



University of Alberta and University of Liverpool Research Seed Fund Call Guidance

The University of Alberta and the University of Liverpool are committed to developing global research collaborations leading to long term impact. The Research Seed Fund, now in its second year, aims to catalyze new collaborations.

1, Objectives

The Research Seed Fund aims to support new initiatives by providing joint bridge-funding between ideas and external grant proposals. It is designed to enable individuals/groups to identify complementary strengths and co-produce ideas for new joint activities that cannot be achieved by either side alone.

Activities supported through the Research Seed Fund include:

- Research workshops (in person and online),
- Short-term research visits for both early career and established faculty members.
- Targeted experiments/activities to generate relevant data related to the project.

2, Expected outcomes

- Joint proposals for funding from national and international funding schemes (e.g. Horizon Europe).
- Joint proposals for funding and engagement with business/ industry.
- Joint submissions to high impact academic journals.
- Joint research and/or activities leading to new intellectual property or development of prototypes for commercialization.
- Joint proposals to city/ regional government/ other entities for civic impact.
- Access to/development of new research networks and/or resources (e.g. talent/ knowledge, access to specialist facilities etc.)

3. Funding available and priority research areas

The Fund has an annual total budget of GBP £30,000 for the U of Liverpool and CAD \$50,000 for the U of Alberta for each of 3 years. Up to five (5) projects will be funded each year. Funds from each institution allocated to successful proposals will stay with the funding institution for use by the institution's own faculty members; that is, there is no transfer of funds between institutions.

The fund will support the development of collaborations in areas of complementary strength. Whilst applications in all areas will be considered, the following research areas will be prioritised for the 2026/27 Call.

- **Climate and Energy Research** For example, climate modelling, observations and diagnostics; extreme-event dynamics and urban resilience; climate–ecosystem interactions and biodiversity; climate-related health; clean energy; digital climate and energy solutions; small modular reactors (SMRs) and future nuclear; climate justice and policy.

- **Indigenous Research** For example, Indigenous Language Sustainability; Indigenous Cultural Memory & Heritage; Community-led governance, policy, and infrastructure; Health, Wellbeing & Community Resilience; Language / Practices /Materiality (Arts-based approaches)
- **Health** For example, Population health and data science; Maternal, children's, and women's health; Healthy ageing and musculoskeletal science; Cardiovascular and metabolic medicine; Therapeutics innovation and drug discovery; Personalized medicine and drug safety; Eye and vision sciences; Clinical trials and regulatory science; Mental health and primary care systems; Social determinants of health and health inequalities; Precision diagnostics; Public health policy and systems stewardship.
- **Security science and Technology** This theme addresses collaborative innovation at the intersection of science, technology, and security, blending advanced sensing, quantum technologies, aerospace innovations, and autonomous systems. Encompassing these and other technical topics, as well as relevant social policy or behavioral science, it explores complex global challenges through pioneering research and practical, dual-use applications.

4. Accessing the Fund

The primary applicants (Principal Investigators) must be current academic staff (faculty members) at University of Alberta and University of Liverpool and must hold permanent positions at their respective universities. Each proposal must include one Co-Principal Investigator from each institution.

The application template must be utilized and each proposal MUST include:

- A clearly articulated description of the project.
- The motivation for the collaboration; the identified synergies.
- The short- and long-term objectives and anticipated outcomes.
- Identification of future (external) funding opportunities including how Horizon Europe or other government funded programs could be utilized.
- A timeline/workplan with a budget breakdown, milestones and deliverables.
- Two-page short CV of the lead investigators at both institutions.

In addition to the two Co-PIs, applications may include other University of Alberta or University of Liverpool faculty members, post-doctoral trainees or PhD students as team members.

A faculty member can serve as a Co-PI on no more than one application per application cycle. There is no limit to the number of applications a faculty member can participate on as a team member.

Recipients of funding in the last round of seed funding are eligible to apply again; however, there needs to be a clear rationale for this (i.e. the primary purpose of the fund is to generate external funding rather than provide ongoing funds).

Third party universities, or other organizations may join an application, on the condition that matched funds are provided.

Eligible expense budget items include:

- Travel and accommodation costs, in accordance with the travel guidelines of each university (economy class airfare only).
- Visit and workshop costs e.g. meeting rooms, refreshments/ hospitality, materials.
- Laboratory consumables related to the project.
- Access to data or facilities.

All eligible expenses MUST occur within the dates set for the funding of the project. The budget and milestones will be carefully evaluated and a lesser amount may be awarded to a successful project than that which was applied for.

Funding is limited to one year from the project start date.

Extensions are not automatic and will be subject to the approval of both institutions.

Proposals must be sent electronically (**as one pdf**) to your institution's representative listed below and must be submitted "complete".

Institutional contacts for submissions:

University of Alberta: Eyene Okpanachi, PhD, Office of the Vice-President (Research). eyene.okpanachi@ualberta.ca

University of Liverpool: Christine Bateman cbateman@liverpool.ac.uk and Kerry McElroy Kerry.mcelroy@liverpool.ac.uk, Global Engagement and Partnerships Directorate

Timeline

- 27 May 2026: Call opens
- 27 July 2026: Deadline for applications
- Applicants to be notified of the outcome of their applications as soon as the review is completed.

5. Selection Process

Funds will be awarded on a competitive basis.

Funding decisions will be made by a review panel made up of equal representatives from University of Alberta and University of Liverpool, with each partner selecting appropriate representatives.

Applications will be assessed against the criteria listed in section 2. **Generation of external grant applications is a primary rationale for the Seed Fund and the Panel will expect to see realistic and clear routes to external funding in the application.**

Applicants will be informed of the outcome following the joint review, with funding available as soon as possible within the capacity of each organization's administrative processes.

All decisions are final and may not be appealed.

6. Reporting

The Co-PIs will be required to provide a final report to the Panel Secretaries of both University of Alberta and University of Liverpool within two months of the project end date. The major criteria for judging the success of the partnership will be the project

outcomes (relative to the project plan), future direction of the research including attraction of major external funding awards as well as access to new networks and other resources (talent/knowledge, facilities etc.)

7. Third Parties

Where projects involve collaborators from other institutions, U of Alberta and U of Liverpool expect that there will be appropriate agreements put in place depending on the projects and nature of collaboration (i.e., confidentiality, IP) to ensure that projects are completed in accordance with the expectations of the Research Seed Fund.

All enquiries to the Institutional Contacts (details above).