

SPIERFONDS IMPACT AWARD

TERMS & CONDITIONS

2023

The Spierfonds Impact Award is a prize for a young researcher who, in 2022-2023, has made a concrete and valuable contribution with significant scientific and/or societal impact in the neuromuscular field. The aim of this award is to recognize and reward young distinguished researchers, inspiring and encouraging them to continue enriching the neuromuscular field with their dedication and contributions.

Introduction

The Spierfonds aims to improve the lives of people with a neuromuscular disorders. We encourage young researchers to contribute to this mission from their unique perspective and innovative mindset. With the new Spierfonds Impact Award, we annually reward an innovative young researcher (preclinical or clinical) who has made a tangible and meaningful contribution in the neuromuscular field. This can include:

- (creative) communication, such as interviews or podcasts,
- developing a new tool, app, or guideline,
- providing patient information, for example, by organizing a patient day,
- a scientific achievement, such as a new discovery,
- implementing a technique in the Netherlands or establishing a new collaboration.

With the Spierfonds Impact Award, the Spierfonds aims to provide young, talented researchers with the opportunity to stimulate their professional development, broaden their insights, increase their chances of future grants, and attain a prominent position within the neuromuscular field in the Netherlands.

The prize

The winner of the Spierfonds Impact Award will receive:

- €2,500 to be used for personal and/or scientific development (such as attending a conference, training, or international experience).
- Presentation of the award during the 'Spierfonds Ceremony': an exclusive gathering for the grant recipients of 2023 and other invitees. The winner will have the opportunity to give a speech here.
- An interview in the [SpierKrant](#).
- Invitation to serve as a one-time member of the jury for the Spierfonds Impact Award next year.

Who qualifies for the Spierfonds Impact Award?

The audience for the Spierfonds Impact Award consists of young researchers aspiring to a position as a group leader in the neuromuscular field. This award contributes to both the visibility and professional development of the researcher. We particularly encourage young researchers who do not yet hold a permanent research position.

The following researchers are eligible to apply:

- The applicant has made a concrete contribution to the neuromuscular field with scientific and/or societal impact in 2022-2023.
- The applicant is in the final year of their doctoral research or has been awarded their doctorate for no longer than eight years ago at the closing date, following the [extension policy of NWO](#).
- The applicant is actively engaged in the neuromuscular field and aspires to a scientific career within this field.
- The applicant has not previously won the Spierfonds Impact Award.

The Spierfonds is open to considering specific cases that do not meet the criteria mentioned above but have the potential to make significant impact in the neuromuscular field.

Selection procedure

The Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on two criteria:

- Impact

The Spierfonds adopts a broad definition of impact, encompassing both relevance and added value for scientific advancement (scientific impact) and positive effects for patients and/or society as a whole (societal impact).

- Applicant Profile

The Spierfonds Impact Award is granted to researchers who stand out due to their motivation, innovative approach, forward-thinking, and broad perspective. Traditional scientific excellence, such as the number of publications, is not the primary focus.

The Jury

The winner of the Spierfonds Impact Award is selected by a jury composed of (preclinical and clinical) researchers, patient representatives, and the Spierfonds. Jury members must have no conflict of interest with the applicant, and the assessment of applications is non-discriminatory, confidential, and transparent.

In the event of overwhelming interest, the Spierfonds may decide to conduct a pre-selection based on potential impact.

Submission

The deadline for submission of the Spierfonds Impact Award is Friday 27th October 2023. Applications can be submitted via email to onderzoek@spierfonds.nl.

A complete application consists of:

- A completed application form (in Dutch or English).
- Up to two letters of recommendation from relevant individuals (such as a supervisor, collaborator, or patient representative).

If essential components are missing, the Spierfonds may decide not to process the application. As long as the applicant meets the previously mentioned criteria, they are eligible to compete for the prize in multiple years.



Awarding

Applicants will be notified of the decision by email no later than mid-November. The awarded monetary prize should be used for personal and/or scientific development (soft skills, conference attendance, training, etc.). Once the arrangements regarding the use of the prize and the timeframe have been finalized, the Spierfonds will transfer the awarded amount to the applicant's account.

The award will be presented at the 'Spierfonds Ceremony': an exclusive event for the grant recipients of 2023 and other invitees. The winner will have the opportunity to speak to the select audience within the neuromuscular field and present themselves as a researcher.

The Spierfonds aims to make a maximum contribution to education and advocacy. The winner of the Spierfonds Impact Award may be invited to participate in publicity activities, events, and/or communication efforts.

