TURBO Program

Background and objective/aim

The University of Twente and Radboudumc have a long-lasting history of collaboration. In 2017, they launched the **T**wente **U**niversity **R**ad**b**oudumc **O**pportunities (TURBO) program, a joint grant initiative aimed at fostering innovative research. Since then, 9 successful funding rounds have been completed, and the TURBO 2027 call opens in April 2026.
Building on this strong foundation, the two institutes signed a strategic collaboration agreement in May 2024. This new phase of partnership, called HealthTech Nexus, focuses on expanding the collaboration in knowledge sharing, talent development, and innovation. Together they aim address pressing healthcare challenges, specifically unmet medical needs that currently lack effective solutions.

Scope

The TURBO projects should align with the ambition to match unmet clinical needs with technological solutions, aiming to improve health and healthcare through the development of new diagnostic methods and innovative therapies for diseases that are currently difficult to diagnose or treat effectively.

Opportunities for improvement include developing and applying emerging technologies—such as organ-on-a-chip systems, artificial intelligence and machine learning for the analysis of large amount of data, e-health innovations, and sensing technologies, while also addressing legal, ethical, safety, financial, and practical considerations essential for the implementation of medical technology.
Promising areas include the current opportunities in defence and healthcare applications, productivity-enhancing healthcare innovations, more sustainable medical materials, and advanced platforms like digital twins.
The TURBO program also welcomes any emerging technologies that help meet unmet clinical needs. While TURBO projects can span a wide range of fields, the primary goal of a TURBO-assisted grant application should be to bring the application one step closer to the market or practical application. This means that the projects should preferably focus on a transition of Technology Readiness Level (TRL) or Societal Readiness Level (SRL).

From TURBO grants to new grant application

Each year, the UT and Radboudumc jointly award four TURBO grants of 80K€. These project-based grants will be awarded to four new collaborations between researchers from the University of Twente and Radboudumc.
New collaborations are defined as:

A. No joint publications in the last 10 years. Additionally, researchers with dual appointments should start collaborations with researchers from other research groups.

B. Resubmissions of previously rejected applications are allowed; in this case applicants may have started working together.

This pre-seed subsidy should support a joint grant application by a researcher of the University of Twente and a colleague of the Radboudumc. Typically, this concerns a collaborative grant application for the EU, NWO (e.g. TTW-grants), NWA routes, EFRO, Interreg, etc. Personal grants are explicitly excluded from this list.

The grants can be spent freely, with an emphasis on generating sufficient background for the new grant application. The grants can, for example, be used to hire (new) scientific personnel, purchase equipment, arrange networking events for the set-up of new consortia, or realize participation of industrial parties/companies for a joint grant application.

Criteria

Applicants and Collaboration

- The project is a collaboration between a researcher employed at the University of Twente (assistant/associate/professor, or tenure track position) and a Radboudumc Research Group Leader (RGL), a Talent Tracker (TT), or a member of a Radboudumc RGL's research group. The RGL is part of the application team but is not necessarily the main applicant.
- A researcher is allowed to submit only one project as applicant or team member. Those who received a TURBO grant as main applicant in last year's round cannot apply in this round. Those who received a TURBO grant in any previous round can only apply if they fulfilled the conditions of TURBO, i.e. applied for an external grant based on the TURBO project.
- Collaboration between the two parties is evident both in the research proposal and the budget plan. The project's aim cannot be met without the joint expertise of the applicants from both Institutions ("1+1=3"). Please note only new collaborations can apply.
- Collaboration with additional applicants is possible, but the TURBO resources remain internally at UT and Radboudumc. Other partners can bring in additional resources for the project.

Project

- Projects bring together health and technology (in the broadest sense). Projects should be innovative and may be fundamental, applied, or focused on implementation science.
- The focus of the project and the envisioned external grant application should be integrated in a Radboudumc Research Program and on the interface of unmet need conditions, health and/ or medical technologies, building on existing data sources/ infrastructures.
- The proposed external funding body is known, and accompanying application deadlines are within max. 15 months after the start of the TURBO project.
- Within 8 weeks after finishing the project, the applicants will fill out a short final report (template will be provided) and provide information on what has been achieved, how the collaboration will continue, and which grant has been or will be submitted.

Budget

- According to the TURBO grant budget plan format, the project represents a value of 80k€ and must be supported by a clear budget plan.
- The budget will be assigned to the department of the main applicants. We strive to have an even distribution of the budget: 40 k€ to the main applicant from the UT and 40 k€ to the main applicant from Radboudumc.
- The project is feasible with the funded subsidy (80k€) and within the proposed time span of max. 1 year. The project includes the finalization of an external grant application within the project time span.

Evaluation committee

- The evaluation committee is (preferentially) chaired by an external representative.
- At both partners four to six scientific experts take a seat on the committee.
- Grant advisors of both institutions are represented.

Every proposal is first evaluated to fulfil the general eligibility criteria. Proposals that do not fulfil these general criteria will not be taken into consideration by this evaluation committee.
The proposals are evaluated by at least two independent scientific experts (reviewers) and a grant advisor from each institution according to the criteria: (scientific) quality (50%), feasibility of project and likelihood of obtaining additional funding (20%), innovativeness (15%) and (societal) impact (15%).
The combined scores of both institutions are the basis for a final ranking by the evaluation committee. The evaluation committee must come to a unanimous agreement. If no consensus can be reached, the chairperson will make the final decision.

Time schedule TURBO Call 2027

13 April 2026	TURBO call 2027 open
6 July 2026, 11.00 AM	Deadline TURBO Call 2027
6 July – begin Sept 2026	Proposals evaluated by the committee
1 October 2026, afternoon	Granting meeting, TechMed Centre, Enschede
Not later than 1 Jan 2027	Start of projects
31 December 2027	End of projects, draft grant application written
Ultimately 1 April 2028	Final report submitted
Ultimately 2028	Submitted grant application at external funding body

For more information

For general information or questions about the TURBO program: Marlous Weghorst (techmed@utwente.nl).
Program manager University of Twente: Jojanneke Schuiling-Jukes (j.m.jukes@utwente.nl)
Program manager at Radboudumc: Andrea Roig Alba (Andrea.RoigAlba@radboudumc.nl)

Use the provided formats for the Proposal and Budget plan.
Name your proposal: TURBO2027_[Last name UT applicant]_[Last name Radboudumc applicant].doc.
Name you budget plan: TURBO2027_[Last name UT applicant]_[Last name Radboudumc applicant].xlsx
The proposal and budget plan are submitted via the submission button on the UT's TURBO website, not via e-mail.

Attachments (also available on the TURBO website)

1) TURBO2027 Proposal format
2) TURBO2027 Budget plan format