

Call for Proposals Seed Grants (Instrument I) 2024

IP Themes

The University of Amsterdam (UvA) wishes to encourage collaboration between disciplines on complex societally relevant themes. To stimulate this type of research the UvA offers Seed Grants for interdisciplinary research projects falling within four specific themes that are important for the university. The four themes are:

1. Responsible Digital Transformations
2. Healthy Future
3. Fair and Resilient Societies
4. Sustainable Prosperity

These four themes are described in the UvA Instellingsplan ‘Inspiring Generations’ 2021-2026.

The Seed Grants range from €15k-€40k and can be spent on bringing together UvA-scholars from different faculties to work on e.g., small innovative interfaculty research projects or grant proposal preparations. Depending on the number of applications and the requested budgets, we expect to award between 2-3 grants for each theme in this round of the call. We expect to launch a second call in the autumn of 2024 in which 2-3 additional Seed Grants can be awarded.

The deadline for submitting proposals is 23 May 2024, intending for projects to start as early as possible in 2024.

Please consult the additional guidelines for the intended theme (appendix II) and the [dedicated webpage](#) for specific information for each IP Theme.

The Seed Grants (Instrument I) are one form of available funding under the Theme-based collaboration, for more information about additional forms of funding, please see Appendix IV. We expect that funding for Instrument II – Midsize Projects will be made available soon.

1. Details of the Call

The Seed Grant instrument is intended to provide a space for collaboration, innovation, experiments, and exploring new methods. These are small-scale projects that will help researchers from different faculties to come together and plant a research seed that can flower in the future.

We encourage prospective applicants to carefully read the details below and the [webpage](#) for more information on the strategic goals of each theme:

1. [Responsible Digital Transformations](#)
2. [Healthy Future](#)
3. [Fair and Resilient Societies](#)
4. [Sustainable Prosperity](#)

1.1. Requirements:

- A Seed Grant proposal should set up a new and innovative research initiative with a clear output such as a joint grant proposal, joint research paper, proof of concept, data model, etc. It needs to fall within the scope of one of the four themes and this should be specified in the proposal.
- The proposal should involve new research initiatives, although they may build on existing collaborations; they should however clearly extend the collaborative and/or interdisciplinary and/or methodological scope.
- The envisaged output of the project should be clearly described (e.g., a joint paper, an interdisciplinary research proposal, joint grant proposal, proof of concept, data model, etc.).
- The call is open to all tenure-track, assistant, associate and full professors, and professors by special appointment from the UvA, for applications for projects that fit the Seed Grant projects criteria as defined in this call. Members of the steering committee can in principle participate in applications but will not take part in assessment of these proposals.
- A minimum of one co-applicant of a different faculty is required. Thus, involvement of a minimum of two faculties is required, even though participation of more faculties is strongly encouraged, as well as collaboration between different disciplines from two or more faculties.
- Collaboration with non-academic partners is not yet required, but societal relevance should be clear.
- The proposal needs to demonstrate how this adds to the overall knowledge base of UvA and does not copy what is being done at other institutions in the Amsterdam region.
- The proposal needs to describe what the grant will be spent on, with rough estimates of the amounts and a timeline of the project with a starting and end date.
- The project should run for 6-12 months.

1.2. Available budget

The Seed Grants range from €15k-€40k and can be spent on new, innovative projects that bring researchers from different disciplines and faculties together.

Depending on the number of applications and the requested budgets, we expect to fund 2-3 grants per theme in this call.

1.3 Eligible expenses:

- Personnel costs
- Data access and collection, data infrastructure, research assistants
- Conferences/research travel/visitor proposals

When a Seed Grant is awarded, applicants are asked to draw up a budget sheet together with project office of the penning faculty.¹

1.4. More Information

Before applying, we strongly advise prospective applicants to carefully read the additional guidelines for the intended theme (appendix II) and the webpages of the theme for more details about this call.

¹ Update since 8 May 2024, it is no longer necessary to provide a budget sheet along with the application.

There you will find:

- contact details of the Steering group members for each theme;
- contact details of the Theme manager for each theme;
- summary of the focus of each IP Theme;
- information on the Seed Grants and Midsize Projects already awarded;
- this call.

Also, we encourage prospective applicants to consult the IP Theme-managers in order to learn how to best connect to the focus of the respective theme.

- for [Responsible Digital Transformations](#): Christine Erb, via email m.c.erb@uva.nl
- for [Healthy Future](#): Jillian O'Mara, via email j.r.omara@amsterdamumc.nl
- for [Fair and Resilient Societies](#): Christina Feray-Ceulemans, via email c.t.ceulemans@uva.nl
- for [Sustainable Prosperity](#): Dylan Suijker, via email d.p.l.suijker@uva.nl

Do you have general questions about this call?

→ Please contact Emmelie Kamsteeg for more information via e.kamsteeg@uva.nl.

1.5. Applying

Please send your submission form per email to Emmelie Kamsteeg e.kamsteeg@uva.nl before **23 May 2024, at 11.00h CET**.

A format for applying for a Seed Grant is made available in Appendix I.

2 Assessment procedure

2.1 Assessment procedures

Each IP Theme has a steering group. The steering groups will function as the assessment committee and advise the Chairs about the projects falling under their theme.

Steering group members who have participated in the submission of a proposal are not eligible to assess that proposal.

2.2 Assessment criteria

Assessment will be based on:

- A. Fulfilling the requirements as listed under 2.2 (in the case of a Seed Grant)
- B. Alignment of the objectives of the Seed Grants with the IP Themes.
- C. Quality of the research proposal and consortium, based on the application formats in Appendix I (in the case of a Seed Grant).

Relevance to chosen focus of the themes will be ultimately decisive for equivalent proposals.

Appendix I: Seed Grant application format

To be sent in via e.kamsteeg@uva.nl no later than **23 May 2024, at 11.00h CET**.

The proposal must be drawn up in English. The size of a proposal is a maximum of 1000 words (with the exception of title/applicants). A proposal addresses the following matters:

1. Title and applicants

2. Purpose of Seed Grant

What do you want to do with this Seed Grant? What seed is intended to be planted with this Seed Grant proposal and what plant should it grow into?

Include the following:

- Scientific case / impact: what does scientific innovation consist of? What makes this project an interfaculty collaboration? What are the main themes and methodology?
- Societal case / impact: what is the intended IP Theme for this project and how does the project contribute to the relevant IP Theme? What social impact is intended? Involvement of a non-academic party is not a requirement, but what parties might ultimately be interested in this research field?
- Expected output and success indicators: what products or other outputs are created? How does this relate to the objective of this project? By what indicators can the success of this project be measured?
- How would this project contribute to the intended IP Theme and its community?
- Through this call, we want to stimulate new, interdisciplinary teams, understand how the teams work together and how to best support this. Please explain shortly how you envision your team activities and collaboration. How do the project partners contribute to the outcome?

3. Practical matters & potential for follow-up

- Staff, organization and institutional context: how is this Seed Grant organized? Who commits to this project (if awarded funding), what contribution do they make, and for how much of their time?
- Budget (according to budgeting sheet format): how much funding is applied for (€15k-€40k)? What is it spent on (staff, organization, support, etc.)? Use the format that will be available through the website.
- Potential follow-up and financing: how does this project tap into potential follow-up funding? Subsidy providers, stakeholders, perspective on a follow-up. Why is there is a reasonable possibility for acquiring additional external resources after the Seed Grant period?

Appendix II: Additional guidelines by IP Theme

- Additional guidelines Responsible Digital Transformations
The interdisciplinary, UvA-wide theme Responsible Digital Transformations aims to analyse, criticise and improve ethical, juridical, and societal aspects of algorithms, digital technologies and infrastructures. Our aim is to research how digital technologies can be

used to enhance individual and societal wellbeing, and safeguard human rights and public values. For more information, visit the RDT website.

This call for Seed Grants is open to any thematic proposals that fit within the broad theme of Responsible Digital Transformations. Yet, the steering group encourages researchers to submit proposals on topics that have been identified as strategic priorities for the near future, including Creativity & Generative AI; the Future of Work & Economy; Digital Transformation & Security; and Ethics, Regulation & Digitization. Applications need to explain how the work fits with the broad aims of RDT. New collaborations that have not previously been honored are preferred.

- Additional guidelines Healthy Future

The Healthy Future theme encompasses both mental and physical health focusing primarily on the social determinants and cultural contexts of health: understanding and changing systems that undermine health, from structures and policies to behaviors and beliefs. The Healthy Future theme has identified two sub-themes: (1) Towards a healthy diet for all and (2) Stress & the intergenerational transmission of health and (un)healthy behaviors.

Additionally, from 2024, the Healthy Future theme would like to emphasize the global health perspective as applied to the two themes described above. This perspective can help to extend our knowledge about safeguarding health and well-being across borders, recognizing its social value and promoting well-being and a healthy future for all. The two sub-themes offer guidance for project proposals for Seed Grants. However, project proposals are not required to fall into these categories.

Sub-theme: Towards a healthy diet for all

A healthy diet is fundamental to human health. However, eating a healthy diet in our current food system is made difficult by factors such as the high cost of healthy food, the abundance of unhealthy choices, the marketing of unhealthy food and more. An unhealthy diet can lead to diseases such as obesity and type 2 diabetes. Additionally, our food system contributes to environmental degradation and places unfair demands on developing countries. Therefore, a healthy and sustainable food system is essential for a healthy future. This sub-theme seeks to explore the drivers and barriers to accessing healthy food and to identify policy solutions for creating a healthier food environment.

Sub-theme: Stress & the intergenerational transmission of health and (un)healthy behaviors

A small portion of families experience a disproportionate burden of mental and metabolic health issues, including depression, anxiety, addiction, conduct problems, diabetes, obesity, and dental problems, resulting in significant patient suffering and societal costs. These issues often intersect with societal factors such as class, gender, and race, and can be exacerbated by discrimination. Furthermore, these health conditions and unhealthy behaviors tend to persist within families and are transmitted across generations. This sub-theme aims to investigate the risk factors and mechanisms of intergenerational

transmission of health and health behavior within families facing high cumulative risk and to develop effective interventions.

- Additional guidelines Fair and Resilient Societies

Fair and Resilient Societies (FRS) is the interdisciplinary, UvA-wide theme for research and education aimed at promoting a just, stable and resilient society that ensures the well-being of its citizens.

Research on sub-themes

UvA collaborations in the field of Fair and Resilient Societies are already taking place. Still, in three sub-themes, the steering committee expects new initiatives and wants to create larger groups of collaborating researchers within the UvA. These sub-themes are:

1. Inequality
2. Migration
3. Social crises and polarization

Call seed grants 2024 round 1 focused on three sub-themes

Seed grant projects bring together UvA scientists from different faculties to work on small-scale, innovative, inter-faculty research projects or the preparation of grant proposals. Two seed grant rounds will take place in 2024. This call is about the first round.

The steering committee Fair and Resilient Societies has a preference for seed grant project proposals that fall under the three sub-themes mentioned above, but will also consider proposals that fall under the broad theme Fair and Resilient Societies. New collaborations, which have not been honoured before, are preferred.

More information

More information about the call for seed grant proposals via:

<https://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/about-the-university/strategy/theme-based-collaboration/fair-resilient-societies.html>

More information about the theme: <https://fairandresilientsocieties.uva.nl/en>

If you have any questions, please contact Theme Manager Christina Feray-Ceulemans via c.t.ceulemans@uva.nl

- Additional guidelines Sustainable Prosperity

The UvA has issued a call for proposals for seed grants for interdisciplinary research projects falling within the theme Sustainable Prosperity.

For the 2024 round, for Sustainable Prosperity, €200K is available. USP seed grants can range from €15 to 50k. If the Steering Group does not allocate the full amount in the current round, it will open a second call for proposals in the fall.

The Steering Group gives priority to new collaborations which have not been honoured before.

For the general conditions and information on the assessment procedure that apply to all IP Themes, please consult the text of the UvA call.

For applications under the Sustainable Prosperity theme, the following additional information and guidance applies:

Substantive orientation

The Sustainable Prosperity theme seeks to promote transformative, forward-looking research on the challenges as recognized in e.g. the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN and the EU Green Deal, taking into account the impact of individual societies on each other and on the world as a whole.

Such research should help steer human development in a safer and more equitable direction. Safer by avoiding the negative effects of global environmental change for all forms of life on earth, taking into account planetary boundaries. More equitable by ensuring that all people have and maintain access to the resources that underpin human well-being, now and in the future.

We support and engage in research on the complexity of, and interconnections between, actors and processes, and underlying economic and legal systems that contribute to sustainability challenges, and which should also be the basis for solution directions and the necessary system transition.

Research can examine possible solutions (e.g. safe and sustainable-by-design materials and products, but also new financing instruments or paradigm shifts) in conjunction with the necessary adjustments in regulation, communication and practices of companies and consumers, locally, nationally, Europe-wide and internationally. Understanding how technology, regulation and behavioral change of individuals, groups and organizations can benefit sustainability, must go hand in hand with studies of distributional issues and underlying interests.

UvA Sustainability Platform (USP)

The research under the Sustainable Prosperity theme is carried out within the UvA Sustainability Platform. This is a UvA-wide community committed to making a positive sustainability impact through interdisciplinary research and collaboration with external partners.

Under the umbrella of USP, eight interdisciplinary research projects have been funded so far. Five of these are seed grant projects (small innovative interfaculty research projects or grant proposal preparations) and three are mid-size projects (larger projects that build on existing research ties between UvA scholars from different faculties and that anticipate to be able to draw in non-academic parties).

On the USP website you can find links to and information on research groups that are active within the theme sustainable prosperity, and the names of UvA researchers that are engaged in (interdisciplinary) sustainability research (see list of USP associates)

If you have any questions, please contact Elles Tukker at usp@uva.nl.

Appendix III: Format report

For Seed Grants (Instrument I) we envision that the results of the projects will be presented to a broader public in the form of a short video, that can be published on the webpages of IP-themes.

Appendix IV: Background to the call

As the UvA Strategic Plan 2021-2026 ('Inspiring Generations', chapter 2.2) states, the UvA wishes to encourage collaboration between disciplines. Additional funds have been made available to invite academics to formulate new and at times unexpected research questions at the interface between disciplines and faculties, and to incorporate these into our teaching.

Four societal themes (IP Themes) have been defined for this purpose, all of which play to the UvA's strengths:

- Responsible Digital Transformations
- Healthy Future
- Fair and Resilient Society
- Sustainable Prosperity.

The Strategic plan also states that by boosting innovation through these themes, we aim to achieve the following additional benefits:

- the research collaboration must attract other income, which will ideally lead to long-term partnerships with internal and external researchers and with interested businesses and philanthropists. The additional funding will come from the EU, the NWO, the Growth Fund or the region, for example;
- the innovation must filter through into our degree programmes (both undergraduate and postgraduate), enabling us to attract new students with programmes that relate to the new research questions. That way, we continue to present the UvA as a leading research-intensive university;
- the research collaboration will enable us to attract talent from both the Netherlands and abroad through an inter-faculty approach.

For each of the IP Themes, dedicated grant and network support will be organized. Each IP Theme will also organize network events, seminars, conferences, etc. Also, dedicated communication support is being organized. Next to that continuous support, the following instruments are available:

Seed Grant projects (opstartprojecten) / Instrument I

In 2021-2022, the Theme Steering groups have chosen a particular focus for their IP Theme. In order to get scholars from different faculties to work together on that research focus, Seed Grant projects (opstartprojecten) were identified with a (semi-)open call, and were allocated funding from Instrument I. Open calls will continue to be available annually.

Midsized Projects (doorgroeiprojecten) / Instrument II

Next to starting new collaborations, there is also funding available for (existing) interfaculty

collaborations within those themes and with involvement of societal stakeholders, in which the participating faculties are willing to co-invest. This means that faculties are willing to make additional investments in these collaborations, e.g. because they contribute to the faculty's strategy and because it connects closely to external research (and funding) agenda's. For these Midsize Projects (doorgroeiprojecten) annual funding will be available through Instrument II, to be matched by at least the same amount from the involved faculties. It is not necessary to have received Seed Grant funding (Instrument I) in order to be eligible for funding for a Midsize Project (Instrument II).

Large-Scale Cofunding Projects (grote cofinancieringsprojecten) / Instrument III

For large-scale projects with financial support by third money stream a third mechanism is being put in place, i.e. Instrument III.

→ This instrument will become available in due time.

This initiative is in addition to the existing provision for Research Priority Areas (RPAs). RPAs need not have a societal component, whereas projects within the themes do. Also, RPAs are not expected to be able to attract external funding in the near future, whereas projects within the themes do.

The funds will be used to support the establishment of project-based research areas over a period of five to ten years. Thereafter, the research areas will fund themselves (from research council and contract funding and through the education and research parameters of the internal allocation model).