
2021-2024 Tel mee met Taal (Count on skills) Subsidy Scheme. [Scheme expires on 1 January 2025.] Effective from 20 November 2021 to present

Scheme of the Minister of Education, Culture and Science of 7 December 2020 MBO/26228811, containing rules for allocating subsidies to tackle low literacy (Subsidy scheme Tel mee met Taal (Count on skills) programme 2021-2024)

The Minister of Education, Culture and Science,

In view of Sections 4 and 5 of the OCW (other subsidies) Act (*Wet overige OCW-subsidies*) and articles 1.3 and 2.1 of the Framework Regulation for OCW, SZW and VWS Subsidies (*Kaderregeling subsidies OCW, SZW en VWS*);

Decrees as follows:

§ 1. General provisions

Article 1. Definition of terms

In this regulation the following terms are defined:

additional activities: activities as referred to in article 5(1)(a)(b);

abroad: countries that are a member of the European Economic Area and Switzerland, with the exception of the Netherlands and the Caribbean Netherlands; the Caribbean Netherlands: Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba (BES);

contact hours:

- a. for a subsidy as referred to in section 2: the number of hours of actual contact between an employee or a group of employees and one or more language teachers;
- b. for a subsidy as referred to in section 3: the number of hours of actual contact between a parent or a group of parents and one or more people giving the course;

course:

- a. for a subsidy as referred to in section 3: a course as referred to in article 13(1)(a) and (2);
- b. for a subsidy as referred to in section 4: a course as referred to in article 20(1)(a)(b);

employment:

- a. employment based on an employment contract as referred to in Sections 610 and 690 of Book 7 of the Dutch Civil Code;
- b. employment contract based on Section 1 of the 2017 Central and Local Government Personnel Act (*Ambtenarenwet 2017*) or Section 2 of the Sheltered Employment Act (*Wet Sociale werkvoorziening*);
- c. contract for services as referred to in Section 400 of Book 7 of the Dutch Civil Code;
- d. employment abroad, comparable with employment as referred to under (a), (b) or (c);

digital skills: skills in the use of identifiable digital applications within the everyday living, working and learning environments and in carrying out the most common actions in the following domains:

- a. use of IT systems;
- b. security, privacy and ergonomics;
- c. searching for information;
- d. processing and presenting information; and
- e. communication;

experiment: experiment as referred to in Section 20 (1);

experiment focused on reaching people: experiment as referred to in article 20, opening words and (1)(a);

civic integration course: the whole of activities carried out in preparation of the civic integration examination, referred to in Section 7(2)(a) of the Civic Integration Act (*Wet inburgering*) or in preparation of the State Exams Dutch as a Second Language;

Framework Regulation: Framework Regulation for OCW, SZW and VWS Subsidies;

minister: The Minister of Education, Culture and Science (OCW);

follow-up care: follow-up care as referred to in article 5(1)(b);

T&D fund: Training and Development fund, set up by a collective labour agreement registered with the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment;

educational organization: an educational organization as referred to in article 7 for which the language teacher works;

training programme: training programme as referred to in article 5(1);

parent:

- a. natural parent or adoptive parent of a minor within the meaning of Sections 197 to 232 of Book 1 of the Dutch Civil Code;
- b. guardian of a minor within the meaning of Sections 280 to 301 of Book 1 of the Dutch Civil Code;
- c. carer who takes care of and raises a minor without having custody of that minor.

other activities: activities as referred to in article 13 (1)(b) and (3);

numeracy skills: skills in the area of numbers, ratios, measuring and geometry, or correlations;

language teacher: a teacher as referred to in article 7;

language skills: writing skills, reading skills, listening skills or speaking skills in Dutch;

preparation: preparation as referred to in article 5(1)(a);

employer: a natural person or legal entity, not the State, or a province, a water authority, a local authority or a foreign government body, where the employees are employed;

employee: natural person who is employed by an employer.

Article 2. Application of Framework Regulation for OCW, SZW and VWS subsidies

This scheme applies in addition to the Framework Regulation.

Article 3. Eligible activities

1. The minister may grant a subsidy for activities as referred to in sections 2, 3 or 4.
2. The minister does not grant subsidies for the following:
 - a. a civic integration course or part thereof;
 - b. an education course as referred to in Section 7.3.1(1) of the Adult and Vocational Education Act or part thereof;
 - c. a vocational training course as referred to in Section 7.1.2(2) of the Adult and Vocational Education Act or part thereof.
 - d. another course resulting in a diploma recognized by the minister or part thereof;
 - e. activities for which the applicant has already been granted a subsidy or other financial contribution by the minister or by one or more other administrative bodies; or
 - f. activities that have already begun before the application was submitted.
3. Notwithstanding paragraph 2(f) and, if applicable, article 3.2(2) of the Framework Regulation, a subsidy may also be granted for the preparation that starts prior to the application.

Article 4. The subsidy application

1. A subsidy application as referred to in sections 2, 3 or 4, requires the use of a standard form established by the minister that is published on the website <https://www.dus-i.nl/subsidies/tel-mee-met-taal>.
2. In the calendar years 2021 up to and including 2024, the application may be submitted in the period from 1 January up to and including the last day of February. Any applications submitted outside the application period will be rejected by the minister.

§ 2. Subsidy for activities for low-literate employees

Article 5. Subsidy for activities for low-literate employees

1. On application, the minister may grant an employer a subsidy for a training programme provided in

Dutch by a language teacher with at least 30 contact hours per employee and aimed at improving one or more language skills, one or more numeracy skills or the digital skills of the employee, and for the following additional activities, if necessary:

- a. preparation, i.e. recruiting employees and determining which training programme would be most appropriate for them; and
 - b. follow-up care, i.e. helping employees to enrol in follow-up training, promoting the training programme's results within the employer's organization, or incorporating them into the employer's HR policy.
2. The employer is registered with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK or, if the employer is based abroad, is registered with the body in its country of incorporation that is comparable with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK.
 3. An application for a training programme aimed at improving one or more language skills may only be made for employees living in the Netherlands who have a command of one or more Dutch language skills at a reference level lower than reference level 2F, as established in annex 1 accompanying the Reference Levels Dutch Language and Arithmetic Decree.
 4. An application for a training programme aimed at improving one or more numeracy skills may only be made for employees living in the Netherlands who have a command of one or more language skills at a reference level lower than the reference level referred to in paragraph 3, or have a command of one or more numeracy skills at a reference level lower than reference level 2F, as established in annex 1 accompanying the Reference Levels Dutch Language and Arithmetic Decree.
 5. An application for a training programme aimed at improving one or more digital skills may only be made for employees living in the Netherlands who have a command of one or more language skills at a reference level lower than the reference level referred to in paragraph 3, or have a command of one or more digital skills at a reference level lower than Basic level 2, as established in annex 8 accompanying the 2013 Education attainment targets regulation.
 6. The employer establishes an employee's reference level as referred to in paragraph 3 based on a current individual level assessment or level indication. The level assessment or level indication is made at the latest before the start of the training programme based on a validated instrument. If a written or digital test is not possible due to the employee's language level or level of digital skills, the level assessment or level indication can be carried out verbally, evidenced by an interview report. The language teacher signs the interview report.
 7. An employer may only apply for the subsidy referred to in this section once a year.

Article 6. Budget holder status

1. The application as referred to in article 5(1) may also be submitted by a budget holder, i.e.:
 - a. an employer making the proposed application on behalf of one or more employers; or
 - b. a Training & Development fund or educational organization making the proposed application on behalf of one or more employers.
2. The budget holder is registered with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK or, if the budget holder is based abroad, is registered with the body in its country of incorporation that is comparable with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK.
3. If the application is submitted by a budget holder, the subsidy will likewise be granted to and accounted for by the budget holder.
4. All obligations attached to the subsidy rest with the budget holder, regardless of which party is actually tasked with conducting the work related to the subsidy.
5. If the application is submitted by a budget holder, the application contains a statement by all

employers on whose behalf the application is made, stating that the budget holder is authorized to represent them at law and otherwise in the context of the subsidy grant, and that all information required to comply with the obligations attached to the subsidy will be provided to the budget holder on request. The statement is signed by all employers.

6. A budget holder may only apply for the subsidy referred to in this section once a year on behalf of the same employer or employers. The employer or employers on whose behalf the budget holder submits the application may not apply for a subsidy themselves in the same year and may not join an application of another budget holder.

Article 7. Language teacher training programmes

1. A language teacher who provides a training programme is demonstrably competent to provide language education in Dutch, which is evidenced by the following:
 - a. a certificate, issued under the Higher Education and Research Act, showing that the following requirements were met:
 - 1°. the competency requirements established pursuant to Section 32a(1) of the Primary Education Act;
 - 2°. the competency requirements established pursuant to Section 36(1) of the Secondary Education Act and showing that the language teacher is proficient in one of the language or literature degree programmes; or
 - 3°. the competency requirements established pursuant to Section 4.2.3(1) of the Adult and Vocational Education Act and showing that the language teacher is proficient in one of the language or literature degree programmes;
 - b. a recognition of professional qualifications as referred to in Section 5 of the Recognition of EU Vocational Qualifications Act, granted for the education that the language teacher will provide;
 - c. a certificate of suitability, as referred to in Section 176b of the Primary Education Act, Section 118k of the Secondary Education Act or 4.2.4 of the Adult and Vocational Education Act, showing the suitability for language teaching;
 - d. employment as a language teacher for an educational organization associated with the Dutch Council for Training and Education or as an associated independent language teacher;
 - e. employment as a language teacher for an educational organization who has the 'Blik op Werk' quality mark or as an independent language teacher who has this quality mark;
 - f. employment as a language teacher at an institution for secondary vocational education; or
 - g. a Certificate of NT2 Competent Teacher, issued by the Association for Teachers of Dutch as a Second Language.
2. A language teacher, as referred to in paragraph 1, is employed by an educational organization registered with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK or is registered with the Chamber of Commerce as an independent teacher. If the educational organization or independent language teacher is based abroad, the educational organization or independent language teacher is registered with the body in its country of incorporation that is comparable with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK.

Article 8. Eligible costs

Only direct costs incurred to conduct the activities as referred to in article 5(1) are eligible for subsidy. The following applies to these direct costs:

- a. they may not exceed €150 per contact hour for each training programme;
- b. they may not exceed €1,500 per employee for each training programme;
- c. for preparation (if any), they may not exceed 5% of the eligible costs for the training programme or in the case of multiple training programmes, may not exceed 5% of the total eligible costs for the training programmes as a whole; and
- d. for follow-up care (if any), they may not exceed 10% of the eligible costs for the training programme or in the case of multiple training programmes, may not exceed 10% of the total eligible costs for the training programmes as a whole.

Article 9. Subsidy amount and personal contribution or contributions by third parties

1. The amount of the subsidy per application has a maximum of €125,000.
2. The amount of the subsidy does not exceed 67% of the eligible costs, referred to in article 8. The applicant pays for the remaining 33% through a personal contribution or contributions by third parties.

Article 10. Subsidy cap and method of distributing available funds

1. Subsidy grants based on this section amount to the following:
 - a. in the 2021 calendar year, a sum of no more than €8,800,000;
 - b. in the 2022 calendar year, a sum of no more than €2,850,000 for subsidy grants to employers in the European part of the Netherlands and no more than €50,000 for subsidy grants to employers in the Caribbean Netherlands;
 - c. in the 2023 and 2024 calendar years, an annual sum of no more than €3,300,000 for subsidy grants to employers in the European part of the Netherlands and no more than €50,000 for subsidy grants to employers in the Caribbean Netherlands;
2. If the subsidy cap in any one year is not high enough to allocate all eligible applications, the applications will be ranked by drawing lots.
3. If, after the application period referred to in article 4(2), the subsidy cap for 2021 is not exhausted, a second application period will be opened from 1 June 2021 up to and including 30 June 2021.
4. If the subsidy cap for employers in the European part of the Netherlands in the years 2022, 2023 or 2024 is not exhausted, the remaining amount will be added to the subsidy cap for the European part of the Netherlands, referred to in article 17(1), in the relevant year for the subsidy. If after application of the first sentence there are funds left in 2022, these funds will be added to the subsidy cap referred to in article 24(1) for that calendar year.
5. If the subsidy cap for employers in the Caribbean Netherlands in the years 2022, 2023 or 2024 is not exhausted, the remaining amount will be added to the subsidy cap for the Caribbean Netherlands for activities for low-literate parents, referred to in article 17(1), in the relevant year for the subsidy. If after application of the previous sentence there are funds left, these will be added to the budget for the European part of the Netherlands, referred to in article 10(1), for the relevant calendar year.

Article 11. Subsidy application requirements

1. The applicant must submit the following documents with an application for a subsidy as referred to in this section:
 - a. an activity plan that meets the requirements stated in article 3.4 of the Framework Regulation and that includes at least the following:
 - 1°. a description of the training programme or the training programmes for which a subsidy has been requested, showing at least the number of contact hours, the period in which the training programme is offered, the number of employees, the group size in each training programme, the level of the training programme, the teaching method used, the educational organization or independent language teacher and the testing instruments to be used;
 - 2°. a description of the objectives of the training programme or the training programmes and the way in which these fit in with the employees' current or future activities at work;
 - 3°. a description of any additional activities; and
 - 4°. a form of monitoring chosen to evaluate, after completion of the training programme or the training programmes, the extent to which its objectives and any additional activities have been achieved, with the applicant being able to choose between self-assessment, impact measurement or the recording of learning outcomes or test results;
 - b. a budget that meets the requirements set in article 3.5 of the Framework Regulation and that at least shows clearly the total costs of the training programme or the training programmes, the costs per employee, the number of contact hours, the costs per contact hour and the amount of the personal contribution or the contributions by third parties; and

- c. if the application is made by a budget holder: the statement as referred to in article 6(5).
2. In the application, the applicant lists the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK registration number and that of the educational organization or independent language teacher, unless the applicant, the educational organization or independent language teacher is based abroad, in which case the registration number of a similar institution in the country of incorporation should be listed.

Article 12. Obligations

1. The activities will be completed within 18 months starting from the moment the subsidy was granted.
2. The subsidy recipient ensures that each employee who participates in a training programme attends at least 30 contact hours of this training programme, unless the subsidy recipient is able to demonstrate that there have been unforeseen circumstances and that the subsidy recipient has made adequate efforts to have the employee catch up on those hours where reasonably possible, or to have another employee take part in the training programme. If another employee is permitted by the subsidy recipient to take part in the training programme, this employee must also take at least 30 contact hours.
3. The subsidy recipient records the following:
 - a. how many employees and how many of each sex have taken part in the training programme or the training programmes;
 - b. how many employees have Dutch as their mother tongue or as a second language; and
 - c. the number of attended contact hours per employee.
4. At the end of the training programme and any additional activities, the subsidy recipient will evaluate to what extent the objectives have been met, with the subsidy recipient using the form of monitoring, referred to in article 11(1)(a)(4°), as indicated on the application. The subsidy recipient must submit the evaluation to the minister no later than three months after the end of the subsidized activities.
5. In addition to article 5.4 of the Framework Regulation, the subsidy recipient will, during the term of the subsidized activities and up to one year after these end, cooperate on the minister's request with initiatives in the context of the Tel mee met Taal (Count on skills) programme to comment on the implementation or results of the training programme and any additional activities.
6. The subsidy recipient will demand from the educational organization or independent language teacher that they keep the information required for the records, referred to in section 3, and share it with the subsidy recipient and, furthermore, that they will cooperate with the evaluation referred to in article 5.4 of the Framework Regulation.
7. If the records as referred to in (3) are requested by the minister for the purposes of accountability and confirmation of the subsidy, the subsidy recipient will remove the employees' personal data from those records.

§ 3. Subsidy for activities for low-literate parents

Article 13. Subsidy for activities for low-literate parents

1. On request, the minister may grant a subsidy to a budget holder as referred to in article 14 for the following purposes:
 - a. a course for parents given in Dutch and consisting of at least 30 contact hours per parent; or
 - b. other activities aimed at parents.
2. The course referred to in (1)(a) is aimed at improving one or more language skills, one or more numeracy skills or the digital skills of the parent and, where language skills are concerned, applying those skills in communication with and about their child or children. The course

contributes to developing an educational partnership between parent and educational institutions, youth healthcare institutions, and preschool facilities, and promotes an intellectually stimulating home environment.

3. The other activities, referred to in (1)(b) are aimed at:
 - a. promoting an educational partnership between parent and educational institutions, childcare institutions, youth healthcare institutions and preschool facilities, and developing one or more language skills, one or more numeracy skills or digital skills; or
 - b. promoting an intellectually stimulating home environment and developing one or more language skills, one or more numeracy skills or digital skills.
4. An application for an educational programme aimed at improving one or more language skills may only be made for parents living in the Netherlands who have a command of one or more Dutch language skills at a reference level lower than reference level 2F, as established in annex 1 accompanying the Reference Levels Dutch Language and Arithmetic Decree.
5. An application for an educational programme aimed at improving one or more numeracy skills may only be made for parents living in the Netherlands who have a command of one or more language skills at a reference level lower than the reference level referred to in paragraph 4, or have a command of one or more numeracy skills at a reference level lower than reference level 2F, as established in annex 1 accompanying the Reference Levels Dutch Language and Arithmetic Decree.
6. An application for an educational programme aimed at improving one or more digital skills may only be made for parents living in the Netherlands who have a command of one or more language skills at a reference level lower than the reference level referred to in paragraph 4, or have a command of one or more digital skills at a reference level lower than Basic level 2, as established in annex 8, attainment targets for digital skills accompanying the 2013 Education attainment targets regulation.
7. For the parents participating in the course, the applicant establishes each parent's reference level, referred to in paragraph 4, based on a current individual level assessment or level indication. The level assessment or level indication is made at the latest before the start of the course based on a validated instrument. If a written or digital test is not possible due to the parent's language level or level of digital skills, the level assessment or level indication can be carried out verbally, evidenced by an interview report. The language teacher signs the interview report.
8. An application is supported by a local authority and includes a statement of support signed by the local authorities supporting the application.

Article 14. Budget holder status

1. A budget holder is a natural person or legal entity, not being the State, a province, a water authority, local authority or foreign government body, who submits the application on behalf of at least two other parties, which must in any case include a local library, a youth healthcare institution, an educational institution or a preschool facility.
2. The budget holder is registered with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK or, if the budget holder is based abroad, is registered with the body in its country of incorporation that is comparable with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK.
3. The subsidy will be granted to and accounted for by the budget holder.
4. All obligations attached to the subsidy rest with the budget holder, regardless of which party is actually tasked with conducting the work related to the subsidy.
5. The application contains a statement by all parties on whose behalf the application is made, stating that the budget holder is authorized to represent them at law and otherwise in the context of the subsidy grant, and that all information required to comply with the obligations attached to the

subsidy will be provided to the budget holder on request. The statement is signed by all parties.

6. In that capacity, the budget holder may only apply for the subsidy referred to in this section once a year. The application relates to either a course or to other activities.

Article 15. Eligible costs

1. The subsidy is only intended to cover the direct costs of providing the courses. The direct costs may not exceed €600 per parent, regardless of whether the parent takes one or more courses.
2. The subsidy is only intended to cover the direct costs of providing the other activities.

Article 16. Subsidy amount and personal contribution or contributions by third parties

1. The amount of the subsidy per application has a maximum of €125,000.
2. The amount of the subsidy does not exceed 67% of the eligible costs. The applicant pays for the remaining 33% through a personal contribution or contributions by third parties.

Article 17. Subsidy cap and method for distributing the available funds

1. Subsidy grants based on this section amount to the following:
 - a. in the 2021 calendar year, a sum of no more than €1,300,000;
 - b. in the 2022 calendar year, a sum of no more than €1,250,000 for applicants in the European part of the Netherlands and no more than €50,000 for applicants in the Caribbean Netherlands;
 - c. in the 2023 and 2024 calendar years, an annual sum of no more than €1,700,000 for subsidy grants to applicants in the European part of the Netherlands and no more than €50,000 for subsidy grants to applicants in the Caribbean Netherlands;
2. If the subsidy cap in any one year is not high enough to allocate all eligible applications, the applications will be ranked by drawing lots.
3. If the subsidy cap for applicants in the European part of the Netherlands in the years 2022, 2023 or 2024 is not exhausted, the remaining amount will be added to the subsidy cap for the European part of the Netherlands, referred to in article 10(1), in the relevant year for the subsidy. If after application of the first sentence there are funds left in 2022, these funds will be added to the subsidy cap referred to in article 24(1) for that calendar year.
4. If the subsidy cap for applicants in the Caribbean Netherlands in the years 2022, 2023 or 2024 is not exhausted, the remaining amount will be added to the subsidy cap for the Caribbean Netherlands, referred to in article 10(1), in the relevant year for the subsidy. If after application of the previous sentence there are funds left, these will be added to the budget for the European Netherlands, referred to in paragraph 1.

Article 18. Subsidy application requirements

1. The applicant must submit the following documents with an application for a subsidy:
 - a. an activity plan that meets the requirements stated in article 3.4 of the Framework Regulation and that includes at least the following:
 - 1°. a description of the course or courses for which a subsidy is requested, showing at least the number of contact hours, the period in which activities are offered, the number of parents, the group size per course and the teaching method used;
 - 2°. a description of the objectives of the course or courses and how the course or courses will contribute to the objectives, as referred to in article 13(2);
 - 3°. a form of monitoring chosen to evaluate, after completion of the course or courses, the extent to which its objectives have been achieved, with the applicant being able to choose between self-assessment, impact measurement or the recording of learning outcomes or test results;

- b. a budget that meets the requirements set in article 3.5 of the Framework Regulation and that at least shows clearly the total costs of the course or courses, the costs per parent and the size of the parent's personal contribution or the contributions of third parties;
 - c. the statement of support, referred to in article 13(5); and
 - d. the statement, referred to in article 14(5).
2. The applicant must submit the following documents with an application for a subsidy for other activities:
- a. an activity plan that meets the requirements stated in article 3.4 of the Framework Regulation and that includes at least the following:
 - 1°. a description of the other activities for which a subsidy is requested, as well as a description of how these activities will be carried out, the duration of implementation and the distribution of the tasks between the parties involved;
 - 2°. a description of the needs that the other activities will meet, the objectives, results or products pursued through those activities;
 - 3°. a description of the expected results of the other activities and how these contribute to the objectives, as referred to in article 13(3);
 - 4°. a form of monitoring chosen to evaluate, after completion of the other activities, the extent to which the objectives have been achieved, with the applicant being able to choose between self-assessment, impact measurement or the recording of learning outcomes or test results;
 - b. a budget that meets the requirements set in article 3.5 of the Framework Regulation and that at least shows clearly the size of the personal contribution or the contributions of third parties.
 - c. the statement of support, referred to in article 13(5); and
 - d. the statement, referred to in article 14(5).
3. In addition to article 3.3 of the Framework Regulation, the applicant lists the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK registration number, unless the applicant is based abroad, in which case the registration number of a similar institution in the country of incorporation should be listed.

Article 19. Obligations

1. The activities will be completed within 18 months starting from the moment the subsidy was granted.
2. The subsidy recipient ensures that each parent who participates in a course attends at least 30 contact hours of the course, unless the subsidy recipient is able to demonstrate that there are unforeseen circumstances and that the subsidy recipient has made efforts to have the parent catch up those hours where reasonably possible, or have another parent take part in the training programme. If another parent is permitted by the subsidy recipient to take part in the course, this parent must also take at least 30 contact hours.
3. The subsidy recipient records the following:
 - a. the number of parents and how many of each sex have taken part in the course or courses or other activities;
 - b. how many parents have Dutch as their mother tongue or as a second language; and
 - c. for a course: the number of attended contact hours per parent.
4. After the additional activities, as referred to in article 13, have ended, the subsidy recipient evaluates to what extent the objectives have been met, with the subsidy recipient using the form of monitoring, referred to in article 18(1)(a)(3°), or article 18(2)(a)(4°) respectively, as indicated on the application. The subsidy recipient must submit the evaluation to the minister no later than three months after the end of the subsidized activities.
5. In addition to article 5.4 of the Framework Regulation, the subsidy recipient will, during the term of the subsidized activities and up to one year after these end, cooperate at the minister's request with initiatives in the context of Tel mee met Taal (Count on skills) programme to comment on the implementation or results of subsidized activities.

6. If the records as referred to in (3) are requested by the minister for the purposes of accountability and confirmation of the subsidy, the subsidy recipient will remove the parents' personal data from those records.

§ 4. Subsidy for experiments

Article 20. Subsidy for experiments

1. At the request of a natural person or legal entity – not being the State, a province, a water authority, a local authority or a foreign government body – the minister may grant a subsidy as referred to in this section for experiments, i.e. innovative activities developed and tested in the field, aimed at better reaching low-literate people living in the Netherlands so that they are directed towards courses focused on language skills, numeracy skills or digital skills.
2. The applicant is registered with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK or, if the applicant is based abroad, is registered with the body in its country of incorporation that is comparable with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK.
3. An application is at least supported by a local authority and includes a statement of support signed by the local authorities supporting the application.
4. An applicant as referred to in the first paragraph may only apply for the subsidy referred to in this section once a year. Furthermore, the applicant may not apply for a subsidy that year as a budget holder, referred to in article 21(1).

Article 21. Budget holder status

1. The application, referred to in article 20(1) may also be submitted by a budget holder, i.e. a natural person or legal entity, not being the State, a province, a water authority, local authority or foreign government body, who submits the application on behalf of one or more other parties.
2. The budget holder is registered with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK or, if the budget holder is based abroad, is registered with the body in its country of incorporation that is comparable with the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK.
3. If the application is submitted by a budget holder as referred to in the first paragraph, the subsidy will also be granted to and accounted for by the budget holder.
4. All obligations attached to the subsidy rest with the budget holder, regardless of which party is actually tasked with conducting the work related to the subsidy.
5. The application contains a statement signed by all parties on whose behalf the application is made, stating that the budget holder is authorized to represent them at law and otherwise in the context of the subsidy grant, and that all information required to comply with the obligations attached to the subsidy is provided to the budget holder on request. The statement is signed by all parties.
6. In that capacity, the budget holder may only apply for the subsidy referred to in this section once a year. Furthermore, the budget holder may not apply for a subsidy that year in a personal capacity, referred to in article 20(1).

Article 22. Eligible costs

A subsidy is only intended to cover the direct costs of conducting an experiment.

Article 23. Subsidy amount and personal contribution or contributions by third parties

1. Applications for subsidies lower than €25,000 are rejected.
2. The amount of the subsidy per application has a maximum of €125,000.

3. The amount of the subsidy does not exceed 80% of the eligible costs. The applicant pays for the remaining 20% through a personal contribution or contributions by third parties.

Article 24. Subsidy cap and drawing of lots

1. Subsidy grants based on this section amount for the 2021 and 2022 calendar years to no more than €625,000 annually.
2. If the subsidy cap in any one year is not exhausted, the remaining amount will be used for applications submitted for the subsidies referred to in sections 2 and 3. The remaining amount will first be granted to subsidies with the greatest over-expenditure in percentage terms.
3. If the over-expenditure is three times the subsidy cap or more, lots will be drawn from the applications received in the application period, to determine which subsidy applications will be assessed in accordance with articles 25 to 27. The applications drawn will be rejected, unless they qualify for assessment under article 26(4)(5).
4. For the purpose of the draw referred to in paragraph 3, the minister will draw lots for a number of applications that combined amount to no more than €937,500.

Article 25. Subsidy application requirements

1. The applicant must submit the following documents with an application for a subsidy grant as referred to in this section:
 - a. an activity plan that, in derogation from article 3.4 of the Framework Regulation, as a minimum addresses the assessment criteria referred to in article 26(1);
 - b. a summary of the activity plan, suitable for readers at reference level 2F for Dutch as adopted in annex 1 accompanying the Reference Levels Dutch Language and Arithmetic Decree;
 - c. a budget that meets the requirements set in article 3.5 of the Framework Regulation and that at least shows clearly the total costs of the experiment and the size of the applicant's personal contribution or the contributions of third parties;
 - d. the statement of support, referred to in article 20(3); and
 - e. if the application is made by a budget holder: the statement as referred to in article 21(5).
2. In addition to article 3.3 of the Framework Regulation, the applicant lists the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce KvK registration number, unless the applicant is based abroad, in which case the registration number of a similar institution in the country of incorporation should be listed.

Article 26. Method of assessment

1. The minister assesses all applications or, if article 24(3)(4) applies, assesses the remaining applications after drawing lots, based on the following criteria:
 - a. relevance of the project;
 - b. quality of the activity plan;
 - c. practicability and feasibility;
 - d. support and cooperation; and
 - e. budget.
2. The criteria are specified in greater detail in an assessment framework, that is appended to this scheme.
3. Applications must be given at least a pass score on each of the criteria to qualify for a subsidy grant.
4. If lots are drawn as referred to in article 24(3)(4), and if all the applications with a pass score combined are below the subsidy cap referred to in article 24(1), the minister will then assess one or more of the applications rejected by lot.

5. Which application or applications that has or have been rejected in the draw will be assessed by the minister is determined on the basis of the order of the lots drawn, as referred to in article 24(3)(4). The minister will first select an application from the group of experiments for which the fewest applications were assessed with a pass score, and then select an application from the other group of experiments. The minister will repeat this process until the subsidy cap has been reached.
6. The minister will then rank the applications qualifying for a subsidy grant according to the previous paragraphs in descending order based on their total scores for the criteria referred to article 26(1).

Article 27. Advice from the National Basic Skills Centre

The minister requests advice from the National Basic Skills Centre for the assessment referred to in article 26. Before submitting the applications requested on the basis of article 26 to the National Basic Skills Centre, the minister first checks whether the applications are complete.

Article 28. Method for distributing available funds

1. The minister takes a decision on the application.
2. If the total number of applications qualifying for subsidy based on article 26 exceeds the subsidy cap for the calendar year referred to in article 24(1), the minister will reject one or more applications based on the ranking referred to in article 26(6) notwithstanding the provisions of article 26(3). If applications are ranked equally and only one of the applications can be accepted, the minister will decide by drawing lots.

Article 29. Obligations

1. The activities will be completed within 18 months starting from the moment the subsidy was granted.
2. In addition to article 5.4 of the Framework Regulation, the subsidy recipient will, during the term of the experiment and up to one year after it ends, cooperate at the minister's request with initiatives in the context of the Tel mee met Taal (Count on skills) programme to comment on the implementation or results of the experiment.
3. If the subsidy recipient is a state-funded educational institution, that state-funded educational institution will publish a description of the method and implementation of the experiment. Furthermore, the state-funded educational institution evaluates the method and implementation, addressing the following aspects:
 - a. Were the objectives of the experiment met?;
 - b. What investments were made? (in people and money);
 - c. What were the factors that determined success or failure?; and
 - d. were there unexpected effects?
4. The state-funded educational institution must submit the description and an evaluation of the method and implementation of the experiment to the minister no later than three months after the end of the subsidized activities.

§ 5. Extension of completion term, confirmation and accountability, publication of lessons learnt and positive examples

Article 30. Extension of the completion term

The minister may, at the applicant's request and in exceptional cases, decide to extend the completion term once only, as referred to in article 12(1), article 19(1) or article 29(1). The maximum extension is twelve months.

Article 31. Confirmation and accountability for applicants other than state-funded educational institutions

1. The subsidy is granted within 13 weeks of the relevant application period.
2. The minister pays out the full amount of the granted subsidy as a 100% advance.
3. Article 7.4 of the Framework Regulation applies to subsidies of up to €25,000.
4. Article 7.6 of the Framework Regulation applies to subsidies of between €25,000 and €125,000.
5. In derogation from article 1.1 of the Framework Regulation, the activities report of a subsidy, as referred to in section 4, must include the description and an evaluation of the method and implementation of the experiment, as referred to in article 29(3).

Article 32. Confirmation and accountability for state-funded educational institutions

1. The subsidy is granted immediately within 13 weeks of the relevant application period.
2. The minister pays out the full amount of the subsidy.
3. At the minister's request, the subsidy recipient demonstrates that:
 - a. the activities for which a subsidy has been granted have in fact been implemented; and
 - b. all subsidy conditions have been met.
4. Once these activities have been fully implemented and all conditions have been met, any remaining subsidy funds may be used for other activities for which the ministry provides funding.
5. The subsidy is to be accounted for in accordance with the Regulations for Annual Reports on Education, using Model G1.

Article 33. Publication of lessons learnt and positive examples

1. The minister will provide all evaluations, referred to in article 29(3) and all activity reports, as referred to in article 31(5), to the National Basic Skills Centre, for the National Basic Skills Centre to profit from the lessons learnt and positive examples of the subsidized activities referred to in section 4.
2. The minister may share the lessons learnt and positive examples of subsidized activities as referred to in sections 2 or 3 with the National Basic Skills Centre. In addition to article 33(1), the minister may also share the lessons learnt and positive examples of subsidized activities as referred to in section 4, derived from information other than that referred to in paragraph 1 with the National Basic Skills Centre.
3. The National Basic Skills Centre can publish the lessons learnt and positive examples.

§ 6. Applicability in the Caribbean Netherlands

Article 34. Applicability in the Caribbean Netherlands

1. This scheme applies to Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba (BES), with due observance of this section.
2. This section only applies to subsidy applicants and recipients in the Caribbean Netherlands.

Article 35. Derogation from and addition to definitions of terms

1. The following terms in article 1 are defined differently in the following way:

employment:

- a. employment based on an employment contract as referred to in Sections 1613a of Book 7 of the Civil Code of the BES Islands;
- b. appointment as referred to in Section 1 of the BES Central and Local Government Personnel Act;
- c. contract for services as referred to in Section 400 of Book 7 of the Civil Code of the BES Islands;

parent:

- a. natural parent or adoptive parent of a minor within the meaning of Sections 197 to 232a of Book 1 of the Civil Code of the BES Islands;
- b. guardian of a minor within the meaning of Sections 280 to 301 of Book 1 of the Civil Code of the BES Islands;
- c. carer who takes care of and raises a minor without having custody of that minor.

2. In this section the following terms are defined:

public body:

- d. Bonaire public body, Sint Eustatius public body or Saba public body.

Article 36. Derogations from and additions to sections 2 to 5

1. Throughout the scheme, Dutch or the Dutch language can also be understood to refer to Papiamentu, English or the English language.
2. The amounts in euros referred to in the scheme are converted into American dollars at the exchange rate confirmed by the minister each year.
3. In addition to article 3(2), the minister does not grant funding for the following:
 - a. an education course as referred to in Section 7.3.1(1) of the BES Adult and Vocational Education Act or part thereof; or
 - b. a vocational training course as referred to in Section 7.1.2(2) of the BES Adult and Vocational Education Act or part thereof.
4. For subsidies as referred to in section 2, the following applies:
 - a. the application, in addition to article 5(1) and article 6(1), cannot be made by a public body and the applicant must be established on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba;
 - b. the applicant, in derogation from article 5(2) and article 6(2), is registered with a Chamber of Commerce as referred to in the Chambers of Commerce and Industry Act for BES, and which registration number is listed on the application in accordance with article 11(2);
 - c. the application, in derogation from article 5(3) to (5), for an educational programme aimed at:
 - 1°. improving one or more language skills may only be made for employees living on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba, who have a command of one or more Dutch language skills at a level lower than reference level 2F, as established in annex 1 accompanying the Reference Levels Dutch Language and Arithmetic Decree, or a similar level in Papiamentu or English.
 - 2°. improving one or more numeracy skills may only be made for employees living on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba, who have a command of one or more language skills at a level lower than the reference level referred to under 1°, or have a command of one or more numeracy skills at a level lower than reference level 2F, as established in annex 1 accompanying the Reference Levels Dutch Language and Arithmetic Decree.
 - 3°. improving one or more digital skills may only be made for employees living on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba, who have a command of one or more language skills at a level lower than the reference level referred to under 1°, or have a command of one or more digital skills at a level lower than Basic level 2, as established in annex 8, attainment targets for digital skills accompanying the 2013 Education attainment targets regulation.
 - c1. for the Dutch language skill referred to in c., the reference level must be demonstrated by an up-to-date and individual level assessment or level indication made at the latest before the start

of the training programme and based on a validated instrument. If a written or digital Dutch language test is not possible due to, among other things, the employee's language level, the level assessment or level indication can be carried out verbally, evidenced by an interview report. The language teacher signs the interview report. For Papiamentu and the English language, the level must be properly substantiated;

- d. the training programme does in fact focus on the language in which the employee has low literacy skills and thus promotes the employee's self-empowerment in society;
- e. language teachers, in addition to article 7(1), are also able to demonstrate their competence by the following:
 - 1°. a certificate, issued under the Higher Education and Research Act, showing that the competency requirements established pursuant to Section 35(1) of the BES Primary Education Act were met;
 - 2°. a certificate, issued under the Higher Education and Research Act, showing that the competency requirements established pursuant to Section 86(1) of the BES Secondary Education Act were met and showing that the language teacher is competent in one of the language or literature degree programmes;
 - 3°. a certificate, issued under the Higher Education and Research Act, showing that the competency requirements established pursuant to Section 4.2.3(1) of the BES Adult and Vocational Education Act were met and showing that the language teacher is competent in one of the language or literature degree programmes;
 - 4°. employment as a language teacher for an institution for secondary vocational education as referred to in the BES Adult and Vocational Education Act; or
 - 5°. any other certificate showing that the language teacher is competent to provide language teaching; and
- f. the language teacher, in addition to article 7(2), can be employed by an educational organization which is registered with a Chamber of Commerce as referred to in the Chambers of Commerce and Industry Act for BES, or who as an independent language teacher is registered with a Chamber of Commerce as referred to in the Chambers of Commerce and Industry Act for BES and which registration number is listed on the application in accordance with article 11(2).

5. For subsidies as referred to in section 3, the following applies:

- a. the application, in derogation from article 13(4), for an educational programme aimed at:
 - 1°. improving one or more language skills may only be made for parents living on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba, who have a command of one or more Dutch language skills at a level lower than reference level 2F, as established in annex 1 accompanying the Reference Levels Dutch Language and Arithmetic Decree, or have a command of Papiamentu or the English language at a level that is lower than the comparable reference level for that language.
 - 2°. improving one or more numeracy skills may only be made for parents living on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba, who have a command of one or more language skills at a level lower than a level as referred to under 1°, or have a command of one or more numeracy skills at a level lower than reference level 2F, as established in annex 1 accompanying the Reference Levels Dutch Language and Arithmetic Decree.
 - 3°. improving one or more digital skills may only be made for parents living on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba, who have a command of one or more language skills at a level lower than a level as referred to under 1°, or have a command of one or more digital skills at a level lower than Basic level 2, as established in annex 8, attainment targets for digital skills accompanying the 2013 Education attainment targets regulation.
- a1. For the Dutch language skill, the reference level referred to in a., under 1°, must be demonstrated by an up-to-date and individual level assessment or level indication made at the latest before the start of the training programme and based on a validated instrument. If a written or digital Dutch language test is not possible due to, among other things, the employee's language level, the level assessment or level indication can be carried out verbally, evidenced by an interview report. For Papiamentu and English, the level must be properly substantiated;
- b. the course or other activities do in fact focus on the language in which the parent has low literacy skills and thus promotes the parent's self-empowerment in society;
- c. in derogation from article 13(5), the application is supported by a public body and, in derogation

- of article 18(1)(c) and article 18(2)(c), includes a signed statement of support by the relevant public body;
- d. in addition to article 14(1), the budget holder cannot be a public body, must be located on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba and, in derogation from article 14(1), must submit the application on behalf of at least one other party, being a local library, a young people's healthcare institution, an educational institution or preschool facility;
 - e. the budget holder, in derogation from article 14(2), is registered with a Chamber of Commerce as referred to in the Chambers of Commerce and Industry Act for BES, and which registration number is listed on the application in accordance with article 18(3); and
 - f. the applicant, in derogation from article 16(2), is not obliged to fund 33 percent of the subsidized costs with a personal contribution or contributions by third parties, on the understanding that the maximum amount of the subsidy as referred to in article 16(1) is no more than €83,750;
6. For subsidies as referred to in section 4, the following applies:
- a. the application, in addition to article 20(1) and article 21(1), cannot be made by a public body on Saba and that the applicant must be located on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba;
 - b. the applicant, in derogation from article 20(2) and article 21(2), is registered with a Chamber of Commerce as referred to in the Chambers of Commerce and Industry Act for BES, and which registration number is listed on the application in accordance with article 25(d)(1°);
 - c. the application, in derogation from article 20(1), may only be done for experiments focused on low-literate people living on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba;
 - d. the experiment does in fact focus on the language in which the participants have low literacy skills and thus promotes the self-empowerment of these individuals in society; and
 - e. in derogation from article 20(3), the application is supported by a public body and, in derogation from article 25(c)(2°), includes a signed statement of support by the relevant public body.
3. In article 32(5) the Regulations for Annual Reports on Education should be read as the BES Regulations for Annual Reports on Education.

§ 7. Concluding provisions

Article 37. Entry into force and expiry date

1. 1. This scheme enters into force on 1 January 2021.
2. This scheme expires on 1 January 2025 on the understanding that it remains in force for decisions taken before the expiry date.

Article 38. Citation

This scheme shall be cited as: 2021-2024 Tel mee met Taal (Count on skills) Subsidy Scheme.

This scheme and the associated explanatory notes will be published in the Government Gazette.

The Minister of Education, Culture and Science,
I.K. van Engelshoven

Annex 1. Assessment framework for experiments

This annex pertains to article 26(2) of the 2021–2024 Tel mee met Taal (Count on skills) Subsidy Scheme.

This annex includes the assessment framework for experiments as referred to in article 20(1). Based on this subsidy scheme, it is possible to apply for subsidies for practice-based experiments aimed at better reaching low-literate people living in the Netherlands so that they can be directed towards courses focused on increasing one or more language skills, numeracy skills or digital skills. This involves finding people, motivating them and directing them towards the courses offered.

All projects not eliminated by the drawing process are assessed on the following:

- A. Relevance of the application
- B. Quality of the activity plan
- C. Practicability and feasibility
- D. Support and cooperation
- E. Budget

Assessment criteria A (Relevance of the application) and B (Quality of the activity plan) weigh more heavily, with each counting for 30%. Assessment criteria C (Practicability and feasibility) and D (Support and cooperation) count for 15% each. Finally, assessment criterion E (Budget) counts for 10%.

Assessment criterion A. Relevance of the application

Components Minimum requirements Scoring

The project offers something new

1. The applicant describes which deficiencies in content the project addresses. The more apparent the knowledge of existing and applied methods to reach the target group of low-literate people or the approach to acquire this knowledge and use it in carrying out the project, the higher the score awarded for this component. This can be demonstrated from, for example:
 1. A brief reference to previous research, literature, methods, etc., and an appreciation of these.
 2. A substantiated description of a deficiency based on the target group's own experiences, where the deficiency is described from various perspectives.

The project is both innovative and practice-based.

1. The applicant describes the elements that make the project innovative and can argue why these elements are innovative.
2. The applicant describes the elements that make the experiment practice-based. The better the applicant describes that the project is innovative and practice-based, the higher the score awarded for this component, shown by the following:
 1. A clear description of the element(s) that make the project innovative with a substantiation of why that is, for example because it concerns a method not yet in existence or because the way in which the experiment is designed is innovative.
 2. A clear description of the element(s) that make the project practice-based with a substantiation of why that is. The applicant describes how the innovative elements are developed, applied and tested in practice.

Assessment criterion B. Quality of the activity plan

Components Minimum requirements Scoring

The objectives of the project are focused on better reaching low-literate people or on improving the quality of the courses offered to this target group.

1. The applicant clearly describes the objective(s) of the experiment (formulated as SMART).
2. The applicant clearly describes the target group of the experiment and how this target group participates in the experiment.
3. The applicant clearly describes how the experiment is designed to achieve the objectives. The better the applicant is able to substantiate and argue how the objectives and activities of the project contribute to reaching more low-literate people, the higher the score awarded for this component, shown by the following:
 1. A clear description of the objectives and corresponding effects that the project aims to achieve. These objectives are formulated as Specific, Measurable, Acceptable, Realistic and Timely (i.e. SMART).
 2. A description of the target group(s) and sub-target group(s) at which the activities are aimed and how these target groups are involved in the preparation, implementation and

evaluation of the activities.

3. A clear description of the project organization, including its tasks, responsibilities and powers.
4. A clear description of the profile of the leader(s) or project manager(s).
5. The activity plan clearly sets out which approaches, products and processes the project aims to achieve.

Safeguarding and sustainability are addressed. In the action plan, the applicant describes how the activities and results could be suitable for continuation and upscaling after the subsidy period has ended. The greater the efforts and willingness to achieve lasting cooperation, the higher the score awarded for this component, shown by the following:

1. A description of possible partners who can be involved in scaling up the activities, providing a line of reasoning.

Assessment criterion C. Practicability and feasibility

Components Minimum requirements Scoring

The objectives and scheduling of the activities are feasible within the project period. The applicant clearly shows how the project is feasible in a schedule of activities for the project period. The more feasible the activity scheduling, the higher the score awarded for this component, shown by the following:

1. A detailed and achievable activity plan for the project period, consisting of phases, milestones, intended interim and end results, division of tasks by partners (who does what and when?).

Project-related risks and control measures are identified.

The applicant addresses the possible risks and corresponding control measures to a sufficient degree in the action plan. The better the risks are described and resolved in the action plan, the higher the score awarded for this component, shown by the following:

1. A clear description of the project-related risks, showing that possible risk factors and bottlenecks have been carefully considered.
2. A description of possible measures should these risk actually materialize.

Assessment criterion D. Support and cooperation

Components Minimum requirements Scoring - Support

The application is supported by a local authority. The applicant clarifies how the local authority contributes to the shared objectives of the experiment. The greater the involvement of the proposed local authority, the higher the score awarded for this component, shown by the following:

1. A clear description of the involvement of one or more local authorities during the various implementation stages of the activities.

Components Minimum requirements Scoring - Cooperation

The applicant collaborates with other parties. The applicant clarifies how other parties contribute to the shared objectives of the experiment.

The greater the involvement of the proposed party or parties, the higher the score awarded for this component, shown by, among other things, a clear description of the involvement of one or more parties during the various implementation stages of the activities.

Assessment criterion E. Budget

Components Minimum requirements Scoring

The budget for the eligible costs is realistic. The applicant draws up a clear and balanced budget that

meets the requirements stated in article 3.5 of the Framework Regulation. The more efficiently the objectives are achieved, the higher the score awarded for this component, shown, among other things, by the following:

1. The use of human resources, funds and any equipment is in proportion to the intended results.
2. The costs – including the costs for project organization/project management – are in proportion to the return and results described in the activity plan.

The required personal contribution or contributions by third parties has been demonstrated. The applicant clarifies the personal contribution or contributions by third parties and complies with the scheme's framework. The better the personal or third-party contributions are safeguarded for the entire subsidy period, the higher the score awarded for this component, shown by the following:

1. The structure of the personal or third-party contributions and how these are distributed among the partners are clearly indicated.
2. The personal or third-party contributions together with the state subsidy are sufficient to cover the costs of the project.
3. It is clear what the personal contribution or contributions by third parties are for the entire subsidy period.