



Funding period: 01 February 2027 – 1 September 2028
Heidelberg Seed Fund | Manchester Global Fund

Call for Proposals

As part of the institutional partnership between Heidelberg University and The University of Manchester, both universities have a second call for proposals under the Heidelberg Seed Fund | Manchester Global Fund.

This program supports collaboration with the University of Manchester by funding competitive research and cooperative activities through joint projects resulting in joint/co-authored publications in leading journals or external research funding applications.

As the funding for the project is both internal and external, all proposals will be assessed by reviewers from both universities.

Projects funded under this call are expected to start in 1 February 2027 and may run until 1 September, 2028.

1. OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

The Seed Fund supports individual or collaborative research activities and seeks to advance the following goals:

- **Joint research activities:** scoping, feasibility, or proof of concept work.
- **Building networks:** exchange visits to work on a joint project or workshops needed to deliver the research outcome.
- **Skills training or experience:** using equipment or access to labs/cultural institutions in the partner institution for the purpose of meeting the research outcome.

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

Projects should bring together a small network of researchers from both institutions rather than one-to-one researcher-based projects. At least one Early Career Researcher¹ from The University of Manchester **and** Heidelberg University should be included.

The proposed collaborative projects should present a balance between direct research and partnership-building activities, as appropriate.

¹ An individual who is within six years of their first academic appointment. This duration excludes any period of career break.

Priority research themes should reflect one of the following broad themes:

- Creative Industries
- Digital Futures
- Healthier Futures
- Sustainable Futures

2. FUNDING SCOPE

Eligible funding categories for research up to €6.000,00 (total) by Heidelberg University are for:

- Travel and accommodation for short-term collaboration activities up to two weeks
- Laboratory supplies and consumables
- Preparation of external grant applications
- Publication costs
- Technical equipment

3. TIMELINE

Call for proposals opens	Tuesday 15 September 2026
Deadline for submission	Tuesday 27 October 2026, 16:00 (MEZ)
Applicants notified	LATE December
Project start date	1 February onwards

4. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

4.1 ELIGIBILITY

Applications are open to faculties, institutes, and central academic units of Heidelberg University.

We encourage the involvement of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) either as the principal investigators (PIs) or as members of the project team. Eligibility for colleagues from the University of Manchester is listed below, along with other criteria to consider when teaming up. Please note that PhD students are not eligible as PIs/institutional leads from the Heidelberg side, but we encourage PIs to include them as part of the project team.

<https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=79642>

4.2 APPLICATION PROCESS

This is the live link to use for applicants: [https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/UoM-HU/\[smartsurvey.co.uk\]](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/UoM-HU/[smartsurvey.co.uk])

Applications will be administered by The University of Manchester.

- The budget section of the application can be easily completed and should not require input from Research Services teams.

- The funding provided is intended to support expenses, including but not limited to costs of travel between the institutions and necessary related consumables. Details of eligible and ineligible costs are detailed in the table below.
- Each partner should pay its own costs, and there can be no transfer of funds between institutions. For example, travel costs for Heidelberg colleagues should be in the Heidelberg budget, and costs for a workshop taking place in a partner institution location should be allocated in the partner institution budget.
- Each institution will pay funds directly to its researchers. Approval of expenditure will be governed by each university for the portion of funding provided.

4.3 EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

- Project design and rationale (25 points): 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?
- Collaborator complementarity and impact (25 points): 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?
- Potential impact: (20 points): 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 the strategic priorities of the partner institutions?
- Capacity for future collaboration/funding (30 points): 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? Provide an outline for potential follow-up steps following the project.

4.4 REPORTING AFTER PROJECT COMPLETION

Following completion of the project, all awardees must complete a narrative report that describes the outcomes, nature of collaboration, project impact, contributions of team members, and opportunities for future collaboration that evolved from the project.

4.5 GUIDELINES FOR USE OF FUNDS

The use of funds is bound to the general guidelines of Heidelberg University and the Federal State of Baden-Württemberg. All expenses must be supported by documentation and verified at the end of the funding period in accordance with standard university administrative regulations. Any unused funding must be repaid within a reasonable time after the project's completion. The principles of economy and appropriateness apply. In particular, the guidelines for business travel expenses are mandatory.

Further information:

[Financial Accounting and Payment Transactions - Heidelberg University](#)
[Travel Expenses - Heidelberg University](#)

5. CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the call and how to apply, applicants from Heidelberg University can contact the International Relations Office:

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