

TURBO Program

Background and objective/aim

The University of Twente and Radboudumc have a long-lasting history of collaboration. In 2017, they launched the **Twente University RadBoudumc Opportunities (TURBO)** program, a joint grant initiative aimed at fostering innovative research. Since then, 8 successful funding rounds have been completed, and the TURBO 2026 call opens in April 2025.

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 to improve lie amongst others in development and application of new technological methods (e.g. organ-on-a-chip), the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning for the analysis of large amounts of data, technological developments related to e-health, as well as legal, safety, ethical, financial, risk-associated, and practical considerations that are key to the implementation of medical technology.

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). A preference is given to the higher levels ([TRL or SRL](#) of 4 or above).

Examples of promising areas include the current opportunities in defence and healthcare, e-health and sensing technologies, innovations aimed at increasing productivity in healthcare, more sustainable medical materials, as well as cutting-edge platforms like organ-on-a-chip, digital twins, and artificial intelligence. Additionally, any other emerging technologies that contribute to addressing unmet clinical needs are also welcome for consideration within the TURBO program.

From TURBO grants to new grant application

Each year, the UT and Radboudumc jointly offer four TURBO grants of 80K€ each. These project-based grants will be awarded to four preferably new collaborations between researchers from the University of Twente and Radboudumc. This pre-seed subsidy should support a joint grant application of a researcher of the University of Twente with 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.

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 that new collaborations are favoured above existing collaborations.
- 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. However, this year a higher preference will be given to projects with TRL4/SRL4 or higher.
- 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 3 months 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.
- There are two permanently appointed members; one from each institution.
- There are two scientific experts taking a seat on the committee, representing the reviewers.
- Grant advisors of both institutions are represented.

Every proposal is first evaluated to fulfil the general 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%).

Proposals will first be discussed and ranked separately within the University of Twente and Radboudumc. Subsequently, the proposals will be discussed by an evaluation committee consisting of the scientific experts and grant advisors from both institutions. 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 2026

24 April 2025	TURBO call 2026 open
14 July 2025	Deadline TURBO Call 2026
15 July – Sept 2025	Proposals evaluated by reviewers and the committee
Mid-October – Mid-November 2025	Granting meeting (online), exact date t.b.a.
Not later than 1 Jan 2026	Start of projects
31 December 2026	End of projects, draft grant application written
Ultimately 1 April 2027	Final report submitted
Ultimately 2027	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: Joanneke 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: TURBO2026_[Last name UT applicant]_[Last name Radboudumc applicant].doc.

Name your budget plan: TURBO2026_[Last name UT applicant]_[Last name Radboudumc applicant].xlsx

The proposal and budget plan are submitted via the submission page on the UT's [TURBO website](#), not via e-mail.

Attachments

- 1) TURBO2026 Proposal format
- 2) TURBO2026 Budget plan format