

Call for Revanche proposals

Musculoskeletal Health Program

- Amsterdam Movement
Sciences -

October 25, 2021

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background.

The overall aim of the Musculoskeletal Health (MSH) Program of Amsterdam Movement Sciences is to improve the physical performance, the activities of daily life and health related quality of life for people with musculoskeletal disorders through high quality research. This program focuses on common musculoskeletal disorders, such as osteoarthritis, back- and neck pain. More specifically, research in this program addresses:

- 1) The (psychosocial, biomechanical, (neuro)physiological, neuroimmune) mechanisms underlying the development of musculoskeletal disorders and of the progression of declines in physical performance, activities of daily life and health related quality of life due to musculoskeletal disorders.
- 2) The development of methods to accurately diagnose and track the progression (neurophysiological, neuroimmune changes as well as functions) of the musculoskeletal disorders.
- 3) The diagnosis and prognosis of declines in physical performance and health related quality of life and the underlying impairments due to musculoskeletal disorders.
- 4) The efficacy, (cost-)effectiveness of existing and novel interventions, and underlying (working) mechanisms of interventions to prevent/reduce declines in physical performance and health related quality of life.

Revanche program

Within the MSH program we also aim to hold onto top talent. The ultimate aim of this Revanche call is therefore to hold on to talented researchers with a demonstrated strong **personal grant application** under, for instance, the NWO Talent Scheme (Rubicon, Veni, VIDI) or an application with the European Research Council (ERC) or in other prestigious grant schemes (e.g. Douwe Dekker Fellow Hartstichting, NIH Career Development grants, NARSAD Young Investigator award). Many such applications come from our talented researchers, receive very positive (inter)national peer review, but did not get funded due to budget limitations. This Revanche call therefore specifically aims to give top talents a chance to further strengthen a previously submitted (personal) grant application in order to increase the likelihood of success for the next submission of the personal grant.

1.2 Available budget

For this 2022 round the MSH program has a budget of 45k€. The scheduled project starting date for the research grant proposals accepted in this 2022 round is April 2022.

1.3 When to apply

The deadline for this call for proposals is **Monday 24 January 2022, 6 pm (CET)**

2. Goal

2.1 Revanche program

In order to hold onto top talent, the participation of talented researchers in VENI, ERC or other **personal grants programs** is a good route to take. However, experience has shown that excellent proposals submitted by outstanding candidates do not always survive the highly competitive selection process due to shrinking budgets. The Revanche program is designed for proposals that have gone through the entire VENI/ERC process (or other personal grant schemes) and were considered eligible for funding but were just below the threshold for funding. Allowing these researchers additional time to conduct an initial part project in this application, or a pilot study, to further strengthen the submitted personal grant proposal, will increase the likelihood of success upon resubmission. Therefore, the ultimate goal of this revanche program is to provide the opportunity to further strengthen the submitted personal grant proposal and thus increase the likelihood of success in the next submission of this personal grant.

3. Guidelines for applicants

3.1 Who can apply?

The revanche grant proposal will, as a rule, be written by a **project team** and the **main applicant** is the person who was the main applicant of the original and submitted personal grant proposal. Applications can only be submitted if **approved by the head of one of the departments participating in Amsterdam Movement Sciences**. This should be the department where this Revanche proposal will be embedded.

3.2 What can you apply for?

The Revanche program is open to runner ups from the NWO Talent scheme, ERC runners-up, or runner ups from other prestigious personal grant schemes, who can demonstrate that they followed the entire application process in in the period January 2019 to end of October 2021 but who were not awarded a grant.

In 2022 this scheme can fund one candidate. The maximum amount awarded to the proposal is 45k€ over a period of 1 year (but may be longer if co-funding makes this possible). The budget applied for should correspond as closely as possible with the budget for the first year in the initial application. Applicants may, however, make clear in a revised budget how the application has been amended to coincide with the maximum amount stated above. The Revanche applications may include a mix of personnel and equipment costs.

Priority is given to Revanche applications with the following features;

- Applications embedded within departments of the Amsterdam UMC that are directly linked to the Musculoskeletal Health program.
- Applications with co-funding from their department where this Revanche proposal will be embedded.
- Applications should clearly indicate when the re-submission of their improved/strengthened personal grant application will take place. In principle this re-submission should be made to the subsidy scheme where the initial application was also submitted. If this is not the case, i.e. the re-submission is submitted to another subsidy scheme, then this must be clearly justified. In all cases state the concrete deadline for the re-submission.

3.3 Drawing up a research grant proposal for the Revanche program

The Revanche program relates exclusively to proposals that have already been submitted and that were assessed, including a final decision, in the period from January 2019 to the end of October 2021 within the framework of NWO Talent Scheme (Rubicon, Veni, VIDI) or an application with the European Research Council (ERC) or in other prestigious grant schemes (e.g. Douwe Dekker Fellow Hartstichting, NIH Career Development grants, NARSAD Young Investigator award). Applications accepted or applications that are still under review of the grant providers are not eligible for the Revanche program.

The candidates need to submit 1) their original submitted personal grant application, including a CV, 2) the reviews, 3) their rebuttal and 4) the invitation for an interview, if applicable, 5) the final decision letter of the committee, and 6) the attached Appendix of this Revanche call, including the approval of the head of the department in which this Revanche application will be embedded. In this Appendix (see Appendix 1) the applicant 1) must explain the relevance of the Revanche application (and the original personal grant application) in relation to the aims of the MSH program (see above), 2) should give a short explanation (of no more than two A4 pages, Arial, font size 11) which part of the original application the candidate wants to execute, or if needed, how the candidate wishes to amend the original application based on new insights gained, or what pilot study the candidate wishes to perform, in order to strengthen the original application thereby increasing the likelihood of success for the next submission. In this Appendix it should also be explained how the Revanche

proposal can be implemented within the maximum period of one year and, if necessary, how the budget and research implementation plan will be revised. If this is the case a (new) budget should then be submitted separately and should, where possible, be in line with the original budget.

3.4 Submitting an application

Submission to the Musculoskeletal Health program is done by the candidate. Applications should be submitted electronically to r.ostelo@vu.nl. Applications will be taken into consideration only if it has been established that they have been approved by a head of department in which this Revanche application will be embedded.

All files must be merged **into 1 pdf** with clear titles for the requested documents to be included in this Revanche call. Applications that do not include all of the files in a single pdf will **not** be reviewed.

4. Assessment procedure

4.1 General procedure

Administrative-technical check

The first step in the assessment procedure is to check whether the application can be taken into consideration, that is: 1) the head of department in which this Revanche application will be embedded has approved the application; 2) the application is submitted as a single pdf file with clear titles for the requested documents. Applications that do not meet these criteria will not be taken into consideration and will be treated as not having been submitted.

Assessment and priority setting by the MSH program board

The applications are assessed in a peer review procedure and prioritized by the MSH program board. The program board assess the applications based on the assessment criteria as described under 4.2 and 4.3 and draws up a well-argued recommendation for the Director of Amsterdam Movement Sciences.

All proposals are assessed in detail by two members of the MSH program board, both of whom have no direct interest in the proposal. After jointly discussing these assessments, the proposals will be ranked based on these assessment criteria (as described under 4.2 and 4.3) and priority features (as described under 3.2) and the order of priority of the applications will be established.

Decision by the Director of Amsterdam Movement Sciences

The MSH program board will advise the Director of AMS about the prioritizing of the research grant proposals submitted to the program board. Based on this recommendation, and where necessary also on the basis of policy considerations and the available resources, the director will take a final decision to accept or reject the proposal.

Timelines

October 2021-January 2022

Monday 24 January 2022, 6 pm (CET) 2021

February 2022

Beginning of March 2022

of decision

April 2022

Call for proposals

Submission deadline

Assessment and prioritizing of proposals by the MSH program board & Final decision by the director

Inform heads of department and applicants

scheduled project starting

4.2 Generic assessment criteria

First all proposals submitted will be assessed based on the following **generic criteria**:

- the research fits within and/or strengthens the MSH research program;
- the research strengthens the future acquisition potential of the original submitted proposal;

- the research strengthens the future acquisition potential of the Amsterdam UMC, and/or VU
- the research is excellent and innovative.

In addition to these generic criteria, a number of **specific** criteria will be applied, as described in section 4.3

4.3 Specific criteria for the Revanche program

In addition to the generic criteria, the MSH program board will assess proposals relating to this scheme on the following specific criteria:

- quality of the research talent to be retained, as evidenced by the academic CV;
- quality of the central research question and work plan, as evidenced by the peer review by an external grant provider.

Re Quality of the talent

Is the Revanche candidate a promising academic talent as evidenced by, among other things, the PhD thesis, relevant publications, and/or other academic achievements? Are the proposal and the candidate convincing? Does the candidate have the ability to generate innovative ideas? What is the impact on society of the candidate's work? Does the candidate have relevant international experience?

Re Quality of the central research question and work plan

What is the quality, the innovative character and the expected academic impact of the proposed research? Is the content of the research challenging? Is the central research question original? Does the research have clear scientifically innovative elements? Does it use appropriate, effective and, where relevant, innovative methods? Is the work plan feasible within the proposed timeline?

In assessing the proposal, the program board relies heavily on the opinions of the assessors of the original application as submitted to the concerned granting organization. The rebuttal (if the grant provider offered this procedure), and the final decision taken at the time (how far into the procedure did the candidate get?) will also be considered in the decision. Note that the program board's own opinion will not weigh as heavily in the assessment. Major modifications to the original application are therefore not recommended. Where minor changes are made, the program board will base its opinion on the degree to which these amendments have been made in response to the assessors' feedback or on the basis of new insights gained. Any new insights should be clearly described.

5. Contact and other information

For questions about the *call for proposals* please get in touch with: Prof Raymond Ostelo

Department of Health Sciences (Faculty of Science, VU)
r.ostelo@vu.nl

Appendix 1 Application form Revanche program

This application form and all requested appendices should be merged into 1 pdf file.

1. **General information**

- Name, title, & contact details Revanche candidate
- Project title
- Planned starting date of Revanche project
- Planned end date of Revanche project
- Date of re-submission of the renewed personal grant and name the organization
- Approval of the Head of Department where the application is embedded

2. **Relevance in relation to the MSH aims.**

Please describe the relevance of the Revanche application (and the original personal grant application) in relation to the aims of the MSH program (**max ½ A4, Arial, 11 pt**)

3. **Original application and application history**

Please give a short description (**max ½ A4, Arial, 11 pt**) of the original application and the application history. Add the original application, peer reviews and reply and all other relevant correspondence as appendices with clear titles,

4. **The Revanche aims and work plan**

Give a short explanation which part of the original application will be executed, or if needed, how the candidate wishes to amend the original application based on new insights gained, or what pilot study the candidate wishes to perform, in order to strengthen the original application thereby increasing the likelihood of success for the next submission. Describe your workplan for the Revanche project and how the budget and research implementation plan will be revised (if necessary) (**max 2 A4, Arial, 11pt**)

5. **CV**

6. **Signatures, names and date:**

- Revanche candidate
- Head of Department where the application is embedded for approval