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# **SEED4EU+ Call**

**Call for Applications  
for the academic year  
2026-2027**

# 1. Goal

Building on previous editions and in line with the [4EU+ Strategy 2025-2035](#), the 4EU+ European University Alliance is launching the fourth edition of the SEED4EU+ call.

As part of its commitment to strengthening research collaboration across the Alliance, this call provides seed funding for the development of innovative joint research projects involving researchers from the 4EU+ member universities. The programme aims to support the establishment of new research partnerships, the consolidation of existing collaborations, and the development of ambitious research initiatives with the potential to attract external national, European and international funding.

The call seeks to foster interdisciplinary and inter-institutional cooperation, contribute to the development of sustainable research networks, and strengthen the Alliance's ambition to build One Comprehensive Research-Intensive European University.

For the 2026 edition, and in line with the Alliance's strategic objective of supporting the next generation of 4EU+ researchers, the call introduces **two funding lines**:

- 1) **SEED4EU+ Early Career**
- 2) **SEED4EU+ Standard**

The programme is funded directly by the 4EU+ member universities. The allocation of funds between the two funding lines will be determined following the evaluation process, taking into account both the number of eligible applications submitted and the quality of the proposals.

# 2. Scope

The call is open to all scientific fields and disciplines. Proposed projects should contribute to the objectives of the [4EU+ Strategy 2025-2035](#) and fit thematically within at least one of the [4EU+ Flagships](#):

- Flagship 1: Urban Health and Demographic Change
- Flagship 2: Europeanness: multilingualism, pluralities, citizenship
- Flagship 3: Digitisation – Modelling – Transformation
- Flagship 4: Environmental transitions

The call supports research-focused collaborative projects involving researchers from at least three 4EU+ member universities. Funding is intended as a starting point for the development of long-term research cooperation and should contribute to the preparation of future applications for external funding at national, European or international level.

Outreach and dissemination activities may be included where relevant to the project's objectives and expected impact.

### 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. For the University of Milan please see Annex II.

Proposals should be submitted by teams comprising participants from **at least three of the 4EU+ member universities**<sup>1</sup>.

Applications submitted under the **SEED4EU+ Early Career** funding line must be coordinated exclusively by Early Career Researchers. Both the Principal Investigator (PI) and all Local Project Coordinators must meet the definition below of an Early Career Researcher.

For the purpose of this call, Early Career Researchers **are researchers who obtained their PhD 2-10 years prior to the project start date (January 2027)** and are in the process of establishing their academic independence.

The eligibility window of the above definition may be extended in duly documented cases of career breaks, including maternity, paternity or parental leave, long-term illness, national service, clinical training, disability-related reduced working time, or other justified circumstances affecting the research career trajectory. Applicants should contact their local 4EU+ Office regarding eligibility extensions.

Applications submitted under the **SEED4EU+ Standard** funding line are open to all eligible researchers meeting the general eligibility requirements.

Please note that to ensure a broad distribution of funding opportunities across the Alliance, applicants may not participate in both the SEED4EU+ and the Visiting Professorships 2026 calls. Consequently, researchers holding the role of Principal Investigator (PI) or Local Project Coordinator in a SEED4EU+ project proposal are not eligible to apply for the 2026 Visiting Professorship Call.

#### PI and Local Project Coordinators

All proposals, must have:

- One designated Principal Investigator (PI) affiliated with one of the 4EU+ member institutions.
- Local Project Coordinators in charge at each of the participating member institution.

The PI 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 (one month after the end of the project)**.

Any changes in the leadership of the project need to be approved by the affiliated 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

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<sup>1</sup> To facilitate finding partners, a partner search form is available [here](#). You can find the submitted project ideas [here](#).

within a month 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 PhD candidates, and students as project team members is encouraged in both funding lines. Please note that if there is a student participating in the project as a team member, there must 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. Expected earliest starting date for projects is 1 January 2027. The latest date for projects to end is 31 December 2027.

## **5. Available funding**

For both funding lines, the maximum funding available per project is **EUR 40,000**. 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. Proposed projects should fit thematically within at least one of the [4EU+ Flagships](#).

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

### Examples of research activities that can be funded:

- Exploratory workshops to prepare joint externally funded proposals.
- R&I 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-career researchers.
- Collaborative research stays for researchers and doctoral students.

## 7. How to Apply

All proposals must be submitted electronically via the online application form **no later than by 13 October 2026, 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** (email 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](#)
- **A short academic profile or CV** (max 2 pages, in .doc, .docx or .pdf format). It should cover the applicant's research background, key publications or outputs, and any relevant academic experience since their PhD.

## 8. Eligible expenses

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

Be aware of the budget constraints set by your home university, as eligible project costs may differ significantly among the 4EU+ Alliance partners. A summary of eligible and non-eligible expenses is provided below:

	CU	PPAU	SU	UCPH	UHD	UNIGE	UNIMI	UW
Travel and subsistence expenses: airfare (economy class), train, car rental, lodging, meals, visas, or similar <sup>2</sup>	√*	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Costs of hosting seminars/conferences or workshops (e.g., venue rental, catering, lodging)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Consumables and supplies as proportionate with activities	√*	√	√	√	√	√	X	√
Publications (related to collaborative research) costs, including Open Access fees	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Hiring student assistants	√*	√*	X	√	√	√	X	√
Internship stipends	X	X	√	X	X	√*	X	X
Salaries for support teams (scientific, administrative)	√*	X	X	X	X	√*	X	√*
Internal invoicing for access to research infrastructures	√	X	√	√	√*	X	√	√
Subcontracting	X	X	X	X	X	X	√	X
Scientific equipment	X	X	X	√	X	X	√	X
Stipend payments to non 4EU+ member institutions individuals	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fellowships, scholarships for theses	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Website development	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Entertainment costs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Office supply and furniture	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Indirect costs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

<sup>2</sup> All travel activities must comply with internal rules of the respective universities. 4EU+ strongly encourages climate-friendly travel arrangements.

*\*Please note that the definition of cost categories and accounting regulations may vary between member universities. For more information, please consult your local rules:*

- Charles University: <https://cuni.cz/UK-13891.html> ; [4euplus@cuni.cz](mailto:4euplus@cuni.cz)
- Paris Panthéon-Assas University: [4euplus@assas-universite.fr](mailto:4euplus@assas-universite.fr)
- Sorbonne University: [4euplus-su@sorbonne-universite.fr](mailto:4euplus-su@sorbonne-universite.fr)
- University of Copenhagen: [4euplusucph@adm.ku.dk](mailto:4euplusucph@adm.ku.dk)
- Heidelberg University: [4euplus@rektorat.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:4euplus@rektorat.uni-heidelberg.de)
- University of Geneva: <https://memento.unige.ch/doc/0083> ; [4euplus@unige.ch](mailto:4euplus@unige.ch)
- University of Milan: [sportello.ricerca@unimi.it](mailto:sportello.ricerca@unimi.it)
- University of Warsaw: [4euplus@uw.edu.pl](mailto:4euplus@uw.edu.pl)

**The PI and Local Project Coordinators must contact their 4EU+ Local Offices at their respective home university before submitting the proposal to ensure that their budget calculations and selected expense types comply with their home university's eligibility rules.**

## 9. Selection procedure

An eligibility screening procedure will be performed by 4EU+ Local Offices (contact details below). Only eligible proposals will be submitted to an Evaluation Committee, comprised of appointed evaluators by the 8 universities, experts in different disciplinary fields.

The final decision on the funding of ranked proposals will be made by the 4EU+ Management Committee (MC) and validated by the 4EU+ Governing Board (GB).

## 10. Evaluation

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

### 1) Objectives and Methodology

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

### 2) 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?

### 3) 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.

#### 4) Expected results / Sustainability

- Quality of the expected results and their contribution to the project's objectives as well as their potential added value.
- Credibility and feasibility of the plans to sustain the project's outcomes, collaborations, or activities beyond the funding period.

## 11. Timeline

Applications open	22 June 2026
Applications close	13 October 2026, 4 pm
Notification to applicants	End of December 2026
Earliest date for projects to start	1 January 2027
Latest date for projects to end	31 December 2027
Final report due	End of project + 1 month

## 12. Info session

On **30 June 2026, at 12:00 (midday)**, an online **Info Day** will be hosted to answer your questions about the 2026 SEED 4EU+ call.

Academics interested in participating are kindly invited to fill out the form at this link: [4EU+ Calls 2026-27 Online Info Session 30 June](#)

## 13. Contacts

For further information, please contact:

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

# Annex I

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

The table below presents the assessment criteria in detail.

Criteria	Guideline
<b>1) Objectives and Methodology (0-25)</b>	<p><b>a. Clarity and pertinence of the project's objectives</b></p> <p><i>Please refer here to both the scientific objectives of the proposals and their relevance for 4EU+ i.e., "strengthen the current cooperation within 4EU+ in research and innovation", "broaden the engagement of the communities of all 4EU+ universities in creating and developing One Comprehensive Research-Intensive European University".</i></p> <p><i>Reference: <a href="#">4EU+ Strategy 2025-2035</a></i></p> <p><b>b. Soundness of the proposed approach</b></p>
<b>2) Novelty (0-25)</b>	<p><b>a. To what extent is the proposed work ambitious and innovative?</b></p> <p><b>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?</b></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
<b>3) Implementation (0-25)</b>	<p><b>a. Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, and appropriateness of the effort as well as allocated resources.</b></p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><b>b. Capacity and role of each participant, and extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.</b></p>
<b>4) Expected results / Sustainability (0-25)</b>	<p><b>a. Quality of the expected results and their contribution to the project's objectives as well as their potential added value.</b></p> <p><i>Expected results and their potential added value might vary depending on the nature of the proposal. Please evaluate the overall quality, realism, and coherence of the expected results vis-à-vis the specific objectives of the proposed project. Projects should contribute to the realisation of the 4EU+ Strategy.</i></p> <p><b>b. Credibility and feasibility of the plans to sustain the project's outcomes, collaborations, or activities beyond the funding period.</b></p> <p><i>Please note, <u>sustainability can occur in different forms and couple with different dimensions</u> (i.e. financial sustainability, third party funding, creation of durable research networks, sustainable research synergies, creation of ties with external stakeholders, 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.</i></p>

## ANNEX II

### University of Milan – Eligible Applicants for SEED4EU+ 2026

	SEED CALL	SEED4EU+ Early Career (Definition at point 3)	SEED4EU+ Standard
Categories on the application form	Italian categories		
Assistant Professor	RTDB (fixed-term researchers, type B) funded by resources not subject to financial reporting obligations	✓	✓
Assistant Professor	RTT (tenure-track researchers) funded by resources not subject to financial reporting obligations	✓	✓
Assistant Professor	RU (university researchers)	✓	✓
Associate Professor	PA (associate professors)	✓	✓
Full Professor	PO (full professors)	✓	✓

Requirements applicable to all candidates:

- Must hold a PhD;
- Must have available person-time that does not need to be reported to other funding bodies;
- Must hold a contract with the University of Milan with a duration extending at least one month beyond the project end date (i.e. until 31 January 2028) to cover the reporting period.