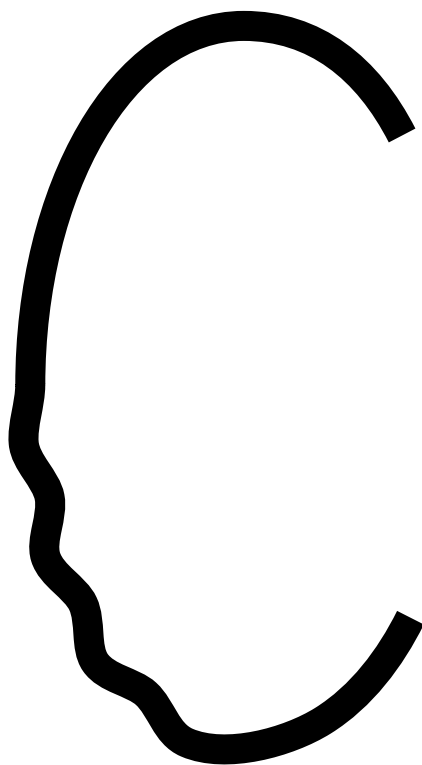


Open Call Regenerative Regions

creative industries fund NL



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This document is a descriptive translation of the original Dutch Open Oproep Regeneratieve Regio's. The English translation is provided for reference purposes only, and in all instances the original Dutch text takes precedence. If you would like to report a translation error or inaccuracy, we encourage you to contact the Creative Industries Fund NL.

In 2050, the Netherlands wants to be climate-neutral and have a circular economy, embedded in a healthy and biodiverse living environment. To reach that future, making our current systems more sustainable will not be enough. Ways of residing, working and living together will need to actively contribute to the well-being of communities and ecosystems and to do so, a new spatial logic needs to be developed; one which respects planetary limits and enables regenerative systems. A logic such as this prioritises well-being over prosperity, carefully uses space and raw materials, prevents the negative effects of this from being shifted on to other places or future generations and adopts the uniqueness of areas as its basis. What do we need to do now to give shape to a regenerative living environment and society, and which spatial choices can we make today to develop bio- and other regions that do justice to well-being, sustainability and regional uniqueness?

The Creative Industries Fund NL invites spatial and other designers to carry out research by design into spatial strategies for regenerative regions in collaboration with parties from other committed sectors. With this open call, the Fund wants to contribute to creating not only ecologically sustainable regions, but regions that are socially just and economically resilient, keeping the goal of a climate-neutral and circular country in 2050 within reach.

in summary

For spatial and other designers who want to carry out research by design into spatial strategies for regenerative regions in collaboration with other parties.

canvas phase

- Closing date: 24 October 2025
- Grant application with project canvas
- Number of grants: a maximum of 26 of € 3,000
- Announcement of selection: Friday 19 December 2025 at the latest

development phase

Only for applicants who have been selected in the canvas phase

- Closing date: 30 January 2026
- Grant application with complete project plan
- Number of grants: a maximum of 14 of € 34,000
- Project period: April to October 2026

follow-up phase

Only for applicants who have completed the development phase

- Closing date: 2 November 2026
- Grant application with complete project plan
- Number of grants: a maximum of 14 of € 44,000
- Project period: January to October 2027

regeneratieve regio's

The 1972 *Limits to Growth* report of the Club of Rome already warned that an economy based on unlimited growth on a finite planet is untenable. The club's researchers showed that continued economic and population growth would inevitably lead to resource depletion, loss of biodiversity and a disruption of ecosystems. Over fifty years later, the consequences of this warning have become reality: climate change,

a decrease in biodiversity, resource scarcity and a growing pressure on the living environment. It is now widely acknowledged that sustainability within the existing growth model is not enough. In other words, we are facing an enormous challenge, as our way of living, working and producing needs to be fundamentally revised.

Considering the scope and complexity of this challenge, conscious choices need to be made now that go beyond gradually making the existing system more sustainable. Naturally, not everything can be tackled all at once, but we do have to start somewhere. With this open call, the Fund wants to stress the urgency and offer scope for new perspectives and design approaches that accelerate and actualise the transition to a regenerative, circular and climate-neutral society. Additionally, this provides leeway for critically questioning the dominant economic model and exploring alternatives that put the well-being of people and nature centre stage.

The focus of this open call is not thematic, since the approach is specific to the area and the urgency, desirability and necessity of themes differ per region. Designers are therefore expected to express their ideas about this explicitly.

who is this open call intended for?

Proposals may be submitted by spatial and other designers who form a relevant coalition with committed parties and stakeholders, such as collaborations with the communities involved or representatives thereof, government bodies, local occupants, cooperatives, farmers and circular entrepreneurs, social organisations, nature management, waterboards, area and project developers, heritage specialists and educational and knowledge institutions.

The application must clearly state which coalition partners are involved and what their contributions are going to be. The Fund encourages you to engage parties with different perspectives and interests, as well as parties that are locally embedded in the region on which the project focusses.

which projects are eligible for a grant?

With this open call, we aspire to support innovative, future-proof projects and problem-solving approaches that contribute to the regeneration of landscapes, natural resources and raw materials and the well-being of communities. Designers and their coalition partners are invited to question existing growth models and explore alternative spatial logics, all the while putting working on social, just, ecologically sustainable and economically resilient regions centre stage. We are looking for proposals that promote a sense of community and collaboration and that openly and transparently share research results and working methods.

Please be aware that the terms of the Open Call Grant Scheme apply to this open call. This means that under this scheme you may not apply for a grant for activities that have already been implemented, nor for any items that will still have a value after the project nor for standard company costs.

three perspectives

To give direction to the research by design within this open call, we are offering three perspectives: *Just Transitions*, *Spatial Logic for Regeneration* and *Working from a Regional Identity*. These perspectives are not meant to be demarcated themes but are to provide a basis for translating the broad ambition of regenerative regions into actual spatial strategies. The perspectives are linked to the three leading principles set out in the *Nota Ruimte*, and they are meant to provide direction in formulating the research by design, but they are expressly not meant to serve as a tied set of rules. Their purpose is to invite you to ask fundamental questions about how we organise space, relationships and value within the spatial and other challenges of our time.

There is, expressly, scope for a personal focus, regional urgencies and experimental approaches within and between the three perspectives, so the design teams need to make their proposal clear about the perspective they are coming from and the scale at which they will operate and how this choice is connected to the challenge addressed. We also ask applicants to explain which one or more perspectives and starting points they will include in the research by design and how they are supported within the coalition, showing the stance the design team takes and how the selected approach contributes to regenerative regions and/or their development.

1. Just Transitions

It is important to keep in mind the division of benefits and burdens in the transition to a climate-neutral and circular Netherlands. This perspective focusses on making the spatial inequality between regions, groups and generations apparent and how this can be repaired, requiring design strategies that are socially just, contribute to wide-ranging prosperity and address various forms of vulnerability. A few examples could be to improve access to land or building land, facilities, mobility and affordable energy. Another important challenge is the region's economic resilience - ways could be paved for new forms of value creation, such as cooperative revenue models, commons and circular supply chains, whilst redesigning ownership structures and control over space and raw materials could at the same time contribute to a more just use of land. Within this perspective, processes in which occupants, social organisations, government bodies and designers work together on not only sustainable but socially supported area-specific transitions are central.

2. Spatial Logic for Regeneration

A regenerative region requires the development of a new spatial logic that puts the capacity of ecosystems central. This logic diverts from the unilateral growth model and explores alternatives in which restoration, reciprocity and multiple value creations are leading. Designers are invited to question existing planning principles and scales, and to explore new spatial systems that function within bio-regional boundaries, considering soil, water and biodiversity not merely as preconditions, but as structural elements of spatial development. Temporariness and rhythm play a part as well, in that they create the ability to think in terms of phases, leave room for repair and for designing strategies that can adapt to ecological and social changes. Within this perspective, combining functions, for example in terms of linking energy generation with food production or water management with nature development, are central.

3. Working from a Regional Identity

Each region has its own landscape, history, social fabric and soil and water system, which are all characteristics and qualities that are at the heart of this perspective. Regenerative design and research by design build on what is already present and carefully connect these qualities to future challenges. Designers are being challenged to delve into the region's specific ecological, cultural and social-economic context, the genius [regionis], and elaborate this by developing area-specific strategies. Opening local recycling centres for materials, energy, food and labour could contribute to more robust and coherent regions. Time is an important factor in this perspective as well - some solutions require a long-term approach, seasonal awareness or phasing. By not only protecting the region's uniqueness but by actively benefitting from it as well, scope is created for new combinations of functions and for development suitable to the place.

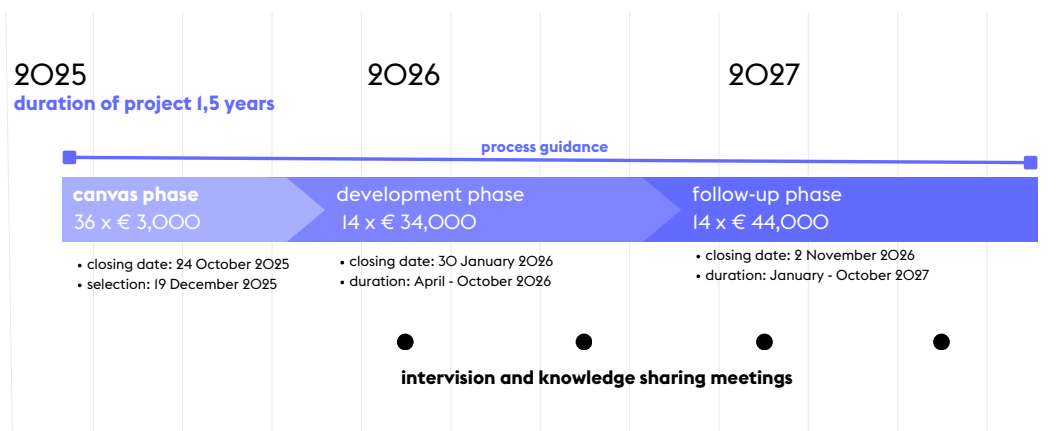
community of practice

With the projects that are supported under this open call, the Fund wants to form a community of practice within which knowledge and experiences are exchanged, enabling projects to reinforce each other and coalition partners to help each other to carry forward the developed perspectives and integral working method in their organisations and to embed them in their policy. During the term of the projects, the Fund will therefore organise various meetings for both the designers and the non-

designer coalition partners. The investment that this takes can be included in the grant application's project budget. The intermediate and end results of this and previous Spatial Design Action Programme calls are collected on our platform [De nieuwe ruimte](#).

what phases does this open call have?

The Open Call Regenerative Regions is divided into three phases:



canvas phase

You draw up a first concise application using the Spatial Design Action [SPA] project canvas. The closing date for this phase is 24 October 2025. An advisory committee then assesses the applications and selects a maximum of 26 proposals which will each receive € 3,000 to develop the project canvas into a complete project application. This amount is financial compensation for the investment of time that is required for this. This selection will be announced on Friday 19 December 2025 at the latest.

Please note: Article 9 of the Open Call Grant Scheme does not apply to the canvas phase within this open call.

development phase

Only applicants who are selected in the canvas phase may submit a complete project application for the development phase of their project. Co-financing is mandatory at this stage. The closing date for submitting this project application is Friday 30 January 2026. An advisory committee then assesses the applications and selects a maximum of 14 proposals that will be awarded a grant of a maximum of € 34,000 (€ 26,000 for the research by design and € 8,000 for the knowledge sharing and impact enhancement). This selection will be announced in late March 2026 at the latest.

After the final selection in March 2026, you will work on the research by design together with your coalition partners from April to October 2026, during which period you will focus on developing new working methods, insights and design proposals. During this period, the Fund will organise a number of interview and knowledge sharing meetings. At the end of the development phase, you can apply for up to a maximum of € 44,000 for work on the next steps of your project. Co-financing is also mandatory in the follow-up phase.

follow-up phase

Supported applications will receive a maximum of € 44,000 (€ 36,000 for the research by design and € 8,000 for the knowledge sharing and impact enhancement) in the follow-up phase. The follow-up phase is from January to October 2027. The objective of this phase is to engage the power of design to further develop the results obtained up to that point. The Fund will also organise a number of interview and knowledge sharing meetings during the follow-up phase.

what is assessed?

The application in the canvas phase and the project applications for the development and follow-up phases will be submitted for assessment to a committee of at least three external independent advisors. This committee will then assess the plans based on the provisions included in the [Open Call Grant Scheme](#) and in this Open Call Regenerative Regions. The working method used by the advisory committee is described in the Fund's Advisory Committee Procedure document. In derogation from this, the individual advisers will only assess the proposals based on criteria 1 up to and including 3 prior to the meeting. The advisers will then together assess the proposals based on criterion 4 in the meeting. The applications from the canvas phase will be assessed on the following criteria:

1. research question

Analysis of the problem, and the research question ensuing from it, will be assessed in relation to the open call's theme. What is important is that the application instils confidence that the research question can be elaborated into a complete project application.

2. positioning

The committee assesses how the application, and therefore the formulated research question, is positioned with respect to existing knowledge and the discussion within and beyond the area of expertise, and how that positioning is translated into an approach. Reciprocity and multiplicity are important aspects. How do you, as a team and as a designer, relate to the challenge and context, and how do you position yourself in this regard? What responsibility will you take on in the challenge and how will you make yourself part of the story? This requires reflection. Will any unexpected and relevant questions be asked or new perspectives discussed? Does the proposal question prevailing ways of thinking and doing or does it build on them? Based on this, the committee determines whether the application instils confidence that the complete project application will be able to make a relevant contribution to the open call's theme.

3. collaboration

The committee assesses whether the application instils confidence, in terms of the intended cooperative ventures and the proposed collaboration forms, that the complete project application could make a relevant contribution to how the issue is approached. This requires introspection: what is my own role and expertise and who do I use that to enhance the project?

4. contribution to diversity and connection with the selection

The Fund is striving for a selection of 14 projects that together can find an answer to this open call's invitation. To come to a selection that represents the diversity in regions, target groups and challenges, the advisory committee will also review the applications in correlation with each other.

Applicants who are selected after the canvas phase will receive the necessary information to draft their complete project application, including an explanation on how to submit an application for the development and follow-up phase, by email.

hoe dien je een aanvraag in?

You can submit the project canvas for the canvas phase up to 24 October 2025 via the Creative Industries Fund NL's [application platform](#). Select the 'Open Call Regenerative Regions' round. The application should consist of:

1. a fully completed application form;
2. a fully completed [SPA project canvas](#);
3. at least one letter of intent from a coalition partner (no more than 2 pages).

Please note:

- make sure that you create an account for the application platform in good time, as it takes one working day to activate it;
- applicants may not submit more than one application within this call;
- read the [Explanatory Notes to the SPA Project Canvas](#) as preparation for writing your application;
- designers act as the lead applicant and are responsible for the project. Collaborative parties act as co-applicant.

grant procedure

The assessment of the canvas phase is similar to a tender - this means that a number of proposals will be preferred over other ones. Only positively assessed projects may be supported. The submitted canvas applications will be processed and assessed on the basis of the Fund's Open Call Grant Scheme (Article 9 excepted) and the open call's criteria. The committee issues its advice to the Fund's board for each application.

acknowledgement of receipt and announcement of the selection

No later than one week after the closing date, you will receive an acknowledgement of receipt via the Fund's application platform. The selection from the canvas phase will be announced by no later than 19 December 2025 via the application platform. The selected applicants will subsequently be invited by the Fund to submit a complete project application for the development phase.

contact

For questions about the open call and the procedure, please contact: Hadewig Cobben or Marthe Oosting via actieprogramma@stimuleringsfonds.nl or call +31(0)10-4361600.

newsletter

Are you interested in the results and insights from the Spatial Design Action Programme and would you like to be informed about lectures, debates and in-depth work meetings? Then sign up [here](#) for the newsletter 'De nieuwe ruimte'.

context

This open call is part of the Spatial Design Action Programme, implemented by the Creative Industries Fund NL on the instructions of the Ministries of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (Housing and Spatial Planning) and Education, Culture and Science.