



## Exercise and sport in open water

*Wanted: solutions to get more people to do sports and exercise in open water*

### Description of challenge

The Netherlands has a movement crisis. Only 40% of Dutch people meet the recommended exercise guidelines. The Dutch government believes this should be at least 75% by 2040.

This goal will not be achieved by paying a 'little extra attention' to stimulating sport and physical activity; rather, innovation and ground-breaking solutions are needed to get more people moving and playing sports.

Sportinnovator sees opportunities for getting more people moving and doing sports in and on all the open water our country is so rich in and challenges entrepreneurs and creatives to come up with innovative solutions.

The Netherlands is a country of water and has a unique swimming and water culture. This is not surprising, as water is never far from where we live. And unlike in many other countries, we use all those ditches, canals, rivers, lakes, swimming pools and also the sea for recreation. Swimming, sailing, rowing, surfing, snorkelling & diving, stand-up paddle boarding, lifeguarding, as well as kite surfing, kayaking, water skiing and wakeboarding - there is plenty to do and experience. Sometimes as a sport linked to a club membership or a subscription with a sports provider, but often as a holiday activity/outing, a water-based event or on one's own.

Yet it is only on hot days in summer that we see traffic jams creeping towards the beaches and crowds on the water. The Netherlands has many beautiful spots of open water, which many more people could use to exercise with pleasure. Even outside those hot holidays. Then more Dutch people will also comply with the exercise guidelines.

Do you have a solution that will get more people exercising and moving in open water? Then we would like to hear your proposal!

### About us

[Sportinnovator](#) is the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport's programme for sports innovation in the Netherlands with the aim of increasing the return on innovation in sport and contributing to a more vital society.

In a [national network of Sportinnovator centres](#), government, scientists, sports professionals and entrepreneurs work together on pioneering innovations that promote performance in top and grassroots sport and encourage people to lead a more active lifestyle.

The Sportinnovator programme is led by Topteam Sport and supported by ZonMw and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport of the Dutch government.



## What are we looking for?

The central question is: how can we get more people to exercise and do sport in and on all the open water our country is so rich in? We are looking for innovative solutions with concepts or technologies that remove barriers and challenge people to exercise and sport in or on open water. We are looking for solutions that are not yet available in the leisure, water and sports sectors. At the same time, it is important that there is potential and ambition for large-scale and structural ways to get and keep people moving.

We think it is important that solutions connect to the obstacles and motives of groups of people to exercise and sport. It is an advantage if you can substantiate that your innovation reaches a group of people who, in a general sense, do not exercise or exercise enough. We'd like to see that people's lifestyle or sports needs are central and that the supply or innovation helps meet those needs. It can therefore be valuable if an innovation is not only linked to one branch of sport or type of physical activity.

Innovations can remove barriers to greater use of open water for exercise and sport, but these barriers are very different for people.

- For example, many people find the water outside the summer months (too) cold. Water temperature is also a concern from a safety point of view.
- Some people do not go into or onto the water because of the perceived risks of drowning or falling ill.
- In a broader sense, there seems to be a tension between making safe choices/preventing risks/ fear of water conditions versus challenging yourself/ seeking adventure/ connecting with nature.
- Furthermore, it seems difficult for recreational users to find up-to-date and complete information online about water quality and conditions, activities, crowds, accessibility and facilities in relation to a waterfront location.
- Finally, the trend is, on the one hand, that more and more people are going to exercise and sport individually and/or unorganised/informally. On the other hand, groups of people (e.g. young people and families) meet up at the water's edge to have a good time. There are also all kinds of groups of people who find each other locally and often via the internet to go swimming or do other activities together.

It is important that the plan pays specific attention to safety/drowning prevention. It is preferred that possible activities/pilots/projects are linked to the bathing water sites designated by the provinces (see [www.zwemwater.nl](http://www.zwemwater.nl)).

Innovations can be aimed at some of the (market) parties mentioned in the background information or directly at the individual leisure consumer.

## What are we not looking for?

- We are not looking for proposals from an individual swimming or sports organisation if there is no ambition to scale up and if there is no entrepreneurial expertise involved
- We are not looking for plans that only focus on research
- We do not focus on already existing initiatives
- We are not looking for innovations that focus on activities in which physical activity plays little or no role (such as motor boating, paddling)
- We are looking for innovations that focus on activities that take place in or on the water, not on those that only take place next to the water (e.g. on the beach, quay, pier, etc)
- We are not looking for innovations that focus on skating or other winter sports activities
- We are not looking for proposals that only focus on the provision of outdoor and indoor swimming pools or only focus on renewing swimming lessons or diploma swimming for the National Swimming Certificates A, B and C.



## What is there to gain?

A total of **€200,000** (incl. VAT) is available for this challenge and will be distributed among 4 or 5 winners, based on the proposals submitted. Up to **€50,000** (incl. VAT) in costs will be reimbursed by Sportinnovator for each proposal.

This innovation competition is a form of pre-commercial procurement. Companies receive a development budget in line with the market that must lead to a minimal viable product or to the validation of a concept. A practical test is part of the plan.

Besides the development budget, Sportinnovator offers an interesting network of cooperation partners and experts who can challenge you to make the solution even better and we can take care of publicity through Sportinnovator's media channels. At the end of the project, we expect the exporting company to be able to independently scale up and market the product. We will use our network for that.

## Evaluation criteria

The evaluation of your proposal will be based on 5 criteria, each with its own weighting factor:

- Quality (20%)
- Impact (30%)
- Feasibility (20%)
- Economic perspective (20%)
- Budget (10%)

The assessment will also consider whether the proposals are sufficiently distinct from one another. We strive for different types of solutions to the issue.

See the procedural document for the exact elaboration of the assessment criteria.

The assessment is made by an independent jury. After a written evaluation, the best proposals (max. 8) will be invited for a live pitch, where questions from the jury can be answered in more detail. Afterwards, the jury will determine the final scores and the winners will be announced.

## Conditions of participation

In addition to a pitch/offer, you must also complete our Uniform European Tender Form (UEA) when you register. Furthermore, if you win, you will have to provide a number of formal documents:

- Excerpt from the Chamber of Commerce
- Declaration of compliance with tax obligations
- Declaration of Conduct for Procurement
- Corporate or professional liability insurance

For full details, please refer to the full procedure document (tender document, in Dutch). This challenge is subject to the General Conditions of Government Procurement (ARVODI-2018) in the Netherlands.

## Your proposal (max 6 pages / 18 slides)

- **Description of solution:**  
Give a short description of the concept and how it contributes to the aim of this Challenge. And what results will be achieved after a year. Also indicate to what extent the concept distinguishes itself from what is already available in the market and provide insight into the business case, which demonstrates that the project can be sustained.
- **Description of the approach:**  
Give a description of what is needed to carry out the project, to make a prototype and/or to set up a pilot. Address content, planning, required access/materials/data and risks.



- **Description of the intended social value:**

Describe concrete (and preferably measurable) goals and what social value the innovation aims to achieve, and explain how this is linked to the solution and approach. Show how the solution connects to barriers and/or motives of groups of people to exercise and sport.

- **Team description:**

Give a short description of the company, the team that will realise the innovation, possible cooperation with partner organisations and how the final target group will be involved. What involvement do you wish or expect from Sportinnovator and other parties?

- **Quote:**

Make the costs of the project transparent. The quote can be submitted in any format, but fits in well with the rest of the proposal. Please state clearly the total amount including VAT.

The proposal may be submitted in any format (presentation/slide deck, letter format), but must be uploaded as a pdf file (landscape or portrait A4) (max. 30MB). Links to external sources will not be considered by the jury. Do not forget to upload the signed UEA alongside your proposal.

*Pitches in English are allowed*

## Challenge timeline

- 25 May 2022 - Launch of Challenge
- **Tuesday, 14 June 2022, 14:00** - online information meeting
- Thursday, 16 June: 12:00: First deadline to ask questions
- Monday 20 June: Publication of 'Explanatory Memorandum (answer to questions)'
- Wednesday 29 June 12:00 noon: Deadline for asking questions
- Friday 1 July: Final answer to questions in 'Explanatory Memorandum'
- **Monday, 11 July 17:00: Challenge deadline - submission of proposal**

After submitting your proposal, the timeline will look like this:

- By 31 August: evaluation of the proposals
- By 1 September at the latest: send out invitations for the live pitch round
- **Wednesday, 7 September:** live pitch
- 27 September 2022: sending of award notification
- 10 calendar days: period for objecting to award decision
- 10 October 2022: dispatch of order letter
- 1 November 2022: latest start date of implementation

## Background information

There are 946 official swimming water locations in the Netherlands ([www.zwemwater.nl](http://www.zwemwater.nl)). These locations have been designated by the provinces and water quality is measured there regularly from 1 May to 1 October. But many Dutch people also jump into the water in all sorts of other places, and in a general sense that is not forbidden either.

Approximately 400 companies are affiliated with the water recreation department of the HISWA-RECRON employers' organisation. Furthermore, municipalities often own the local water bodies and also the recreational lakes, but the management and operation is often outsourced. Stakeholders in recreational areas also have their own 'consultative body for cooperative outdoor recreation' (OSO).

The various sports also have their own sports federations. In addition to the swimming association (KNZB, 422 associations, 129,000 members), these include the water sports association (362 associations, 75,000 members), the rowing association (KNRB - 41,000 members), the rescue teams (Reddingsbrigade Nederland - 157 associations, 21,000 members), the water friends associations (NCS, +/- 50 swimming associations) and the underwater sports association (NOB - 258 associations, 13,000 members). 96% of all children obtain at



least one swimming diploma (annually more than 350,000 swimming diplomas A, B and C) and during a hot summer, 6.8 million Dutch people go swimming or enjoy recreation at open water locations.

Other sources of information (in Dutch):

- [Swimming in surface water, what about it?](#) (2020) - overview of stakeholders and policies
- [Perceived safety at outdoor swimming spots](#) (2019) - survey among 15-79 year-olds
- [Many opportunities for water sports](#) (2017) - online message following research
- [Youth and water sports in Friesland](#) (2017) - four future scenarios
- [Building blocks mobility-friendly environment](#) (2021) - framework with suggestions for blue space
- [Monitor sports and coronavirus](#) (2021) - research changing sports and exercise behaviour during coronavirus
- [How the Netherlands plays sports](#) (2021) - trends and developments in sports participation in 2020
- [Swimming and recreation of 65+ people](#) (2021) - research among 65+ people
- [www.allesoverzwemles.nl](http://www.allesoverzwemles.nl) - collection of basic information about learning to swim/swimming lessons
- [National Swimming Safety Plan](#) (2020) - implementation plan policy 2021-2024