

Call for Applications – Seed funding for research activities and African-European collaboration 2025

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Further information on the call's dedicated webpage:

[Seed funding for research activities and African-European collaboration 2025 – CIVIS, A European University Alliance](#)

Are the Universities that we can partner with limited to the CIVIS member and partner universities, or is it open to other universities?

This call is open to all CIVIS Alliance Universities (African and European) with the exception of the University of Tübingen, with a compulsory participation of at least three universities, of which at least two must be European CIVIS universities. It is also possible to open the established CIVIS consortium for this call to non-CIVIS partners. But those cannot receive funding.

UT members may still participate in projects as collaborators, provided they can secure their own funding independently.

Can I apply if I have not identified a potential funder of a larger grant proposal?

If the application falls under the category "application design measure", it should indeed state which funding institution or for which funding programme the initiative targets. It is also possible to indicate several possible funding institutions/programmes, if the decision is still pending. Anyway, it should become clear in the application how the project team plans to sustain the network through third-party funding.

If the project falls under the category "new collaborative research activities", no funding institution/programme must be mentioned. If the activity could lead to third-party funding applications at some point or as a possible outcome, this could strengthen the sustainability of the initiative and thereby the application.

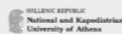
Does the Call imply concrete funding opportunities for student training?

This Call for Applications is not aimed at funding students training, and students (including Ph.D. students) cannot receive funding through this Call. It is rather a funding opportunity to encourage collaboration on research-oriented activities among faculty and researchers of CIVIS' Alliance members and strategic partners. However, activities with the aim of creating research training options for (Ph.D.) students, e.g., by preparing a related grant proposal, or a research-oriented summer school, could be funded.

How long are the proposals? Will there be templates available?

Applicants can work online on their application in the Application Portal and save entries before submission. The application form requires information on various topics. The longest text blocks are expected for the project description, which should not exceed 500 words. The partners network's description or the sustainability plan should not exceed 400 words.

Member universities :



Associate member universities :



What are the eligibility criteria?

The eligibility criteria are mentioned in the Call text. Accepted projects must involve at least three CIVIS participating institutions, relate to at least one of the five CIVIS Hub themes, align with one of the types of supported activities (New collaborative research activities / Application design measures), demonstrate the potential for a longer-term collaboration among participants; be implemented by 30th June 2026.

What are the evaluation criteria?

Evaluators will also take common academic quality standards into account, i.e., the research question, the research method, the relevance of the research collaboration and the coherence of the planning (see further information in the application form).

Further desirable project features are the inclusion of at least one strategic partner university from Africa and preference will be given to projects demonstrating interdisciplinarity and addressing societal challenges. Contribution to citizen/participatory science is especially encouraged in the case of collaborative research activities.

Until how many years after the completion of my PhD thesis can I apply?

Potential applicants should be able to prove a long-term contract with his/her university to ensure the sustainability of the proposed project. There is no minimum period for postdocs after the completion of their thesis. Postdoctoral applicants are particularly encouraged to apply.

Can I submit application for the seed funding even though my university is not yet a member of CIVIS Europe-African collaboration community?

Members from non-CIVIS universities can be included in the list of project participants, but their institution would not count as one of the minimum of three participating universities, and these participants cannot be main applicants/contact persons for a proposal. Hence, staff (faculty, researchers) from universities, which are neither a European member nor an African partner institution of CIVIS, can participate in the activities supported by this Call with own funding, but they cannot directly benefit from the seed funding.

How can one cover the expenses of African scientists coming to Europe?

This call is primarily funded by the CIVIS Erasmus+ budget which does not allow covering the travel costs for the African partners. However, some CIVIS universities in Europe have special funding options for inviting these partners (either Erasmus+ ICM funds, own institutional funds). Please consult your local CIVIS office for checking whether such options exist.

For UofG and UNIL costs cannot be covered by Erasmus+ budget but their own institutional funds will be used (and can therefore exceed the 10,000 EUR limit), Please consult your local CIVIS Office.

Of course, African partners can always join activities by relying on own funding, e.g., from their home university. Alternatively, applicants might want to consider holding meetings/events at a partner institution in Africa.

Can one have NGOs as partners? If so, is it possible for the members of these NGOs to be funded? The same question applies to researchers coming from non-CIVIS Universities.

This call is funded by an Erasmus+ budget which covers only the travel cost of university members. Hence, travel costs for non-academic/university staff members must rely on external funding.

Applications will be also be checked for 'financial and organisational feasibility'. How can I know whether our proposal is feasible?

Your proposal needs to be in line with the formal eligibility criteria (activity planned until 30th June 2026) and funding rules (e.g., only staff members can be funded) and follow the guidelines provided in the application form in order for your activity to be eligible. As mentioned in the Call, further local funding rules of hosting or sending institutions may apply. You should anyway inform your local CIVIS office/contact person about your application. You might want to ask thereby, whether your planned activity is considered feasible, in principle, and in line with local funding circumstances.

I will retire and not be a university staff member at my university after 2026. How does this affect my eligibility to apply for seed funding?

Persons supported by this seed-funding call need to be staff members at the time of the planned activity/the conducted mobility. Applicants should plan to be a member of or be affiliated with their current university in a way that allows them to sustain the contacts/network created by the funded activity according to the sustainability plan of the proposal.

May we also apply for organizing a Summer School for postgraduate students in one of the thematic areas?

In principle, yes, but it must be research-oriented, i.e., have a clear research training dimension or be for example about PhD research projects. Note that the funding would have to be matched with other mobility funding as it would certainly not be enough to cover mobility for all PhDs and senior academics.

Is it correct that applicants from University of Glasgow can be part of a project but that their travel cannot be covered by the application?

The University of Glasgow has its own funding and is fully participating in this call. Contact your local CIVIS Office for more information about the funding possibilities.

Regarding the eligibility criteria – is it correct that there must be at least one African university, and two European?

The consortium must be composed of a minimum of 3 CIVIS university members, including at least (but not limited to) 2 European members. Inclusion of an African University (member) is not compulsory but can be seen as an advantage when evaluating the proposal.

Can PhD students in Africa apply for the seed funding call?

No, PhD students in Africa cannot apply themselves, but they can be part of a consortium.

How can one get in contact with the thematic area of interest?

The application theme must relate to at least one of the [Hub thematic areas](#). This will have to be elaborated on in the application. Though, it is not necessary to get in touch with the CIVIS Hubs directly.

Could the seed funding cover the costs of experiments at a biotechnology core facility at a university?

No, the funding aims at covering mobility costs.

Could Lausanne and Glasgow together be the only two European institutions on an application?

Yes, but please get in touch with your local CIVIS office for clarifying the exact funding options in such a case.

Can any African University be included in the application or must it already be linked to CIVIS?

As long as a minimum of 3 CIVIS universities are part of the consortium (European and/or African members), any other partner can be included. However, these extra-CIVIS partners are not eligible for funding through this call and would have to find other funding opportunities.

Can I apply to do laboratory (Genomic Sequence) activity through the seed funding at a European member university?

It would have to be a collaborative research activity, and not an individual exchange, only then would it fit the activities that are eligible for funding.

Are any other recommendations that would help find potential project partners? Especially because we probably want to avoid "cold calling".

It might be useful to contact the CIVIS Institutional Coordinator at your own university to find out whether some collaborations have already been established with other CIVIS partners in your area of interest.

In addition, an online platform has been set up to provide an overview of the various research themes being addressed by the Alliance's member universities, listing research groups and their related research topics and contacts details to facilitate contact within the Alliance's research community.

Refer to the [platform](#) with information about research groups and contact details at the different CIVIS universities.

Can Early Career Academics take the lead in the partnership?

As far as they are members of a European university, early career academics can be the lead if they have already obtained a PhD and have an employment contract which lasts beyond the duration of the project.

Can a post-doc researcher apply and the funding used for the mobility of a PhD student based on one partner's universities?

It is a collaborative project so it does not aim at funding single persons' mobility.

Is there a list of all the projects funded in 2024 with details and a summary?

As the projects are still ongoing only certain information is available now. There will be more visibility on the CIVIS website once the projects have finished.

Can seed funding cover on-site data collection for a pilot study (in Africa)?

The CIVIS seed funding budget cannot cover intra-African mobility, additional funds are up to individual universities. On the other hand, it cannot fund activities for one person only – there needs to be a minimum of 3 partners involved.

Also, the aim is not to finance a temporary activity. The proposed activity must have a long-term objective, in order to develop/strengthen networks that will be viable over time.

Hello, I am a Chemistry PhD student in area of natural products at Makerere University, what opportunities that are eligible to me?

You could be a part of an application led by a Researcher at a later Career-stage (Postdoc at least). So, there is no direct way that you can apply. Check out the CIVIS Website for finding out what CIVIS can do for PhD students in particular.

Can CIVIS seed funding cover collaboration towards an Erasmus Mundus proposal?

No, the proposal would have to be wider and include a research perspective.

Is there any template that we must follow to send the Proposal?

Yes, application can be done through the online [Application Form](#).

Will the recording of the session be shared?

Yes, you will be able to find the recording as well as the PowerPoint presentation on the call [webpage](#).

For any general inquiries, don't hesitate to contact the generic email address: seed-funding-2025@lists.civis.eu.