

Scientific Award AstraZeneca Foundation 2026

Cancer as a Systemic Disease: Insights on Organ Crosstalk

- Art. 1.** On the initiative of the AstraZeneca Foundation, the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) and the Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique-FNRS (F.R.S.-FNRS) will grant in 2026 the **Scientific Award AstraZeneca Foundation in Cancer as a Systemic Disease: Insights on Organ Crosstalk**, which amounts to 25.000 EUR. Half of this amount will be attributed to the laureate in person; the other half of the amount will be paid to the host lab of the laureate to further research in the domain of innovative approaches related to cancer as a systemic disease: insights on organ crosstalk.
- Art. 2.** The Scientific Award AstraZeneca Foundation – **Cancer as a Systemic Disease: Insights on Organ Crosstalk** 2026 rewards research that elucidates systemic hallmarks of cancer and inter-organ communication networks shaping tumor initiation, progression, organotropism/metastasis, treatment response/resistance, and cancer-associated conditions. It intends to reward **an established investigator on the basis of their previous work, with a perspective of future development in the same field.**
- Art. 3.** The applicant should be active in the above-mentioned field of research, with both ongoing work related to the focus of the prize and future prospects. The research outline should specify the past and ongoing work of the applicant in the field of research (description of four (4) pages at most), followed by one (1) page in which the candidate elaborates on their further plans to continue the research, detailing e.g. the future prospects of the obtained achievements and the results which clinical or experimental study might generate in the following three years.
- Art. 4.** The award will be granted on the basis of the recommendations of a jury of experts, appointed jointly by the FWO and the F.R.S.-FNRS according to the applicable rules of the FWO and the F.R.S.-FNRS. If no suitable candidate can be identified, the award will not be granted. In this case, the AstraZeneca Foundation will, in close consultation with both the FWO and the F.R.S.-FNRS, allocate the complete amount of the award to a scientific goal within the core business of the FWO and the F.R.S.-FNRS.
- Art. 5.** The award cannot be divided amongst several researchers.
- Art. 6.** **The award can only be given to an individual scientist from postdoctoral level onwards who is affiliated to a Belgian university, a university hospital, or an eligible research institute (see Annex 1) at the deadline of the call.** Prior to the submission deadline, the applicant must have held a research position in Belgium for at least five years (in a consecutive or cumulated period). **The applicant must have obtained the first PhD degree maximum 15 years before the date of the submission deadline (possibly extended in case of eligible career breaks).** For each continuous period of 365 days between the date of the PhD degree and the application, maximum one extension of one year of the abovementioned seniority limit may be granted, if during this period continuous periods of at least 3 months, regardless of the number, have occurred because of maternity leave, full-time parental leave, full-time sickness leave or military service/compulsory civilian service in the country of which they are citizen.
- Art. 7.** Personnel of the AstraZeneca Foundation or affiliated to the AstraZeneca Foundation are not eligible for the award.
- Art. 8.** Applicants may not have received an award for the work submitted with the same amount (25.000 EUR) or higher in the last 3 years (at the deadline of the call).

- Art. 9.** Applicants for the **Scientific Award AstraZeneca Foundation – Cancer as a Systemic Disease: Insights on Organ Crosstalk 2026** cannot apply for any other award granted by the AstraZeneca Foundation in the same year.
- Art. 10.** Applications have to be submitted electronically using the appropriate form at the latest on **4 May 2026 by midnight CEST**. The form is available on the website www.fwo.be and has to be sent by e-mail to prijzen@fwo.be. The form has to be completed in English.
- Art. 11.** Any problems or disputes arising from the eligibility of submitted applications or from granting the award will be settled by the FWO and the F.R.S.-FNRS, whose decision in these respects will be final.
- Art. 12.** The scientific outline, presentations and evaluation reports generated in the framework of this Scientific Award AstraZeneca Foundation – Cancer as a Systemic Disease: Insights on Organ Crosstalk 2026 will be treated confidentially.
- Art. 13.** The laureates have to attend the awards ceremony, which will take place in the evening of 10 December 2026 at the Palace of the Academies (Brussels).

Annex 1: Eligible Research Institutes

In addition to universities and university hospitals, applicants may be affiliated with the following Belgian research institutes to be considered eligible for this award:

- Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp
- LABIRIS
- Flemish Institute for Biotechnology (VIB)
- Flemish Institute for Technological research (VITO)
- de Duve Institute
- Bordet Institute
- GIGA Institute
- Walloon Excellence Research Institute - WEL Research Institute
- Assimilated Federal Research Institutions:
 - o Sciensano
 - o Belgian Nuclear Research Center (SCK CEN)