The University of Manchester and

The University of Texas at Austin – Research Seed Fund

Guidelines for UoM applicants
Deadline: 2 November 2025

The University of Manchester (UoM) and The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) are pleased to announce a new research seed fund initiative.

The purpose of the fund is to initiate or develop new research partnerships. Funds will be awarded to projects which encourage the building of networks of researchers and have clearly defined plans for future funding.

These guidelines are for UoM applicants. UT Austin applicants should consult the guidelines and application process on the [Texas Global Faculty Research Seed Grants](#) webpage.

The proposed collaborative project should present a balance between partnership building activities and direct research, as appropriate, considering the key objectives of the funding opportunity. Projects can include:
- joint research activities: scoping, feasibility, or proof of concept studies
- travel and networking
- exchange visits
- skills training

Projects that primarily focus on teaching or training will not be eligible.

The Fund is open to applications from all research areas, and we encourage applicants from any discipline to submit proposals. If you are looking for collaborators, please get in touch with us (contact details at the end of the document) and we will help identify researchers with similar interests.

We encourage the involvement of research staff who are Early Career Researchers (ECRs) either as the principal investigators (PIs) or as members of the project team (please check the eligibility list below for other criteria to ensure you are eligible).

Timeline

Call for proposals opens	Monday 15 September 2025
Deadline for submission	Sunday 2 November 2025, 11:59 pm (CST).
Applicants notified	By the end of January 2026.
Project start date	From 1 February 2026.

Funding and project length

Recipients can be awarded up to GBP 5,000 from UoM to support UoM applicants and USD 10,000 from UT Austin to support UT Austin applicants.

For applications funded in this round, the grant period is 1 February 2026 – 1 March 2027 (13-month projects).

Project scope

- The proposal must be a new collaboration, i.e. the collaborators cannot have already published together or have joint funding together.
- **Proposals must include at least two eligible researchers from UoM and one eligible researcher from UT Austin.**
- Eligible applicants (see other eligibility details below) may only lead one application, but can be listed in the project team on other applications.
- Academic staff members from all disciplines and research areas are welcome to apply. We encourage early career researchers (ECRs) to apply. PhD students or academic staff on non-research contracts may be included in the project team, but cannot lead a project.
- UT applicants will need to indicate that the research is linked to UN SDGs. UoM applicants will need to demonstrate a strong relevance to UoM strategic research priorities with the potential for sustainable collaborations beyond the initial funding period.
- Proposals may include but are not limited to workshops (face-to-face and virtual), symposia, staff exchanges, research seminars/presentations and formation, development of a collaborative network and/or practical pilot or feasibility research activities (such as experiments, surveys, etc.).

Eligibility criteria for UoM team members

- Academic staff members from all disciplines and research areas are welcome to apply (see other eligibility details below).
- Applicants do not need to have a permanent post, but they must have an existing research-focused staff contract at the time of application, and that contract must cover the full period of the grant.
- Eligible applicants may only lead one application but can be listed in the project team on other applications.
- PhD students or academic staff on non-research contracts may be included in the project team but cannot lead a project.

- Mutual external collaborators (including researchers from other universities internationally, or those working in non-academic contexts such as industry or government) cannot lead an application but can be involved in the proposed activities at their own expense, where the benefit of their involvement to the collaboration is justified in the proposal.

Costs and budget

- Eligible costs include travel and subsistence, consumables and the cost of research assistants e.g. PhD students, research associates and technicians which are directly related to the project.
- Existing staff time, including the lead applicants'/PIs' time cannot be costed to the project.
- The UoM grant does not support equipment, scholarships, conference attendance or tuition fees.
- Each institution will pay funds directly to its researchers. Approval of expenditure will be governed by each university for the portion of funding provided.
- Each partner should pay its own costs and there can be no transfer of funds between institutions. For example, travel costs for UoM staff should be in the UoM budget, costs for hosting a workshop at UT Austin should be allocated in the UT Austin budget.
- A fEC costing is not required. Please note that only directly incurred costs are allowed and not directly allocated. The budget section of the application is easy to complete and should not require input from Research Services teams. If however, you feel you need support then please follow local Faculty or School procedures for submitting grant applications.

Eligible costs	Ineligible costs
• Travel costs including trains, flights, hotels and subsistence • Costs associated with organising workshops and meetings. • Directly incurred staff e.g. Research Assistant* (up to a maximum of 20% of the budget). • Research costs including consumables (up to a maximum of 20% of the budget). A description of these costs will be required in the application form.	• Replacement research/teaching costs • Directly allocated costs including applicants' time ** • Indirect costs/estates costs • Equipment • Scholarships • Conference attendance • Tuition fees • Honoraria

*Directly Incurred costs are project-specific (i.e. they arise as a direct consequence of the project taking place).
** Directly Allocated costs are not project-specific (i.e. they are incurred whether or not the project takes place), and are estimated at project level e.g. Investigator time, Technician time (where not directly incurred).

- Applicants should take into consideration the University's policies and guidance on travel. University Travel Policy, Before Travelling and Travel Decision Tree.
- Only travel to/from Manchester/Austin will be funded.

Submission of Proposals

This is a joint call involving a single main proposal.

The **UT Austin lead/PI** must submit the proposal via the UT Austin portal, available on the UT Austin webpage here.

In parallel, the **UoM lead/PI** must:
1. Upload a full **copy of the proposal that was submitted to UT as one file to SmartSurvey,**
2. Complete a short submission form on SmartSurvey.

The SmartSurvey submission form is available here and can be previewed in advance here. The form is comprised of the following elements:

- **Applicants' details – affiliations from each institution with contact details**
  - Principal Investigator/institutional lead information (UoM)
  - Principal Investigator/institutional lead information (UT Austin)
- **Research Proposal**
  - **Title:** of the Research Project
  - **Key words** that relate to the main topic of your proposal
  - **Collaborator complementarity and impact**: A description of how the proposed activities combine mutual areas of interest and strength and the added value of this combined expertise. Include any corresponding deliverables, e.g. a publication, blog, a meeting, a report etc.
  - **Potential impact:**
    - **Potential scholarly impact** – a description of the expected academic gains for the project as a result of the proposed cooperation and mobility, and the identification of corresponding performance indicators.
    - **Potential broader impact** – a description of how your proposal aligns with the strategic priorities of the participating institutions and the anticipated benefits of the activities to local or international communities.
  - **Capacity for future collaboration:**
    - What plans do you have for future funding after the end of the project?
  - What other potential future collaborations and outcomes do you anticipate as a result of having undertaken the current collaboration? For example: joint publications, joint supervision of graduate researchers, growth of research team size at each partner.
  - **Proposed budget**
    - A breakdown of the cost of the activity e.g. travel, hotels etc.
  - **Project team information**
  - **Additional documents**
    - A copy of the project proposal submitted to the UT portal.
    - A letter of support: from your Line Manager or Head of Department outlining how the project aligns with your Faculty's strategy.
  - **Declaration and approval -** confirmation you understand the rules and regulations of the fund.

Evaluation criteria

In this call, proposals will be reviewed independently by each institution's review committee, after which representatives from both institutions will confer to make final funding recommendations. Applicants should coordinate closely with their collaborators to ensure alignment in submission and proposal content.

A UoM panel will assess each proposal according to the academic merit and the following criteria:

- **Project design and rationale**
  How clearly presented and justified is the basis for, and design of, the project? How do the proposed activities assist with establishing new and emerging research collaborations? (25% of the evaluation score).
- **Collaborator complementarity and impact**
  What is the added value of the new or emerging collaboration? How do the proposed activities combine mutual areas of interest and strength? What are the anticipated benefits of involving early-stage/early career researchers and/or graduate researchers/PhD students? (25% of the evaluation score).
- **Potential impact**
  What desired outcomes do the planned activities set out to achieve? What are the anticipated benefits of the activities to local or international communities? How does the proposal demonstrate strong relevance to strategic priorities of the partner institutions? (20% of the evaluation score).
- **Capacity for future collaboration/funding**
  What is the potential for this project to foster ongoing collaboration and through what mechanism(s)? How well does the proposed collaboration plan to access external funding? Is there an outline for potential next steps following the end of the project?
  (30% of the evaluation score).

Reporting after project completion

All awardees must, as a condition of receiving an award under this call, complete a narrative report that describes the outcomes, nature of collaboration, project impact, trainee involvement and opportunities for future collaboration that evolved from their project.

Information about this call

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The University of Texas at Austin
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