

# The Jelte NextGen Award 2026 is now open

For early-career researchers with an innovative research proposal  
in the field of metabolic diseases



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Stop metabole ziekten.

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*It is the vision and firm belief of Metakids that scientific research is the key to achieving the 50in35 mission: by 2035, half of all patients with a metabolic disease must be treatable. To accelerate this progress, Metakids annually awards the Jelte NextGen Award to a talented early-career researcher whose innovative research proposal has the potential to create significant impact for patients with a metabolic disease.*

## General Information

The Jelte NextGen Award was presented for the first time in 2025, on the initiative of Jelte's parents, Sanne and Hein, and is being made available again in 2026. The award consists of a maximum grant of **€350,000**, to be used exclusively for the proposed research project.

The funding is intended for the execution of an innovative research project. If necessary for the successful completion of the project, the grant may be used to support a fellowship in the Netherlands or abroad, or a part-time supporting position (for example, a research analyst), provided that these costs demonstrably and directly contribute to the objectives of the project.

## Impact and Contribution to 50in35

No specific theme has been defined for the 2026 edition. However, one clear condition applies: the research proposal must demonstrably contribute to the realization of the 50in35 mission.

Impact is the key criterion. Applications must clearly describe:

- the concrete progress the research will deliver (in the short or long term) for patients, treatments or knowledge development;
- why this proposal should be carried out at this particular moment;
- how the project will lay the foundation for structural and sustainable acceleration of the metabolic field, beyond the duration of the project.

## Assessment Criteria

The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) will assess all submitted pre-proposals based on, among others, the following criteria:

- scientific quality, originality, innovativeness and feasibility of the proposal;
- expected impact on the metabolic field and the explicit contribution to the 50in35 objectives;
- the applicant's profile, including motivation letter, CV and publication list;
- letters of recommendation from the mentor/supervisor and the head of department;
- collaboration between centres or research groups (considered a plus);
- where relevant: the targeted acquisition of additional (international) expertise that is limitedly available in the Netherlands and necessary to achieve the intended impact;
- alignment with the framework of the **Translational Research Agenda for Metabolic Diseases**.

## Eligibility

- PhD candidates in the final phase of their doctoral research;
- postdoctoral researchers up to two years after obtaining their PhD, with possible extensions in cases of pregnancy, training, or other relevant career interruptions, up to a maximum of five years;
- applicants must be under 38 years of age and employed at a Dutch academic institution;
- the applicant must have a clear ambition to remain active within the metabolic disease research field.

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## Application for Funding

Early-career researchers wishing to apply for the Jelte NextGen Award 2026 must submit a **pre-proposal**.

- The pre-proposal must be written in English.
- The application form can be downloaded via the “*For Researchers*” page on the Metakids website.
- The maximum funding per application is **€350,000**.
- The deadline for the 2026 round is **17 February 2026**.
- Proposals should be submitted via **subsidies@metakids.nl**.

## Selection Procedure

The assessment of pre-proposals is carried out by the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) of Metakids.

- Selected candidates will be invited to further elaborate their proposal into a **full proposal**.
- Following evaluation by independent (international) reviewers, the SAB will select three projects for an interview round, based on the project proposals, referee reviews and rebuttals.
- The SAB will subsequently select one candidate and nominate this candidate to the Board of Metakids.
- The Board of Metakids will take the formal funding decision based on these recommendations.

## “Showcase Project” (formerly “On the Shelf”)

In addition to the final award recipient, the SAB may advise to designate one promising proposal as a “Showcase Project.” For this project, Metakids will, in consultation with the research team, initiate fundraising activities for a maximum period of one year in order to secure additional funding.

## Questions

For questions regarding the call or the procedure, please contact:  
**i.vandervelde@metakids.nl**