of research and increasing research impact. Please include the invitation from the host institute as an attachment to the last tab '*Additional uploads*'.

#### *Data management*

Describe how you will collect and analyse data, how you will store the data during and after the project and how the data will be made available for reuse. If using existing data, please describe which data sets you will be using and how this data is reused. After being awarded the fellowship, the researcher will be asked to hand in a Data Management Plan (DMP). The DMP is considered to be a dynamic document and will also be used to monitor progress on data management.

#### *(Pre-)Clinical studies*

If you want to use patients or healthy subjects, indicate how many subjects you wish to include, their sex, what type of intervention is involved and whether an METC permission is required. Similarly, if you plan to use laboratory animals for your study, indicate their species, how many animals and their sex. In addition, describe why this animal model was chosen and why it is necessary to use this model to answer your research question. The DHF values the responsible use of laboratory animals for research purposes. Therefore, indicate which alternatives have been considered (for example an in vitro model or human study) and the reason these alternatives cannot be used. In the last section, please indicate which measures will be taken to reduce the number of laboratory animals needed and to reduce the amount of discomfort for the laboratory animals. In addition, it is important to register research with laboratory animals at the international register: <https://preclinicaltrials.eu>. Legal requirements associated with human-related research and the use of laboratory animals can be found at: <https://professionals.hartstichting.nl/samenwerking-en-financiering/financiering/wettelijke-eisen-voor-onderzoek>.

#### *Route to societal impact*

Indicate what steps you are taking to advance your research results towards societal benefit, what this could mean for healthcare practice in the long term and whether you are using specific knowledge of professionals and patients to inform your work. Describe how you plan to communicate results to professionals and the general public, e.g. strategy, activities and target group. If you involve target groups (including patients, healthcare professionals and other stakeholders), you must also indicate this. Describe how their advice will be incorporated throughout your project from start to finish. If the fellowship is awarded to you, we will support you in increasing its social impact through our workshop 'Social Impact'.

#### *Dissemination*

##### Open Science

The DHF has an Open Access policy to ensure that research data is reusable and reproducible. This focuses on:

- Publishing Open Access: all research articles that arise from DHF funding should be published Open Access so the results are accessible to everyone for free.
- Access to research data: Research data should be reproducible and reusable, and therefore we ask you to pay attention to:
  - Data management: as described above.

- Study registration: prior to starting, researchers are required to register their research project, which applies to both clinical research (e.g. <https://www.clinicaltrials.gov>) and preclinical research (e.g. <https://preclinicaltrials.eu>).
- Data sharing: researchers are – where possible – obliged to make their research data available for reuse according to the international FAIR-principles.

Please find additional information about open science at: <https://professionals.hartstichting.nl/onze-missie/goed-onderzoek/data-en-infrastructuur>.

#### End user involvement

Your research results can be translated to and used by other researchers, healthcare professionals, companies and/or patients. We therefore ask you to consider which people you involve in your research early on and how. The DHF contributed to the development of the Kickstarter, which shows how to engage users of research results at every stage and in every type of research. For more information about participation and the Kickstarter, visit: <https://professionals.hartstichting.nl/samenwerking-enfinanciering/samenwerking/gebruikersparticipatie>

#### *Collaborations*

The Dekker program is a personal fellowship. However, the DHF believes that it is important for researchers to collaborate, which will improve knowledge and expertise and therefore increase the likelihood of project success. When assessing your application, the committee will take into account whether and how you intend to collaborate. Therefore, also indicate how you collaborate with existing research programs (national and international) and what this collaboration consists of. Also consider possible collaboration with DCVA consortia.

#### *Reviewer suggestions*

Provide at least three national and three international reviewers for external review of your application. If you want to exclude any reviewer, please indicate the reason.

#### *Additional uploads*

Please upload the following documents as **PDF**:

- **Mandatory**
  - Letter of recommendation by head of the department.  
This recommendation letter should outline your academic developments within the institute, and if applicable, confirmation of partial exemption for clinical duty.
  - List of publications, that can include all types:
    - Peer review articles in journal (published/accepted/submitted/in press).
    - Letters to the editor, editorials etc.
    - Book chapters.
    - Oral or poster presentations on conferences.
    - Policy documents.
    - Patents.
    - Contribution to guidelines.
    - Popular science publications such as newspaper, or non-scientific journals.
    - Public presentations other than scientific .
- **Optional**
  - Figures in PDF. Provide a maximum of 3 figures/tables on max. 2 A4 pages.
  - Invitation of guest institute for a working visit.

#### **Signing the application**

The application should be signed by the applicant and *Director of Institute*, who has the final responsibility for the implementation and infrastructure of the project and is authorised to sign on

behalf of the institute. By signing the application, the *Director of Institute* endorses and supports the application.

You can invite the *Director of Institute* to sign your application on the left side in the red menu under 'Invitations'. This person will receive an email with an invitation to sign. They must register on our application system to be able to sign. The signing of the application consists of two steps: first the invitation needs to be accepted by *Director of Institute* after which the actual signing takes place. The *Director of Institute* can sign at any time while the application is being written and does not have to wait until the application is fully ready to submit. The *Director of Institute* can view the application but cannot change it. You will receive an email notification once all required signers have signed the application.

After completing all fields, and uploading all the necessary documents, you can sign for approval at acceptance conditions. For questions about signing the application, please consult the manual for Cavaris (available via: <https://gms.cavaris.nl/files/471941/139913/External%20manuals>) or contact us at [research@hartstichting.nl](mailto:research@hartstichting.nl).

### **Confirmation of submission**

You will automatically receive a confirmation email when your application has been successfully submitted to the DHF. If this does not happen, your application has not been received by us. In that case, please contact us as soon as possible. Applications cannot be submitted after the deadline and we will not be considered. If you have any problems with submitting your application, please contact us before the deadline via [research@hartstichting.nl](mailto:research@hartstichting.nl) or 070-3155534.

## **6. Procedure**

### **Pre-check on conditions**

Immediately after submission, the DHF will check your application. This includes whether your application is complete and meets the conditions for submission. In case we have questions, we request you to be available to answer queries until Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023. Please let us know in advance if you are not available. You will receive a confirmation of receipt by email whenever your application is complete.

### **Selection procedure**

The selection procedure consists of the following steps:

#### *1. External review*

In consultation with the chair of the scientific committee, the DHF will determine whether your application will be processed. If rejected, the DHF will inform of you this decision. However, in most cases, your application will be forwarded for independent assessment to national and international reviewers. You will receive their feedback after which you will have an opportunity to respond with a point-by-point rebuttal.

#### *2. Online meeting*

Your application, including reviewers comments and rebuttal, are presented to the committee members. For each application, two committee members will carry out a comprehensive review and share their opinion with the other members. Based on this information, the committee will discuss who they wish to invite for an interview. This decision will be made in comparison with other candidates, based on the quality of both the applicant and application, as well as the reviewer comments and rebuttal.

### 3. Interview

During this selection meeting, candidates are invited to present their research proposal to the committee. Afterwards, the committee will discuss the proposal with each candidate. At the end of the selection meeting, the committee advises which candidates are eligible for funding.

### 4. Decision

Selected candidates are presented to the Board of the DHF, which is responsible for allocating grants. After approval by the management team, awarded candidates are informed.

### Composition of Dekker committees

The DHF composed three scientific committees that will assess applications for six different Dekker fellowships. A member of the scientific advisory board of the DHF will chair each committee. These committees consist of scientists working in the Netherlands and are well distributed in expertise and knowledge institutes. If an application requires an expertise that is not present in your committee, the DHF will recruit an additional committee member. You can find the committee members on the DHF professionals website: <https://professionals.hartstichting.nl/samenwerking-en-financiering/financiering/dekkerbeurs-voor-onderzoekers>

### Granting

The final decision for granting is funded on an agreement and funding conditions. These funding conditions can be found on our website <https://professionals.hartstichting.nl/samenwerking-en-financiering/financiering/financieringsvoorwaarden> and can also be found in Cavaris. The research should start within 6 months after the fellowship has been awarded, otherwise the funding will elapse.

### Award ceremony

The DHF strives for a good relationship with Dekker laureates, both during and after the funding period. At the start of 2024, we will invite Dekker laureates of 2023 for a festive official award ceremony during the 'Dekker afternoon'. Families and loved ones are invited to attend. In addition, we may call on you for activities or involve you in DHF meetings or events. Finally, as the DHF, we hope to be able to call on your expertise and rely on your commitment as a reviewer for future grant applications.

### Workshop societal impact in research

The DHF aims for maximal societal impact. Therefore, we believe it is important to consider societal impact right from the beginning of your research project. The DHF invites every laureate to participate in the workshop 'Social impact in research'. This workshop is led by the Committee Societal Quality (CSQ) and takes half a day. This workshop is mandatory for all Dekker laureates. More information about the CMK can be found on the professionals website of the DHF at <https://professionals.hartstichting.nl/onze-missie/goed-onderzoek/maatschappelijke-kwaliteit/commissie-maatschappelijke-kwaliteit-cmk>.

### Provisional timeline

4 <sup>th</sup> of July 2023, 14.00	Submission deadline
July/August	External review
Start September	External review reports sent to applicants for rebuttal
Mid September	Deadline for rebuttal
Mid October	First selection in online meeting by Dekker committee
End of October	Selection interviews
Start November	DHF management meeting
Mid November	Notification of award
	Agreements
January 2024	First start date
6 months after granting	Last start date

## 7. Contact information

### Contact details

In case of any questions about this fellowship, please contact Team Research and Health Innovation: [research@hartstichting.nl](mailto:research@hartstichting.nl). For this call, please contact: Jessie van Wezenbeek [j.vanwezenbeek@hartstichting.nl](mailto:j.vanwezenbeek@hartstichting.nl), 070-3155534.

For technical questions about Cavaris, please contact [Support@Smartsimple.com](mailto:Support@Smartsimple.com).

### Code of conduct

The DHF assumes that you adhere to the following codes of conduct:  
Dutch Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, revised ([version 2018](#))  
Code of Conduct for Health Research ([version January 2022](#))

### Rules and regulations for clinical research

For clinical research, it is mandatory to follow the Basic Course on Regulations and Organization for Clinical Investigators (BROK). For more information, see the NfU website: <https://www.nfu.nl/themas/randvoorwaarden-academic-research/brokr>. We would also like to refer you to the [CCMO website](#). Here you will find everything about rules and regulations regarding clinical research.

### Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

The DHF addresses the importance of an objective decision-making and transparent assessment procedure. Applicants should be able to rely that their proposals will be confidentially treated. To guarantee this, the DHF applies the code of conduct Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest, which can be found on our website (<https://professionals.hartstichting.nl/samenwerking-en-financiering/financiering/gedragscode>).

### Complaints procedure

It is not possible to object to a rejection. If you believe that the procedure regarding your application was not correct, it is possible to submit a complaint. You can submit a complaint up to four weeks after the date of the rejection letter via the complaints form on the DHF website. The complaints procedure can be found on our website (<https://professionals.hartstichting.nl/samenwerking-en-financiering/financiering/klacht-over-de-selectieprocedure>) or requested via [research@hartstichting.nl](mailto:research@hartstichting.nl).