

## RULES AND REGULATIONS RESEARCH PROJECTS MS-LIGA VLAANDEREN

It is the mission of MS-Liga Vlaanderen to contribute to the general well-being of people with MS, their family members and their environment, and to stimulate scientific research into MS. Referring to our mission, below you can find the rules and regulations for our scientific call in which we financially support scientific research.

### Section 1

Every two years vzw MS-Liga Vlaanderen (*MS-Association Flanders, non-profit organization*) organises a call to finance research projects from the research units of the Dutch-speaking universities in Belgium and the hospitals with a rehabilitation centre that are included in the programme. For the allocation of these funds, vzw MS-Liga Vlaanderen is supported by external referees and a scientific advisory committee.

### Section 2

The research projects must be submitted to vzw MS-Liga Vlaanderen, through the online submission form <https://www.ms-vlaanderen.be/nl/form/ms-grant-program-submission> , before 16/03/2026. The application consists of an - according to the rules and regulations - complete online submission form (in English), including a curriculum vitae of the candidate(s) and researcher(s). The applications will be declared admissible or not by the scientific advisory committee, based on the stipulated rules and regulations (mentioned above and in the online submission form). In case of an inadmissible application, vzw MS-Liga Vlaanderen will inform the applicant of this decision, after consultation within the scientific advisory committee, and explain why the application is inadmissible. There is no opportunity to discuss this decision.

The contribution per project amounts to a maximum of € 20.000 per year. Submitted projects have a maximum duration of two years. The contribution can be used to buy equipment linked to the project and/or for operational costs and/or working hours. The financial contribution for a research project is made available to the project through the accounting department of the university or institution to which the research group is connected.

The applicants of selected projects commit themselves to providing a communication about their research on a scientific-journalistic level and a financial report, ultimately two years after the allocation of the project. In case projects take longer than one year, vzw MS-Liga Vlaanderen expects a short, mid-term report (both content-related and financially) after one year.

### Section 3: Composition of the scientific advisory committee

The scientific advisory committee consists of a representative of every Dutch-speaking university in Belgium (Antwerp, Brussels, Hasselt, Leuven, Ghent) and a representative of the members of the “Chronische Conventie” (*Chronic Convention*) (Nationaal MS Centrum in Melsbroek, Noorderhart in Pelt, AZ Klina in Brasschaat and AZ Alma in Eeklo), as well as the Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences of the University of Hasselt.

Members can be physicians, paramedics or researchers, but should have an affinity with and commitment to MS research. Each centre independently decides who will represent it. The chairman is chosen by vote, among and by the members. The functions of member and chairman are valid for a period of 6 years, but this period can be extended.

The director of vzw MS-Liga Vlaanderen is present at the gathering of the scientific advisory committee as an observer. The director has no decision mandate and does not take part in a possible discussion about substantive aspects of the submitted projects.

#### Section 4: Review process

The review process exclusively involves referees that are not connected to Dutch-speaking institutions in Belgium. Each member of the scientific advisory committee suggests two external jurors, willing to judge the quality of all projects, based on the following criteria:

- 1/ Efficiency (cost to results ratio)
- 2/ Importance for people with MS and MS-Liga Vlaanderen
- 3/ Scientific methodology
- 4/ Feasibility
- 5/ Practical usability

and by means of the scoring options below:

- 0 = insufficient
- 1 = average
- 2 = good
- 3 = excellent

Based on these reviews, a summary score is generated for all criteria.

#### Section 5: Awarding the grants/projects

Grants can only be awarded to researchers at Dutch-speaking institutions in Belgium that conduct clinical, applied or fundamental scientific research, both short-term and long-term (with a maximum of two years), on multiple sclerosis. The grant can be used to buy equipment linked to the project, for operational costs and working hours of the project workers.

Based on the external reviews, a summary score for all criteria will be generated and submitted to the scientific advisory committee, which determines the final ranking. The ranking and explanation will be transmitted to the Board of Directors of vzw MS-Liga Vlaanderen, which honours the decision.