



Call for Proposals Midsize Projects (Instrument II) 2024 IP Themes

In its Strategic Plan the University of Amsterdam has set the ambition to strengthen innovative interdisciplinary research for societal impact.

Over the last two years, UvA researchers have set out to work on a variety of exciting interdisciplinary projects and have created vibrant communities around four themes:

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

Now, UvA researchers are again invited to join the collective efforts to contribute to solutions to societal challenges.

Through this second **Call for Proposals for Midsize Projects**, researchers are encouraged to form interdisciplinary groups in partnership with non-academic stakeholders. They can apply for projects with a maximum budget of €200k. The grant can be spent on hiring new temporary staff such as postdocs, data scientists and research assistants and other costs (travel, consumables). The duration of the project is max. two years. Two or three grants will be awarded for each theme.



à *Details are specified in the [application guidelines](#) below.*

Please also check the additional guidelines of each theme (Appendix I) and consult the webpages of the themes.

The deadline for submission is **Thursday October 31st, at 11.00h CET.**

Guidelines for application

1. Details of the Call

Midsized Projects are meant to encourage UvA scholars to consolidate existing collaborations between scholars from different faculties on a research topic within one (or potentially two) of the four IP Themes. At the same time, researchers are invited to strengthen active collaboration with non-academic partners in that research. We also welcome collaborations who work towards an application for future funding via programmes such as National Growth Fund, Horizon Europe, etc. It is not necessary to have received Seed Grant funding to be eligible for funding for a Midsized Project.

Prospective applicants are advised to carefully read the requirements 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:

1. A Midsized Project proposal should consolidate existing collaborations between scholars from two or more faculties on a research topic that is tightly connected to one or more of the four IP Themes. Applicants need to specify how the proposed project connects to the aims and goals of the theme(s) they wish to apply for.
2. A minimum of one co-applicant from a different faculty is required. Thus, the involvement of a minimum of two faculties is necessary, though the participation of more faculties is strongly encouraged, as is collaboration between different disciplines from two or more faculties.
3. Collaboration with a non-academic partner is required. The contribution by the non-academic partner(s) can be either in-kind or in-cash and must be demonstrated in the application. The format for the declaration of intent by the non-academic partner can be found in Appendix III of this call.
4. The call is open to all tenure-track, assistant, associate, and full professors, as well as professors by special appointment from the UvA. Members of the steering committee can participate in applications but will not take part in the assessment of such proposals.
5. The proposal needs to indicate the research time that the participating UvA researchers will commit to the project. Participating in the proposed project must allocate (part of) their existing own research time to the project (see 1.2).
6. The proposal needs to explain how this project adds to the overall knowledge base of UvA and does not copy what is being done at other knowledge institutions in the Amsterdam region. In addition, the proposal needs to explain how it contributes to the IP Theme and its community.
7. The project should clearly extend existing collaborative and/or interdisciplinary and/or methodological scopes.
8. The envisaged output of the project should be clearly described (e.g., a joint paper, an interdisciplinary research proposal or joint grant proposal).
9. The proposal needs to include a financial plan that explains what the grant will be spent on, including rough estimates of costs. a timeline of the project with a starting and end

date. The main applicant needs to liaise with the faculty project office to ensure realistic estimates.

10. The project should have a running time of 12-24 months.
11. The project size can vary, but funding through this instrument (Midsize Projects) is limited to 200k€ per project. See also the paragraph below.

1.2 Financing the projects

Researchers participating in the proposed project must allocate (part of) their existing own research time to the project. Therefore, they need to make sure that they have enough research time available to spend on the project and that their faculties support and confirm the time spent on the project, if awarded.

- The available budget for each project should in principle be allocated for hiring new staff (or extension, specifically for this project, of existing staff), i.e. postdocs, data scientists or research assistants. The resources cannot be used to buy out teaching time, neither can the resources be used for freeing up additional research time for existing staff.
- All faculties confirm in advance to the research time committed to the project. Therefore, prospective applicants will have to make sure that they can use their own existing research time for this application.

1.3 Eligible expenses:

- Personnel costs for postdocs, data scientists, and research assistants. (Personnel costs of the applicants are brought in by the applicants from existing research time.)
- Data access and collection.
- Conferences/research travel/visitor proposals.
- Additional project costs associated with societal impact.

Applicants are required to contact a project controller of the faculty project office (projectenbureau) for preparing a correct budget sheet project controller of the project office (*projectenbureau*). The budget sheet needs to be enclosed with the application. We advise the main applicant to contact the project office of their own faculty as early as possible.

1.4 More Information

Before applying, please carefully read the additional guidelines for different themes (see Appendix I) and the webpages for more information about the themes.

The webpages of the four themes provide an overview of:

- thematic description of the IP Theme;
- the members of the steering group (incl. contact details);
- the theme manager (incl. contact details);
- information on the Seed Grants and Midsize Projects already awarded;
- this call.

We encourage prospective applicants to consult the IP Theme-managers 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, - Jillian O'Mara will be on leave, Emmelie Kamsteeg will be the contact for Healthy Future during this call, via email e.kamsteeg@uva.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

For a correct budget sheet please consult the project office:

- Faculty of Economics and Business: Yvonne ter Horst, y.terhorst@uva.nl
- Faculty of Humanities: onderzoek-fgw@uva.nl
- Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences: Jamie King, j.j.king@uva.nl
- Faculty of Science: projecten-science@uva.nl
- Amsterdam Law School: Yusuf Hanelçi, a.y.hanelci@uva.nl

Applications from faculties AUMC and ACTA are asked to consult the project office from one of the other participating faculties.

Since a collaboration with a non-academic partner is required, you might want to consult the Impact Developer of your faculty for help and insights in developing new partnerships. Consider that it might also be necessary to have the application reviewed by the [Advisory Committee on third-party collaborations](#).

Do you have general questions about this call?

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

1.5 How to apply:

Please send your submission form (see Appendix II), including the budget sheet and the declaration of intent by the non-academic party (see Appendix III) via email to Emmelie Kamsteeg at e.kamsteeg@uva.nl whenever ready but no later than **Thursday October 31st, at 11.00h CET**. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

2 Assessment procedure and decision

The qualitative judgement of the proposals will be based on the following assessment criteria:

- A. Fulfilling the requirements, see 1.1.
- B. Alignment of the objectives of the Midsize projects with the IP themes.
- C. The quality of the research proposal and consortium.
- D. Committed research time by the participating UvA researchers that is appropriate to the proposal and structurally contributes to the existing research activities.

The assessment will mainly be based on the content of the application and its fit with the strategy of the themes. In addition, the application will be assessed on whether the commitment of the existing research hours is appropriate to the proposal and structurally contributes to the existing research activities. The financial details will be included as an indication. Relevance for the themes will be ultimately decisive for equivalent proposals.

The decision for funding will be made in three steps:

- (1) The steering groups of individual IP themes will assess the quality of the proposals submitted to the respective theme based on the criteria above. The steering groups will come to a preliminary ranking of the proposals and provide a funding advice per theme to the assessment committee.

- (2) The assessment committee, i.e., the rector magnificus and the chairs of the steering groups (the deans), will assess the quality of all proposals. The assessment committee will also evaluate the strategic fit of the proposals with the overall aims and goals of the themes. This process will lead to a prioritisation and final recommendation presented to the UvA Executive Board.
- (3) The UvA Executive Board will take the final decision on which proposals will be awarded.

Awarding extra projects

In principle, two projects are awarded for each IP theme. If there are more proposals eligible for funding, additional grants might be allocated to the most promising proposals.

Appendix I: Additional guidelines by IP Theme

- Additional guidelines Responsible Digital Transformations

The Responsible Digital Transformations (RDT) theme showcases, assembles and deepens research on digital transformations conducted across the UvA community and in close cooperation with societal partners. The theme focuses on digital technologies and the intertwined ethical, legal and societal questions that arise with the increasing use of these digital systems, algorithms and platforms.

It is our core belief that the digital technologies should be developed and used to enhance individual and societal wellbeing, must safeguard human rights and therefore need to be developed in an inclusive way. Our goals are to

- Understand, analyse and critically assess digital transformations in society.
- Map, test, and experiment with modes and mechanisms of responsibility that address the exclusionary effects of digital transformations.
- Contribute to better practices in developing (data -driven) technology/ products / environments and the appropriate regulations.

To read more about the aims and goals of our theme, please visit [the RDT website](#).

To enhance the effectiveness of the RDT theme, the steering group has decided to implement campaigns focussed on specific topics. Therefore, in this call for **Mid-size projects (Instrument II, to a maximum of € 200k)** we invite research groups that work together with external partners on a topic that fits into the topic of **Creativity & Generative AI**:

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is radically changing how we perceive the relations between humans and machines. For the first time in history, humans are not the only ones anymore to make coherent readable text, generate images that we like to look at or finish the music of the last Beatles song. Consumer AI has become a focus of companies worldwide for new forms of creative production and consumption, raising old questions of what defines creative practices and how their future might look like. Users of AI have become makers through prompting as a new form of interacting with machines, which can lead to new well-paid job opportunities for people generally not associated with AI developments like language majors. But generative AI has created maybe even more low-paid jobs and will also put pressure on (already precarious) creative jobs, which were supposed to be immune from technological innovations. Because of the investments necessary we are in danger of reproducing and fostering global labour imbalances.

Other creative work like programming will never be the same again, as prompting enhances but also replaces coding. Similarly, and depending on one's perspective, research is either better or worse if writing up results is supported by GPT. Classical teaching assessment forms like the essay are challenged. Generative AI will make it easier to produce large amounts of marketing content, which can also be used to mislead and deceive us. If Cambridge Analytica had these capabilities its reach and impact could have been much wider. Generative AI has made it harder for us to believe our own eyes and ears. We can expect new forms of governance to emerge to address these challenges.

1. **(Re-)defining creative practices.** Can we speak of a new form of creativity with Generative AI? What kind of new creative practices might emerge in the collaboration with humans and machines?
2. **Generative Modelling.** Existing options for steering Generative AI approaches are aimed at post-hoc restrictions and regulations, with a lack of technological measures. Develop methods to explore and model the alignment between generative models and cultural, ecological, legal, and human values.
3. **Research and teaching practices with generative AI.** Investigate new research methodologies and technologies. Develop policies and shared understandings to address their potentials and dangers.
4. **Future of creative work.** Explore the impact of Generative AI on creative work, focusing on markets, labour relations, and the shifting balance between varying levels of job opportunities. Investigate how these changes influence organizational structures, innovation processes, and the broader economic ecosystem within creative fields.
5. **Generative AI governance.** Examine how new policies and regulations, such as the EU's landmark Artificial Intelligence Act, address the risks and opportunities of Generative AI. Explore how the governance and regulation of generative AI could affect how creative content using generative AI is created, distributed and consumed.
6. **Expanding Interactions with GenAI.** Analyse the multifaceted ways Generative AI is transforming interactions across various groups including users, citizens, creators, businesses and educational entities. Delve into the implications for content creation, societal engagement and the evolving relationship between technology and diverse communities.

For this call, we invite proposals that spur the dialogue between technical and social research, between the arts and the sciences. We explicitly encourage interdisciplinary co-creation methodologies that integrate the voice of non-academic stakeholders into the research design, and by that facilitate new dialogues between these project partners. We are especially interested in building upon existing research within the UvA to continue excellent research and provide it with a more long-term basis.

Please contact the theme manager of any member of the steering group of you want to hear more about this campaign.

- [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 polarisation

Call for midsize projects focused on three sub-themes

Midsize projects build on existing research collaborations between UvA scholars from different faculties. They also involve partnering with one or more non-academic parties. The steering committee Fair and Resilient Societies has a preference for proposals that fall under the three sub-themes mentioned above.

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](#)

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 proposals eligible for funding will focus on the examination of 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 behavioural 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 anticipate the participation of 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)

Appendix II: Midsize Project application format

To be sent in via e.kamsteeg@uva.nl when ready but no later than **Thursday October 31st, at 11.00h CET**.

The proposal must be written in English. The size of a proposal is a maximum of 1500 words (with the exception of title/applicants, declaration of intent non-academic party and budget sheet). A proposal addresses the following matters:

1. Title and applicants

2. Purpose of Midsize Project

What do you want to achieve with this Midsize Project? Include the following:

- A short summary of the Midsize Project.
- Scientific case/impact: what is the scientific objective (and sub-objectives) of this project? What does the scientific innovation consist of? What makes this project an interfaculty collaboration and how do the disciplines meet? What is the chosen methodology and why?
- How does this project contribute to the IP theme(s) and its community? How does the project build on existing strengths and/or areas to be developed within the UvA?
- Societal case / impact: which societal challenge is addressed by the project and why?
- Involvement of non-academic parties: which non-academic party (public, semi-public or private) contributes to this project? What expertise can this party contribute to the project? How is the contribution of the non-academic party made (in-kind/in-cash)? Please include the declaration of intent of the non-academic party in the Appendix to the application, the format for the declaration of intent can be found in Appendix III of this call.
- 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?

3. Practical matters & potential for follow-up

- Staff, organization and institutional context: how is this Midsize Project organised? How do the faculties and the non-academic party relate to each other? What is the best organizational form to achieve the above? Who commits to this project (if awarded funding), what contribution do they make, and for how much of their time?
- 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.
- Budget: how much funding is applied for? What is the budget spent on (postdocs, data scientists, research assistants, smaller seed grants, etc.)? Please contact the project office of your faculty as early as possible in order to obtain a correct budget sheet. The contact details of the project offices can be found in paragraph 1.4.
- Potential follow-up and financing: how does this project tap into potential follow-up funding? Is there a reasonable possibility for acquiring additional external resources after

the midsize period? If this project or collaboration has received previous funding, could you specify the previous funding received?

Appendix III: Format declaration of intent non-academic party (/parties)

Subject
Letter of intention – Midsized Project [*project title*]

To: <*name main applicant*>
Universiteit van Amsterdam
<*Place, date*>

Dear <*name main applicant*>,

As <*name of your organisation*>, we are very interested in participating in the research proposal <*title project proposal*>. <*name of your organisation*> fully intends to contribute to this research, under the condition that the research proposal is awarded a Midsized Project by the University of Amsterdam.

<*organisation name*> declares, as co-funder:

- to have and to endorse the project proposal
- if the project proposal is awarded:
 - to participate and contribute to the project as described in the project proposal;
 - to fulfil all obligations regarding a prompt conclusion of the consortium agreement.

Co-funder provides:

co-funding in cash of € Amount in cash, excl. VAT
and/or

co-funding in kind of € Amount in kind, excl. VAT.

<*if in-kind contribution applies: please use the table in the appendix to specify the in-kind contribution*>

Yours sincerely,

Signature

.....

<*Name of representative of your organisation*>
<*Role within the organisation*>
<*Name of your organisation*>
<*E-mail address*>
<*Address*>

Appendix III: letter of intent
Specification of the in kind contribution

Specification of in kind item or activity	Price or hourly rate	Number of hours (if applicable)	Total €

Appendix IV: Format report at end of Midsize project

At the end of the funding period, applicants are asked to submit a final report consisting of:
a video of the results obtained with the project funding, as well as

- A video of the results obtained with the project funding;
- A short report, with the following details:
 - Use of budget (max. ½ A4);
 - What are the available resources spent on?
 - Results or the added value of the project financing (max. 300 words);
 - What new developments and/or innovations have been made possible thanks to this funding that would not have occurred otherwise?
 - To what output and/or outcomes did this lead?
 - Which interfaculty collaborations and collaborations with social parties have arisen?
 - What external visibility has been generated?
 - Strategy (max. 300 words)
 - How did the above results contribute to achieving the goals formulated in the project proposal?
 - What are your plans for the future?

Appendix V: 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.

Midsize 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).