

EWUU - institute 4 Preventive Health

Alliance TU/e, WUR, UU and UMCU

EWUU - i4PH Seed call 2026

Terms and Conditions

Building the future of Preventive Health: Seed call for preventive health transitions

1. About EWUU - institute 4 Preventive Health

At the EWUU – institute 4 Preventive Health (i4PH), we drive systemic transitions toward a fundamentally different approach to health and prevention. Lasting improvements in health and reductions in health inequalities require change across healthcare, public policy, living environments, technology, and society – so we work transdisciplinary, bringing together perspectives and sectors to accelerate transformative change toward healthier people, communities, and environments.

Our vision: a healthier Netherlands for all. We align with Health Holland's Knowledge and Innovation Agenda: +5 years of healthy lifespan for every Dutch citizen and –30% in health disparities by 2040. We aim to direct our research towards groups where we can achieve the most substantial improvement in health outcomes, especially people living in circumstances that make them vulnerable. We involve their experiences, priorities, and ideas when shaping research from the start. We focus on critical life stages while driving system-wide transitions in preventive health that are more inclusive, sustainable, and impactful.

Through this Seed Call we catalyse new collaborations and ideas that accelerate these transitions and strengthen future transdisciplinary funding consortia. We invite innovative, transdisciplinary proposals that contribute to one or more EWUU - i4PH Transition Pathways and align with our Research Themes.

Seed funding supports tangible outcomes – for example turning your project idea into a larger application (e.g. Horizon Europe, NWA), developing a white paper or literature review, organizing co-design workshops or building new collaborations with societal stakeholders, policymakers, healthcare organisations, or living-lab environments.

2. Our Research Focus

At EWUU - i4PH, we focus our research efforts through a combination of Research Lines (what we study) and Transition Pathways (how change towards preventive health can be achieved).

A - The EWUU - i4PH Transition pathways

The EWUU - i4PH Transition Pathways are based on research of preventive health transitions in the Netherlands, conducted in collaboration with the Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development (UU). The four pathways were derived from stakeholder interviews within and beyond the EWUU institutes and extensive literature review and resulted in four future scenarios.

Together, these pathways represent key leverage points for accelerating the transition towards healthier and more equitable societies. They help identify where scientific knowledge, innovation, policy, and societal action can create the greatest impact, while providing a shared framework for connecting and aligning diverse research and stakeholder initiatives.

Preventive health with all, for all

Treats preventive health as a shared public good and a community responsibility rather than an individual one. Embeds “Health in All Policies” across housing, education, urban planning, and social policy; develops community-based services, and participatory governance. Tackles structural drivers – poverty, loneliness, discrimination, poor housing, unhealthy commercial practices – and scales local innovations such as caring neighbourhoods and community health platforms.


Preventive health as the easy choice

Makes healthy living the default by redesigning physical, social, fiscal, and digital environments. Moves beyond education and individual responsibility toward structural prevention: restricting unhealthy food marketing, reducing fast-food outlet density, investing in cycling and green infrastructure, and embedding health impact assessments in spatial planning. Healthy behaviour becomes the norm and enabled through coordinated action by governments, schools, employers, communities, and digital platforms.

Preventive health, planetary-centred

Integrates planetary health into prevention by recognising the interdependence of human wellbeing, ecological sustainability, and the health of other species. Aligns health, climate, environmental, agricultural, and spatial policies across governance levels: reducing environmental exposures, expanding green infrastructure, embedding planetary metrics in decision-making, and building integrated environmental-health monitoring. Governments, universities, NGOs, businesses, and communities collaborate on sustainable lifestyles and preventive systems that minimise their own ecological footprint.

Preventive health as investment



Frames prevention as a long-term societal investment in health, wellbeing, equity, productivity, and welfare – not merely a way to cut healthcare costs. The pathway promotes cross-sector financing, joint investment funds, broader return-on-investment frameworks, and structural embedding of prevention in governance and financial systems.

B - The EWUU - i4PH Research Themes

Optimal physical, social, and mental functioning, and self-efficacy, are foundational for healthy and productive lives across every life stage – from adolescence to working age to old age. EWUU - i4PH studies how lifestyle and environmental factors influence independent functioning, how biological and social systems shape resilience, and how lifestyle, healthcare, and environmental, societal, or technological innovation can enhance self-efficacy. We seek system-level change that combines solutions across domains for sustained wellbeing, independent functioning, and self-efficacy throughout life.

Healthy Start

By focusing on children and families, particularly during the transition from primary to secondary school and onwards until children leave home, we aim to address societal challenges such as peer pressure, limited access to healthy lifestyle options, and mental health issues. Particular attention is given to children and young people with somatic and non-somatic limitations, recognising the importance of resilience, adaptive capacity, and inclusive support systems in promoting healthy development during critical life stages. We welcome research proposals that contribute to healthy development, resilience, inclusive participation, and successful life-course transitions through preventive, technological, social, or environmental approaches.

Healthy living environments

Our living environment is a major structural driver of our health and wellbeing, significantly impacting health. Our living environment provides us with a large arsenal of health-promoting interventions in four interacting dimensions of the living environment: built environment (e.g., roads, bike lanes, parks), chemical/biological environment (e.g., pollutants), social environment (e.g., social networks, participation, safety) and food environment (e.g. healthy food outlets). We welcome research proposals that develop, evaluate, or implement interventions and policies aimed at creating healthier, more inclusive, and sustainable living environments for diverse populations.

The future of cancer

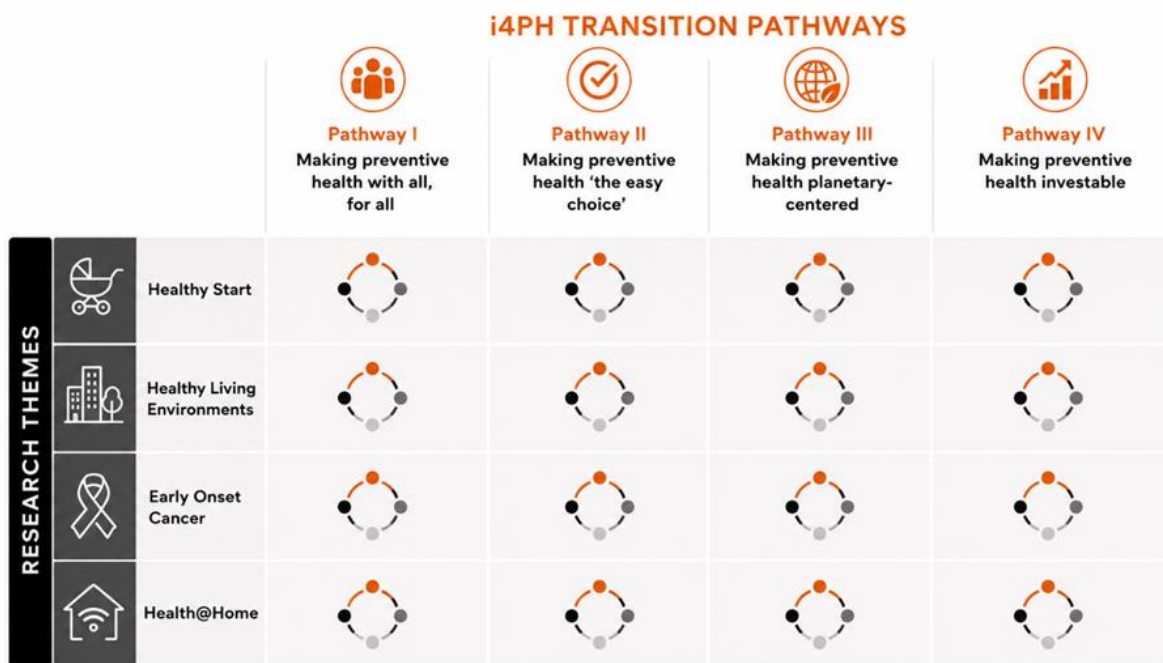
Cancer affects people of all ages and has major impacts on individuals, families, and society throughout the life course. This theme focuses on supporting people under the age of 49 during and after cancer treatment by improving quality of life, resilience, participation in society, and long-term physical, mental, and social wellbeing. We explore how lifestyle, living environment, technology, and supportive care can help patients during treatment, improve outcomes, enable timely detection of complications or deterioration, and strengthen recovery and functioning for individuals living with or beyond cancer. We welcome research proposals focused on supportive care, remote patient monitoring, recovery, survivorship, prevention of recurrence, and improving long-term wellbeing and participation for people affected by cancer.

Health @ Home

With the goal of promoting digital self-management and self-organization, this research theme focuses on frail elderly individuals and those at risk of institutionalization. By harnessing technological innovations and implementing living lab environments, we seek to optimize functioning, enhance participation in society, and improve overall well-being of this group. We welcome research proposals that advance digital health, remote monitoring, self-management, healthy ageing in place, and innovative home-based support systems that enable independent living and societal participation.

This Call for Projects aims to stimulate ideas for research projects from within the Alliance TU/e, WUR, UU, and UMCU on Preventive Health that will contribute to the further development and implementation of the i4PH research and transition agenda.

Applicants are therefore encouraged to submit proposals that fit within at least one research line and one or more transition pathways, fostering connections between scientific excellence and societal impact (see next picture).



3. Funding, Eligibility and Call Conditions

Who can submit?

Project Ideas must meet the following eligibility criteria:

Consortium requirement:

Each proposal must come from a consortium of at least three co-applicants from at least three different EWUU institutions.

Eligible main applicants:

Postdoctoral researchers, assistant or associate professors (tenure-track or tenured), or equivalent academic staff employed by TU/e, WUR, UU, or UMC Utrecht.

Not eligible for application:

- Members of the EWUU - i4PH working group (Programme Team, Advisory Board, Supervisory Board)

Application limits per person:

- An individual may participate in maximum one proposal (as applicant or co-applicant).
- A Principal Investigator (PI) may not submit a new proposal if they are already PI on an ongoing i4PH seed grant (PI's working on other national grants in collaboration with EWUU - i4PH, such as NWO, Health Holland etc. are allowed to submit).

Funding and eligible expenses:

- A total budget of €200.000,- is available for this Seed Call. We expect to fund approximately 4-5 projects. The maximum funding per project is €50,000. EWUU-i4PH reserves the right to partially fund proposals where appropriate.
- External collaborators can be part of the proposal, but funding is required to stay within 4 institutes of the EWUU alliance (i.e., no sub-awards).
- Including external collaborators (with in kind or cash co-funding) beyond the EWUU alliance, such as societal partners and other knowledge institutes, is considered favorable.
- Projects start from January 1st, 2027 onwards.
- Budget requested must be used before December 1st, 2027. Left over budget beyond 2027 will be 'lost'.
- Budgets cannot be transferred from one institute to the other institute during the run time of the project.

The grants should be used for activities to support a tangible outcome such as a literature review, white paper, submitted proposal to a larger grant scheme, position paper etc. is required, including but not limited to:

- Salary of a PostDoc.
- Fees for additional personnel, material costs or grant writing consultants.
- Travel and costs directly associated with the proposed activity (for example, travel to match-making events, consortium meetings related to the grant application).

The grants cannot be used for:

- Matching in a grant application.
- Topping up a previously awarded EWUU seed call
- Financing the extension of the contract of a PhD student.¹
- The purchase of software, hardware or other devices unless such items are crucial to the execution of the research project and cannot be obtained through the regular support services of the institution where the researcher has been appointed.
- Attending courses or conferences not related to the research project.

¹An exception is the following situation: the PhD student has completed his/her work for the dissertation and still has some time left in the contract. The PhD student may then be included in the budget for the new project as a PhD student. It should therefore be clear that the PhD student will be carrying out new work that falls outside the scope of the PhD assignment.

4. Timelines

This Seed call will be opened from the 15th of June, 2026 and closes October 16th, CoB 2026.

Evaluation timeline

Milestone	Date
Call opens	15 June 2026
Submission deadline	16 October 2026, 23:59 CET
Evaluation period	October–November 2026
Funding decisions communicated	December 2026
Project start date	From 1 January 2027

5. Application package

Applicants should submit a concise proposal using the application template provided. The proposal should clearly describe the project idea, the consortium composition, the requested budget (separate budget sheet), the expected outcomes, and how the project aligns with the EWUU-i4PH Research Themes and Transition Pathways. The maximum length of the proposal is 3 pages, excluding references and budget overview.

6. Evaluation and next steps

Proposals will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- **Contribution to cross-EWUU collaboration**
The extent to which the proposal fosters meaningful collaboration across TU/e, WUR, UU, and UMC Utrecht, including clear complementarity of expertise and added value through integration.
- **Alignment with i4PH strategy**
The degree to which the proposal contributes to the mission and long-term objectives of EWUU - i4PH and aligns with the Health Holland Knowledge and Innovation Agenda 2024-2027.

- **Fit with EWUU - i4PH Transition Pathways and Research Themes**
The relevance of the project to one or more transition pathways and research themes, and its contribution to system-level change in preventive health.
- **Transdisciplinary and societal engagement**
The involvement of societal partners and the extent to which the proposal strengthens transdisciplinary collaboration and supports real-world system change. Meaningful engagement of people who are affected by the research outcomes, by co-creating the project from the outset and including their experiences, priorities, and ideas.
- **Clarity of follow-up and impact pathway**
A clear description of intended next steps, such as submission to larger funding schemes (e.g. Horizon Europe, NWA) or other concrete follow-up trajectories.

Selection and obligations

- Proposals will be evaluated by the EWUU - i4PH programme team and the EWUU - i4PH Advisory Board and [i4PH Citizen Advisory Panel](#).
- Based on the evaluation, funding decisions will be made, including the possibility of partial funding.
- Successful applicants are expected to actively participate in EWUU - i4PH community and communication activities. Participation in these activities is mandatory and cannot be declined.

1.

7. Need help building your consortium?

Preventive health require collaboration across disciplines, sectors, and institutes. If you have an idea but are still looking for expertise, partners, or connections within the EWUU alliance, the programme team can help. We are happy to connect researchers across TU/e, WUR, UU and UMC Utrecht and facilitate the development of new collaborations.

Please contact the programme team for support and matchmaking:

- TU/e: Dasha Alexeeva - d.v.alexeeva@tue.nl
- WUR: Martine van der Mast - martine.vandermast@wur.nl
- UU/UMCU: Tessa Scherphof - c.t.scherphof@uu.nl