Oncode Institute

Outsmarting cancer
Impacting lives

Oncode Researchers

Synergy Projects

Call 2026

Call for proposals: Oncode Researchers Synergy Projects 2026

Background

At Oncode Institute, our mission is to advance fundamental cancer research and accelerate the translation of discoveries into benefits for patients. Oncode Institute aims to support its researchers by fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration, enabling them to explore bold ideas that push the boundaries of cancer research.

This call for proposals is the first of its kind and is designed to enable Oncode Researchers to explore original concepts and establish new scientific connections. We are looking for projects that are innovative, high-risk, high-gain research ideas that emerge from the synergy between researchers working across different Oncode Institute groups. Through this initiative, Oncode Institute aims to:

1. Fund and support outside-of-the-box ideas that challenge existing paradigms and open new directions in cancer research.
2. Support talented researchers within the Oncode community in developing their independent scientific vision and career.
3. Facilitate new collaborations, across fields of expertise.

Scope

Projects should focus on innovative and curiosity-driven research in the field of cancer research. The call is open to all areas of basic and preclinical cancer research, including the development of novel concepts, technologies, models, tools, or approaches that can advance the field.

Project requirements:

- New initiative; not a continuation or extension of existing work, and would not be feasible to be initiated without this funding opportunity.
- Innovative approach; high-risk, high-gain ideas are encouraged.
- A synergistic approach combining the complementary expertise of different Oncode Institute groups.
- Concrete description of project goal(s) and potential outcomes
- There are no restrictions on research topic or methodology, as long as the project aligns with Oncode's mission to promote excellence and innovation in cancer research.

Call outline

Eligibility criteria

- Proposals must be jointly submitted by 2–3 Oncode Researchers (not Oncode Investigators), each affiliated with a different Oncode Institute group. New collaborations and cross-institute collaborations are preferred.
- Each Oncode Institute group may submit a maximum of 3 proposals.
- As an Oncode Researcher, you may be part of only one project proposal.
- All applicants are Oncode Researcher and hold a position at the time of submission in an Oncode Institute group. Applicants must have this position secured until the project's end date, or applicants may include funding in their budget to extend their position accordingly. This arrangement must be agreed upon in advance with the applicant's group leader (Oncode Investigator).
- Eligible costs include salary, research expenses and services, but not equipment purchases.
- Application needs to be signed for approval by 1) the applicants; 2) the Oncode Investigators of the associated labs, and 3) the financial controllers of each associated department

Funding and duration

- Maximum total budget: €150,000 per project.
- Project duration: 6 to 18 months.
- Projects must commence between July 1st and December 1st, 2026. Projects need to be concluded before 1 January 2028.

Review Process

Process and evaluation criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Aim and ambition:
    - Is the proposed research is based on a well-defined and coherent scientific rationale?
    - Does the project push scientific boundaries?
    - Does the proposal meet all the project requirements as listed in the section 'Scope'?
- Synergy and complementarity of the team
    - Is there a clear synergistic approach?
    - Well described collaboration
- Feasibility
    - Is the project appropriate for the proposed timeframe and budget?

All submitted proposals will be reviewed by the Oncode Research Management Committee (RMC), if needed with support from additional Oncode Investigators. The RMC will assess the scientific quality, novelty, and collaborative nature of the proposals according to the criteria above.

Based on this evaluation, the RMC will provide a funding recommendation to the Oncode Management Board (MB), which will make the final decision on project selection and funding.

Application and deadline

Submission deadline: March 11th 2026, 14h. We expect to be able to communicate the outcome of the call before April 30th 2026.

Template

Applicants must use the templates (provided for the following parts of the application:

A: Description Project (Word template)

Part I:
Description of the project, hypothesis and an explanation of the collaboration.

Part II:
Timelines and budget.

Part III:
CV of each applicant

B: Budget Project (xls template)

Submit your complete proposal via research@oncodeinstitute.nl **before March 11th, 2026, 14h.**