4EU+

SEED4EU+

Call for applications for the academic year 2025-2026

1. Goal

Building on past editions and in line with the new [4EU+ Strategy 2025-2035](#), the 4EU+ European University Alliance is launching the third round of the **SEED4EU+ call**. With a particular emphasis on research activities, this call seeks to provide seed funding for the implementation of **novel** ideas to foster 4EU+ cooperation. It offers our academic community the opportunity to collaborate on out-of-the-box initiatives that do not necessarily fit into customary calls for proposals, thus allowing them to broaden their creative horizons. Academic staff of the 4EU+ member universities is encouraged to submit joint, innovative proposals that will make a significant impact on strengthening the Alliance and develop our One Comprehensive Research-Intensive European University.

The programme is funded directly from the budgets of 4EU+ member universities.

2. Scope

The call is open to all academic disciplines. The proposed projects should fit thematically into at least one of the 4EU+ Flagships.

Proposals should be aligned with the overall [4EU+ Strategy 2025-2035](#). We are inviting applications for funding to initiate innovative inter-university collaborations. This call primarily supports research-focused projects, though high-quality educational initiatives are also eligible. Outreach can serve as added value in both research and educational proposals.

The aim is to enhance international cooperation between 4EU+ member universities through small-scale, jointly developed projects. Funding is intended as a starting point – successful projects should serve as a foundation for long-term collaboration, with the goal of securing continued support from external, national or European, funding schemes.

3. Eligibility

The call is open to researchers and academics who hold a PhD and are affiliated with any of the eight 4EU+ member universities.

Proposals should be submitted by teams that consist of participants from **at least three of the 4EU+ member universities**.

PI and Local Project Coordinators

Each proposal must have:
- one designated Principal Investigator (PI) affiliated with one of the 4EU+ member institutions.

- one Local Project Coordinator in charge at each of the participating member institutions.

The PIs and the Local Coordinators must hold **at least a PhD degree and have an employment contract** at one of the 4EU+ member universities covering the entire duration of the envisioned project and reporting period.

Any changes in the leadership of the project need to be approved by the institution and communicated to the participating institutions and 4EU+ Local Offices.

Role of the Principal Investigator

As the main applicant, the PI will be responsible for submitting the proposal and for reporting after the project is finalised. Furthermore, the PI is responsible for the project coordination and for monitoring the overall implementation of the project, with support of the Local Project Coordinators.

If the PI leaves their university during the project, they shall assure a timely replacement at their institution.

Role of Local Project Coordinator

The Local Project Coordinator is responsible for implementing planned activities at their institution, in line with the submitted application and under supervision of the PI.

The Local Project Coordinator serves as the main point of contact for the 4EU+ Local Office at their institution. They receive internal information regarding funding and are responsible for internal reporting. An administrative contact may be appointed to support the Local Project Coordinator, though this is not mandatory. Their contact details should be included in the application form.

If the Local Project Coordinator leaves their university during the project, they shall assure a timely replacement at their institution.

Project teams

The participation of early-stage researchers, PhD candidates, and students as project team members is strongly encouraged. Please note that if there is a student participating in the project as a team member, there should also be at least one member of the academic staff from this university participating in the project as a Local Coordinator.

The participation of external partners is possible. However, they are not eligible to be PIs and are not eligible for direct funding under this call. It is possible for external partners to join projects with their own financial contribution. 4EU+ member universities, moreover, may decide to allocate additional funds (outside the predefined call budget) to external partners to enable them to become involved in the projects.

Language

Proposals must be submitted in English.

4. Duration

Projects can run for a period of **up to 12 months**. The expected earliest starting date for projects is 1 January 2026.

5. Available funding

The maximum funding available per project is **EUR 50,000**. The budget must be allocated among the partners, with each partner's share of the budget clearly specified in the proposal. The total amount of funding requested per project is not necessarily linked to the number of participating partner universities, however costs must be justified and calculated based on the actual needs required for all partners to complete the project.

6. Activities

The call is open to all academic disciplines.

As this is a seed funding scheme, planned activities should envisage the establishment of research or educational cooperation, and all proposals must include a precise and realistic sustainability plan addressing the perspectives for continuous collaboration of the project members beyond the project duration. Projects that foresee the preparation of joint proposals for external funding are strongly encouraged (for both research and educational projects).

Examples of research and innovation activities that can be funded:

- Exploratory workshops to prepare joint externally funded proposals.

- Innovation projects with the objective of developing partnerships with external partners in line with the ambitions of the 4EU+ on outreach.

- Networking activities such as conferences, workshop series or symposia with the objective of fostering 4EU+ research networks, particularly for early-stage researchers.

- Collaborative research stays for researchers and doctoral students.

Examples of education/teaching and learning activities that can be funded:

- Development of a joint study programmes (full Bachelors, Masters, PhD programmes, PhD schools) with the long-term objective, to for example:

- submit, as a result of SEED4EU+ project, a joint proposal to obtain external funding e.g. under Erasmus+ or Erasmus Mundus schemes;

- finalise the integration of the programme into the regular offer of the 4EU+ partner universities.

- Development and implementation of innovative teaching and learning methods.

- Creation of innovative research-based teaching tools, templates, videos and other materials.

7. How to apply

All proposals must be submitted electronically via the online application form **no later than by 3 October 2025 4 pm CET.**

[A full application form is available at this link.](#)

[A PDF template of the application form is available here.](#)

Together with the online application form, the applicants are requested to submit the following annexes:

- Letters of intent from the involved universities (e-mail version accepted, as per instructions on the letters of intent), signed by the head of the faculty/department/institution. [A template for a letter of intent is available here.](#)
- A budget form. [A template for a budget is available here.](#)

8. Eligible expenses

Beware of the budget constraints applied by your home university. The eligible costs of a project can vary significantly between Alliance partners. **We highly recommend contacting your 4EU+ Local Office.**

Eligible and non-eligible expenses are listed below.

Activity/Cost	
Travel and subsistence expenses: airfare (economy class), train, car rental, lodging, meals, visas, or similar	eligible
Costs of hosting seminars/conferences or workshops (e.g., venue rental, catering, lodging)	eligible
Consumables and supplies as proportionate with activities	eligible
Publications (related to collaborative research) costs, including Open Access fees	eligible
Hiring student assistants	eligible/not eligible*
Internship stipends	eligible/not eligible*
Salaries for support teams (scientific, administrative)	eligible/not eligible*

Internal invoicing for access to research infrastructures	eligible/not eligible*
Subcontracting	eligible/not eligible*
Scientific equipment	eligible/not eligible*
Stipend payments to non 4EU+ member institutions individuals	not eligible
Fellowships, scholarships for theses	not eligible
Website development	not eligible
Entertainment costs	not eligible
Office supply and furniture	not eligible
Indirect costs	not eligible

Each university covers the costs related to the participation of its own staff and students. Cross payments between the 4EU+ universities are not allowed.

The definition of cost categories and accounting regulations may vary from one Member University to another. Applicants are requested to contact the 4EU+ Local Offices at their respective home universities before submission of the proposal to make sure their budget calculations and selected types of expenses follow their home university costs eligibility rules.

All travel activities must comply with internal rules of the respective universities. 4EU+ strongly encourages climate-friendly travel arrangements.

Budget consultations with the 4EU+ Local Office at your university are highly recommended.

9. Selection procedure

An eligibility screening procedure will be performed by 4EU+ Local Offices (contact details below). Only eligible proposals will be submitted to the Evaluation Committee, composed of representatives of 4EU+ member institutions and the Secretary General (SG).

Upon receiving the list of ranked proposals, the 4EU+ Management Committee (MC) will make the final decision on which projects will receive funding.

10.   Evaluation

Submitted project proposals will be evaluated, based on the following criteria:

Objectives and Methodology

- Clarity and pertinence of the project's objectives.
- Soundness of the proposed methodological approach.

Novelty

- To what extent is the proposed work ambitious and innovative?

- If previous work in 4EU+ is mentioned in the application, how does the project build on its results and add innovative components to the previous work?

Implementation

- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, and appropriateness of the effort as well as allocated resources.
- Capacity and role of each participant, and extent to which the consortium brings together the necessary expertise.

Expected results / Sustainability

- Suitability of the pathways to achieve the expected results and quality of the measures to maximize expected outcomes.
- Credibility and feasibility of the pathways and tools for ensuring the sustainability of the project.

11.   Timeline

Applications open	16 June 2025
Applications close	3 October 2025, 4 pm
Notification to applicants	18 December 2025
Earliest date for projects to start	1 January 2026
Latest date for projects to end	31 December 2026
Final report due	End of project + 1 months

12.   Info session

On **23 June 2025, at 12:00 (midday)**, an online Info Day will be hosted to answer your questions about the 2025 SEED4EU+ call.

Academics interested in participating are kindly invited to fill out the form at the link: https://forms.office.com/e/40aBvLjirc.

13.   Contacts

For further information, please contact:

Charles University	4euplus@cuni.cz
Heidelberg University	4euplus@rektorat.uni-heidelberg.de
Paris-Panthéon-Assas University	4euplus@assas-universite.fr
Sorbonne University	4euplus-su@sorbonne-universite.fr
University of Copenhagen	4euplusucph@adm.ku.dk
University of Geneva	4euplus@unige.ch
University of Milan	4euplus@unimi.it
University of Warsaw	4euplus@uw.edu.pl
4EU+ General Secretariat	secretariat@4euplus.eu

Annex

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The table below presents the assessment criteria in detail.

Criteria	Guideline
1) Objectives and Methodology (0-25)	**a. Clarity and pertinence of the project's objectives** *Please refer here to both the inherent scientific/educational/research objectives of the proposals and their relevance for 4EU+ i.e., "strengthen the current cooperation within 4EU+ in education, research and innovation", "broaden the engagement of the communities of all 4EU+ universities in creating and developing One Comprehensive Research-Intensive European University".* *Reference: 4EU+ Strategy 2025-2035* **b. Soundness of the proposed methodological approach** *Please note that the term 'methodological approach' is used here in a broad way to encompass different types of proposals: i.e., for research: underlying concepts, models, assumptions; for education: underlying teaching concepts, curriculum designs, innovative pedagogies etc. While evaluating methodological approaches consider also the limited duration of the projects (12 months) and the seed funding nature of the Call.*
2) Novelty (0-25)	**a. To which extent is the proposed work ambitious and innovative?** **b. If previous work in 4EU+ is mentioned in the application, how does the project build on its results and add innovative components to the previous work?** *The SEED4EU+ Call aims at both strengthening existing 4EU+ collaborations and supporting new ones. While taking into consideration the starting point of the proposed projects, the novelty criterion thus refers to the intrinsic innovative nature of the proposals.*
3) Implementation(0-25)	**a. Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, and appropriateness of the effort as well as allocated resources.** *Please consider here also the overall coherence of the proposed steps in the work-plan while, again, keeping in mind the relatively short duration of the projects.* **b. Capacity and role of each participant, and extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.**
4) Expected results / Sustainability (0-25)	**a. Suitability of the pathways to achieve the expected results and quality of the measures to maximize expected outcomes.** *Pathways to achieve expected results and measures to maximize them might vary depending on the nature of the proposal (i.e., research, education). Please evaluate the overall quality and coherence of the pathways vis-à-vis the specific objectives of the proposed project. Projects should contribute to the realization of the 4EU+ Strategy.* **b. Credibility and feasibility of the pathways and tools ensuring the sustainability of the project.** *Please note, sustainability can occur in different forms and couple with different dimensions (i.e. financial sustainability, third party funding, creation of durable research networks, sustainable synergies between education and research, creation of ties with external stakeholders, creation of new educational offers, setting-up of new services/infrastructures/activities serving the 4EU+ community etc.). In this part you are requested to demonstrate that the project is credible and feasible and that it will actually be sustainable.*