

Exeter – Université Paris-Saclay Strategic Partnership

Seed Fund Grant Guidelines for Applicants:

Background The University of Exeter and Université Paris-Saclay partner for a range of collaborative activities, built upon a foundation of research and education links plus shared strategic priorities. We have established research cooperation in Climate Science, Sports Science, Astrophysics and Computer Sciences; along with emerging cooperation in areas including Antimicrobial Resistance from a One Health perspective and broader Health research in areas such as public health, healthy ageing and health inequalities. We have established a five-year 'Cotutelle agreement', enabling delivery of a series of double PhD degree projects with match-funding and co-supervision from both institutions in which successful students will obtain PhD awards from both Exeter and Université Paris-Saclay. We have established a student exchange, offering clinical electives of for outbound and inbound medical students each year, allowing our students to explore different medical specialties and healthcare environments by observing clinical practice.

Through **Seed Fund** Grant opportunities we aim to support Exeter & Université Paris-Saclay faculty members in:

- Collaborating to increase the impact of their research or education activities domestically and internationally.
- Collaborating in the development of novel, interdisciplinary research and/or teaching and learning concepts to the point of implementation and submission of bid(s) for external funding.
- Developing initiatives to the point of achieving high impact / high influence publications or equivalent.

The 2026/27 **Seed Fund Grants** are now open for applications, with a closing date of **5th June 2026**.

Objectives

The Seed Fund Grants aim to support pilot projects to establish or broaden collaboration. In summary, **the key aims of the Grants are:**

- To develop and expand relationships between Exeter and Paris-Saclay
- To support both research and education initiatives
- To enable grant holders to develop projects for Exeter – Paris-Saclay Accelerator funding and/or competitive, potentially larger scale external grant applications.

Funding Details

Applications up to a maximum \$2,000€ / GBP £1,700 are invited.

Funding will be provided to the nominated lead applicant who will be responsible for the budget and for all arrangements for any events, activities, and participation.

Awardees will have until 31st July 2027 to utilize the funds for the project or initiative. Funds that are not utilized within the specified period will be returned to their source. All funded applications will be promoted via the websites of each University.

Eligibility Criteria

Seed Fund Grants will be available to the whole academic community at Exeter and Paris-Saclay.

Eligible costs include:

- travel and subsistence (meals and accommodation)
- external speakers/facilitators
- meeting, venue and catering costs
- equipment (small purchases in line with project deliverables)

The following items are not eligible for funding under this scheme:

- academic salaries
- third-party travel costs
- publication costs
- student fees / tuition
- indirect costs, estates costs and overheads associated with internal research facilities.

Application Process

Applicants will need to complete the Seed Fund Grant application via the “démarches numériques” platform in conjunction with their counterpart(s) at the partner institution. Both a lead applicant and co-applicant at the partner institution will need to be nominated for each application. Up to two co-applicants may also be identified. Funding will be divided between the two institutions in the currency of their home institution. The amount provided to each PI would follow the Sub-Totals outlined in Section 8 (cost).

Applicants should ensure that activities are planned and scheduled so that in the event of an award, activities can be undertaken soon after. We expect projects to be completed within the stated timeframes.

The application must be submitted via the “démarches numériques” platform by **5th June 2026 (midnight, local time)**.

For any question or support, please contact:

Exeter: GP-Funding@exeter.ac.uk

Université Paris-Saclay: strategic.partnerships@universite-paris-saclay.fr

Applications will be jointly assessed by a panel of senior administrator and key academic leads for the partnership. Lead applicants will be notified within the specified timeframe (see Key Dates)¹.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed via a competitive selection process based on the following criteria:

- Strategic fit

¹ Please remember to check you spam / junk folder regularly. Messages from “démarches numériques” may occasionally be filtered incorrectly.

- Quality of initiative / activity plan as outlined in the application with considerations for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Perceived value from the investment.
- Potential to expand upon existing or newly identified areas for collaboration.
- Contribution to advancing and sustaining the Exeter – Paris-Saclay partnership.

Feedback and Submissions

Feedback is not usually provided for Seed Fund Grant applications. Resubmission by invitation only.

Key Dates

Date	Activity
8 April 2026	Calls for applications issued
5 June 2026	Application deadline
w/c 6 July 2026	Applicants notified of outcome
Mid August 2026	Project start date
31 July 2027	Project completion deadline
30 August 2027	Post-project report submission deadline

Grant acquittal and reporting

Awardees must agree to adhere to all requirements related to the receipt of funding including deadlines and procedures for acquittal of funds and reporting on outcomes.

Awardees will have up to 31st July 2027 to utilize the funds for the project or initiative. Funds that are not utilized within the specified period will be withdrawn.

Awardees will be required to submit a brief report outlining the successes and outcomes of the project no later than 30th August 2027. Report forms will be provided to Project Leads.

This report will be utilized for the follow up of potential opportunities, reporting on outcomes and to highlight successes of the initiative between Saclay & Exeter.

Exeter awardees who embark on international travel are required to abide by official reporting, insurance and registration requirements as outlined in: [Exeter Travel Policy](#).

Contacts

Please consult your home institution contacts if you would like any additional information.

University of Exeter: Stuart Westhead (Global Partnerships Regional Head – North America & Europe) S.westhead@exeter.ac.uk;

Université Paris-Saclay: Ninon Briffaut (International Projects and Partnerships Coordinator) ninon.briffaut@universite-paris-saclay.fr

Annex A

Assessment Criteria

This guidance has been drawn up to assist applicants when completing their Seed Fund Grant application forms. The purpose is to explain what type of information and evidence is required to satisfy the assessment criteria.

Assessment Criteria	Evidence Required
Strategic fit	Clear information on how the proposed project would enhance the development of one of the established themes and, if applicable, subthemes.
Quality of initiative/activity	<p>How well the application has been considered and planned, and the strength of its potential for taking forward a development or collaboration. Are the goals stretching but achievable? Using data to substantiate, the bid should identify the need for and value of the proposed project and how it fits with UoE and Paris-Saclay objectives. Include details on how the project would be enhanced by being undertaken through this initiative.</p> <p>Considerations for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concrete actions to address equity, diversity and inclusion at stage of the research process are described. ▪ Considerations for how the research environment can be made more accessible and inclusive to the research team/trainees, and how to provide equitable opportunities for all members of the team to engage with the work being conducted are presented.
Perceived value from the investment	<p>Is the proposal offering value for money? Is it communicating clear evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a unique opportunity that is in line with the initiative's purpose • mobilizing a new or already interested, but perhaps disparate, research group, or disciplines, to come together and collaborate for the purpose of step change quality research and teaching • project management capabilities of the proposers - reassurance that, if funded, the project will run on time, to budget and deliver against agreed aims, activities and outcomes • tangible and quantifiable outcomes and impact for the benefit of the institutions as well as the more immediate group • the potential to publish high quality papers, influence policy, and leverage external funding
Potential to expand upon existing or newly identified collaboration	Evidence of strength and potential of the relationship. How can the group and its work develop beyond the project? What mechanisms will be used to ensure ongoing communications and interaction? Clear sense of potential trajectory for the project and the relationship.