

Centre for Digital Trust and Society

Call for seed corn projects (September 2022)

The Centre for Digital Trust and Society is launching a seed corn funding competition to support the development of new research ideas relevant to digital trust.

In 2022/23, we will support around four projects that further our research and understanding of digital trust and society. These could be small research projects, scoping reviews and pilot studies, workshops, symposia, and research seminars/ presentations, or staff exchanges and other collaborative relationship development. This list is not exhaustive and we welcome innovative ideas for your use of the funds.

The fund is open to proposals from across all disciplines. Projects should fit broadly within one or more of the six research clusters that make up the Centre and must be clearly relevant to digital trust.

The Centre

The [Centre for Digital Trust and Society](#) is a focal point for research across the University that explores aspects of trust and security in our digital world. Our scope includes cybersecurity but goes beyond this: we see digital security as part of a set of broader issues of trust and trustworthiness, distrust and trust exploitation, and trust-building and resilience. The Centre is led from Humanities, reflecting the central importance of the social dimensions of digital systems, but our research is interdisciplinary, including scholars from all three Faculties. For more details about our activities and structure, see our [website](#).

Full details

1. Projects

- a. The seed funding granted will be up to £10,000 per project. We expect to fund around four projects.
- b. The fund is open to proposals relevant to digital trust from across all disciplines, and we particularly welcome interdisciplinary projects.
- c. Projects should fit broadly within one or more of the six research clusters that make up the Centre (<https://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/dts/research/clusters/>).
- d. We expect to fund at least one project on digital trust and digital healthcare. Project proposals in this area should involve the Christabel Pankhurst Institute (<https://www.pankhurst.manchester.ac.uk>)
- e. Projects will be funded for up to 8 months and can start from 1 November 2022. There is flexibility on start dates, but all projects must be complete by 30 June 2023. If you intend to propose empirical research, you must clearly demonstrate you have considered the time required for ethical approval before the research can begin.

2. Costs and proposal

- a. Proposals may include small research projects, scoping reviews and pilot studies, workshops (face-to-face and virtual), symposia, staff exchanges, research seminars/ presentations and other activities that contribute to the formation or development of collaborative

relationships. This list is not exhaustive and we welcome innovative ideas for your use of the funds. Proposals should clearly outline expected outputs and outcomes of the project.

- b. Eligible costs include travel and subsistence, consumables, and the cost of research assistants e.g., PhD students, research associates and technicians directly related to the project. Existing staff time including the PI/Co-I time cannot be costed to the project. The fund does not support equipment, scholarships, conference attendance, honoraria, replacement teaching costs, or tuition fees.
- c. A FEC costing is not required but you must provide an indicative overview of how the funds will be used. Please note that only directly incurred costs are allowed and not directly allocated costs.
- d. If you are successful in your application, you will be required to submit an interim report (1-2 pages of A4) midway through the project, and a final project report on completion of the project.

3. Eligibility

- a. University of Manchester academic staff from all disciplines and at all levels are welcome to apply. We encourage early career researchers to apply.
- b. Applicants do not need to have a permanent post, but they must have an existing contract at the time of application, and that contract must cover the full period of the project.
- c. Emeritus and honorary staff are not eligible to apply as PI but may be members of the project team. External stakeholders can also be part of the team.

4. Funding

- a. The seed funding granted will be up to £10,000 per project. We expect to fund around four projects.

5. Timeline

Call for proposals opens: 19 September 2022

Deadline for submission: 5pm BST, 17 October 2022

Applicants notified: By the end of October 2022

Project start date: Anytime from 1 November 2022 but must be completed by 30 June 2022.

6. Submission of Proposals

Proposals should be submitted to dtscentre@manchester.ac.uk using the attached application form.

7. Selection

Proposals will be assessed and recommended for selection by a panel composed of the six CDTs Cluster Leads plus the Director of the Centre, using the following criteria:

- Project design and rationale: how clearly presented and justified is the design and basis for the project (35%).
- Team track record: Team has the right skills and knowledge to achieve the project objectives (15%)
- Fit with the Centre: The degree to which the proposal furthers research and understanding of digital trust and society, including relevance to one or more research clusters (25%).

- Project impact: Clearly articulated and realistic potential benefits to the University, to academics and to stakeholders (15%)
- Potential follow-on: Clear potential and plans for ongoing activity after the project ends (10%)

8. Reporting After Project Completion

All awardees must complete an interim report, a blog post, and a short final project report (template will be provided) which will be shared on the CDTS public website. Project teams will also be encouraged to present their research findings at relevant CDTS seminars.

For any queries, please contact: dtscentre@manchester.ac.uk