

## CALL FOR PROJECTS 2026

# RESEARCH ON BIOCHEMICAL ACTION MECHANISMS IN CANCER

## INTRODUCTION

The Funds Blondine, José Plé - Albert Declercq, Van der Poorten - Vermeiren, Daisy Jacob, René & Augusta, Emile Carpentier, Yvonne & Jacques François - De Meurs, Van Damme, André Van der Stricht and Gerard Gaston & Franquet Blanche are dedicated to advancing cancer research. Managed by the King Baudouin Foundation and guided by an **independent scientific Jury**, these funds support innovative research projects that deepen our understanding of the biochemical mechanisms driving cancer progression.

## SCOPE OF THE CALL

This call invites proposals for **fundamental, pre-clinical, or translational research** focused on the **biochemical action mechanisms in cancer**. These mechanisms involve the pathogenic functions of regulatory or effector proteins, leading to the deregulation of healthy cellular processes at both **intracellular and extracellular levels**.

Key areas of interest include:

- **Protein-protein and protein-DNA interactions** that contribute to tumor development.
- **Tumour cell heterogeneity** and interactions with non-tumour cells (e.g., immune cells, vascular cells, fibroblasts) within the tumour microenvironment.
- **Mechanisms underlying primary tumor formation, extravasation, invasion, and metastasis.**

Projects employing **novel ex vivo models** (e.g., tumour or fused spheroids) or **high-resolution single-cell omics** are particularly encouraged, provided these approaches offer mechanistic insights rather than purely descriptive data.

## ELIGIBILITY

### Applicant Organisations

- Funding is restricted to **not-for-profit research institutions in Belgium**.
- For-profit entities (e.g., pharmaceutical companies) may participate as collaborators but are **not eligible for funding**.

### Main applicant (MA)

- **Early career post-doctoral researchers** ( $\leq 8$  years of active research post-PhD, with allowances for documented career breaks).
- Researchers affiliated with a **Belgian university or not-for-profit research centre** (minimum 50% appointment).

- Projects must be **formally endorsed** by the head of department or medical director of the host institution.

**Location and Collaboration**

- Projects must be **initiated and coordinated in Belgium**.
- **Interdisciplinary and international collaborations** are encouraged, provided the Belgian team leads the project.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Excellence of the **main applicant** (30%)
2. Excellence of the **research project** (50%)
3. **Potential impact** of the research project (20%)

For full details of the selection criteria see annex I: scoring grid

## FUNDING

- **Total funding available:** €550,000 to support **2 projects** (€225,000 per project).
- **Duration:** 3 years
- **Eligible costs:** All project-related expenses, including overhead, which is limited to max. 17%

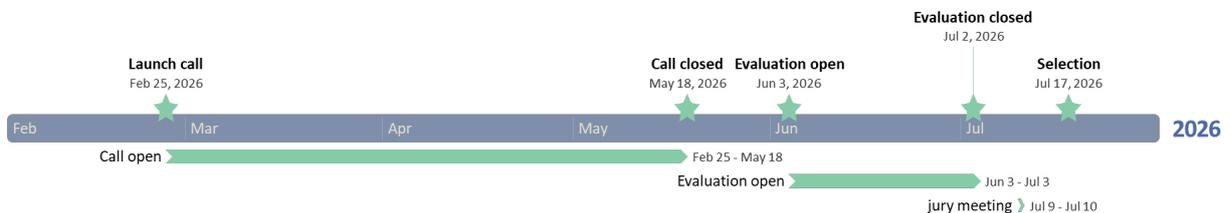
## APPLICATION PROCESS

- **Submission:** Online via the [King Baudouin Foundation website](#).
- **Deadline:** **May 18, 2026**
- **Language:** Applications must be submitted in **English**.
- **Confirmation:** Applicants will receive an acknowledgment of receipt.

## SELECTION PROCESS

- **Review:** Applications will be evaluated by an **independent scientific jury**.
- **Recommendations:** The jury will rank projects and submit recommendations to the Steering Committee.
- **Final Decision:** Announced in **July 2026**

**Timeline:**



### CONTACT

For technical assistance when applying:

Contact center – Tel +32-(0)2 500 45 55 – [proj@kbs-frb.be](mailto:proj@kbs-frb.be)

For information regarding the call:

Scientific secretariat of the Funds for biochemical research on cancer:

Laetitia Aerts – [aerts.l@kbs-frb.be](mailto:aerts.l@kbs-frb.be) – Tel +32 (0)2 549 02 30

#### **King Baudouin Foundation**

The King Baudouin Foundation's mission is to contribute to a better society in Belgium, in Europe and elsewhere in the world. It is an actor for change and innovation, serving the public interest and increasing social cohesion. It seeks to maximise its impact by improving skills in organisations and for individuals. It also stimulates effective philanthropy by individuals and corporations. The King Baudouin Foundation was set up in 1976, on the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign.

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Annex 1: selection criteria

Criteria	1-2 Unacceptable	3-4 Below Average	5-6 Average	7-8 Good	9-10 Excellent
<b>Excellence of the Main Applicant (30%)</b>					
<b>Quality and Relevance of Publications</b> The extent to which the researcher's publications are of high-quality and relevant to the topic, published in high-quality journals, and have contributed to advancing knowledge in the field.	No publications in high-quality journals or platforms.	Limited publications in niche journals or platforms.	Adequate publications in relevant journals or platforms.	Strong record of publications in high quality journals and open-access platforms.	Exceptional contributions to high quality journals, open-access platforms, and patient-friendly outputs.
<b>Research Output and Impact</b> The researcher's contributions to developing clinical practice guidelines, patient-friendly materials, or sharing data and resources that benefit patients and citizens.	No contributions to guidelines, patient materials, or data sharing.	Limited contributions to guidelines or patient materials.	Adequate contributions to guidelines, patient materials, or data sharing.	Significant contributions to guidelines, patient materials, and data sharing.	Outstanding contributions to guidelines, patient materials, and data sharing, with clear impact on the field.
<b>Research Grants and Collaborations</b> The researcher's success in securing funding for relevant research and their involvement in collaborative networks, consortia, or partnerships focused on cancer research.	No grants or collaborations in cancer research.	Limited grants or collaborations with other organisations.	Adequate grants and collaborations with professional networks.	Strong record of grants and leadership in research consortia.	Exceptional grants, leadership in consortia and partnerships.
<b>Recognition and Leadership</b> The researcher's involvement in expert panels, advisory roles, and leadership positions within the cancer research community, as well as recognition from peers and organisations.	No involvement in expert panels or advisory roles.	Limited involvement in expert panels or advisory roles.	Adequate involvement in expert panels or advisory roles.	Active participation and leadership in expert panels and advisory roles.	Exceptional leadership in expert panels, advisory roles, and recognition from the cancer research community.

<p><b>Patient and Community Engagement</b> The researcher's engagement with patient advocacy groups, involvement in community initiatives, and efforts to ensure research outcomes are accessible and beneficial to patients.</p>	No engagement with patient advocacy groups.	Limited engagement with patient advocacy groups.	Adequate engagement with patient advocacy groups.	Strong engagement with patient advocacy groups and community initiatives.	Exceptional engagement with patient advocacy groups, with tangible benefits for patients.
<b>Excellence of the Research Project (50%)</b>					
<p><b>Novelty and Originality</b> The degree to which the research project introduces new ideas, approaches, or technologies that address unmet needs or gaps in cancer research.</p>	No novel aspects or originality.	Limited novelty or originality.	Adequate novelty and originality.	Strong novelty and originality.	Exceptional novelty and originality, addressing current unmet needs.
<p><b>Research Strategy and Feasibility</b> The clarity, soundness, and practicality of the research plan, including the appropriateness of methods and the likelihood of achieving the project's goals.</p>	No clear strategy or feasibility.	Limited strategy or feasibility.	Adequate strategy and feasibility.	Strong strategy and feasibility.	Exceptional strategy, with clear feasibility and contingency plans.
<p><b>Budget and Resource Allocation</b> The realism, justification, and efficiency of the budget, ensuring that resources are allocated appropriately to meet the project's objectives.</p>	No clear budget or resource allocation detailed.	Limited budget or resource allocation.	Adequate budget and resource allocation.	Strong budget and resource allocation.	Exceptional budget, with efficient resource allocation and justification.
<p><b>Collaboration and Networking</b> The extent of collaboration with other researchers, institutions, and networks, to leverage collective expertise and resources in this project.</p>	No collaboration or networking foreseen.	Limited collaboration or networking.	Adequate collaboration and networking.	Strong collaboration and networking.	Exceptional collaboration, leveraging global networks and partnerships.

<p><b>Patient and Stakeholder Involvement</b> The level of engagement with patients, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders in the design, implementation, and dissemination of the research project.</p>	No involvement of patients or stakeholders.	Limited involvement of patients or stakeholders.	Adequate involvement of patients and stakeholders.	Strong involvement of patients and stakeholders.	Exceptional involvement, with co-design and active participation.
<b>Potential impact of the Research Project (20%)</b>					
<p><b>Scientific Impact</b> The potential of the research to advance scientific understanding, generate new knowledge, or contribute to the field.</p>	No potential for scientific impact.	Limited potential for scientific impact.	Adequate potential for scientific impact.	Strong potential for scientific impact.	Exceptional potential for scientific impact, advancing the field significantly.
<p><b>Clinical and Therapeutic Impact</b> The potential of the research to improve clinical practice, develop new therapies, or enhance patient care and outcomes.</p>	No potential for clinical or therapeutic impact.	Limited potential for clinical or therapeutic impact.	Adequate potential for clinical or therapeutic impact.	Strong potential for clinical or therapeutic impact.	Exceptional potential for clinical or therapeutic impact, with clear pathways to patient benefit.
<p><b>Societal and Patient Impact</b> The potential of the research to improve the quality of life, access to care, or societal awareness and support for individuals affected by cancer.</p>	No potential for societal or patient impact.	Limited potential for societal or patient impact.	Adequate potential for societal or patient impact.	Strong potential for societal or patient impact.	Exceptional potential for societal or patient impact, improving quality of life or access to care.
<p><b>Policy and Regulatory Impact</b> The potential of the research to influence health policies, regulatory guidelines, or standards of care.</p>	No potential for policy or regulatory impact.	Limited potential for policy or regulatory impact.	Adequate potential for policy or regulatory impact.	Strong potential for policy or regulatory impact.	Exceptional potential for policy or regulatory impact, influencing guidelines or standards.

<p><b>Sustainability and Scalability</b> The potential of the research to produce long-term benefits (e.g., through asset-building efforts in line with the FAIR principles), be scalable to other contexts, or contribute to sustainable solutions.</p>	<p>No potential for sustainability or scalability.</p>	<p>Limited potential for sustainability or scalability.</p>	<p>Adequate potential for sustainability or scalability.</p>	<p>Strong potential for sustainability or scalability.</p>	<p>Exceptional potential for sustainability and scalability, ensuring long-term benefits.</p>
<p>Overall score (A, B or C)</p>					