4EU+ SEED4EU+ Call

Call for Applications for the academic year 2024-2025

1. Goal

As part of its mission is to develop a barrier-free and continuously growing cooperation the 4EU+ European University Alliance is launching the second round of the **SEED4EU+ initiative**. With a particular emphasis on research   activities, this call seeks to provide seed funding for the implementation of **novel** ideas to foster 4EU+ cooperation and contribute to the realisation of the 4EU+ mission. 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 at the 8 member universities of the Alliance is encouraged to submit joint, innovative proposals that will make a significant impact on strengthening 4EU+ and our strategic partnership, broaden the engagement of the communities of all 4EU+ universities in developing our One Comprehensive Research-Intensive European University further and contribute to the general sustainability of cooperation within 4EU+.

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

2. Scope

The call is open to all academic disciplines. The proposed project outline should fit thematically into at least one of the 4EU+ Flagships. Proposals with a strong focus on research are strongly encouraged, while proposals focusing on education are also eligible.

Proposals should be aligned with the overall vision of the 4EU+ alliance.

The vision of the 4EU+ Alliance is to create "One Comprehensive European Research-Intensive University"; a truly integrated European university system, based on a new quality of deep cooperation in and across education, research, innovation and outreach.

European in identity, the 4EU+ partners share common objectives towards which realization they pool resources and decision-making processes. Partners intend to strive to set up a university system based on a shared set of core values: academic freedom, access to higher education for all, student-centered focus, innovative pedagogy, research excellence, critical thinking, integrity, and service to society.

3.   Eligibility

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

Proposals should be submitted by international 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 PI and the Local Coordinators must hold at least a PhD degree and 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 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 coordinators.

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

Role of Local Project Coordinator

Local Project Coordinator is responsible for implementing planned activities at their institution in line with the application and under supervision of the PI. Local Project Coordinator is a main contact point for the 4EU+ Local Office at their institution, they receive information about the funding internally and are responsible for internal reporting. An administrative contact point as a support to the Local Project Coordinator can (but does not have to) be established, contact information should be uploaded 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](#) and students as project team members is strongly encouraged. Please note that if there is a student participating as a team member, there should also be at least one member of the academic staff from this university participating in the project as 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 2025.

5. Available funding

The maximum funding available per project is 50,000 euros. The total amount of funding requested per project is not linked to the number of participating partner universities, however the costs must be calculated in a way that corresponds to the actual requirements to complete the project.

6. Activities

The call is open to all academic disciplines. Proposals that focus on research in any scientific area are particularly encouraged, however proposals on educational activities are also eligible. Outreach can serve as added value in both research and educational proposals.

As this is a seed funding scheme, planned activities should envisage 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:**
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> - Development of a joint study programmes (full Bachelors, Masters, PhD programmes, PhD schools) with the long-term objective to for example:
>
>   a. submit, as a result of SEED4EU+ project, a joint proposal to obtain external funding e.g. under Erasmus+ or Erasmus Mundus schemes;
>   b. 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 30 September 2024 17:00 CET.

A full application form is available at this link.

An 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. A template for a letter of intent is available here.
- A budget form. A template for a budget is available here.

8.   Eligible expenses

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
Internship stipends	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 up to the limits foreseen in the rules of this call. 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.

9. Selection procedure

Before submitting a proposal, potential candidates should obtain approval from their home university (letter of intent) for their formal eligibility (if any) according to the abovementioned criteria.

An eligibility check will be performed by 4EU+ Local Offices. Only complete and eligible proposals will be submitted to an Evaluation Committee, comprised of representatives of 4EU+ member institutions.

The final decision on the funding of ranked proposals will be made by the 4EU+ Governing Board.

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

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 granting the sustainability of the project

Novelty

- The potential of the proposed project to go beyond the state-of-the-art in the field
- Development and novel components vis-à-vis previous activities, in case the proposal builds on a former/ongoing collaborative project in 4EU+

11. Timeline:

Application open	10 June 2024
Application close	30 September 2024
Notification to applicants	15 November 2024
Latest date for projects to end	31 December 2025
Final report due	End of project + 2 months

12. Contacts

For further information, please contact:

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