

University of Toronto (U of T) and University of Warwick (Warwick) Joint Seed Fund: Developing Collaboration in Research and Education

Purpose

The U of T-Warwick Seed Fund has been established to develop collaborative research and education initiatives between the two institutions, and strengthen or initiate connections, by enabling researchers to jointly undertake preliminary research or pilot initiatives, and organise meetings, workshops and events.

Proposals

To be eligible, a proposal must include a minimum of one faculty member from each university. The call invites proposals in all disciplines that are of mutual interest to the project team and will strengthen the partnership between U of T and Warwick.

Up to five (5) joint proposals will be selected for the 2025-2026 academic year. The funding is intended to enable activities such as, but not limited to:

- the organisation of virtual, hybrid or in-person workshops, conferences, symposia;
- In person meetings to facilitate planning and development of external funding proposals;
- reciprocal or non-reciprocal visits to establish new collaborations;
- preliminary research, experiments and pilot studies.

Applicant eligibility

- **U of T:** Faculty members who meet the [University's definition of a Principal Investigator \(PI\)](#) are eligible to apply. PIs must hold an appointment for the full duration of the grant's funding period plus one year. Successful status-only PIs must hold grant funds at an account within the University.
- **Warwick:** The fund is open to staff from all academic Departments and Centres at Warwick. Applications should specify a Principal Applicant who must be a permanent (including probationary) member of academic staff or hold a fellowship awarded by an external funder, the duration of which extends beyond the duration of the award.

Funding amount and duration

Up to five (5) successful joint proposals will be chosen and each will receive up to \$7000 (CAD) of funding from U of T and up to £5000 (GBP) from Warwick. Each institution will provide funds to its own faculty members and the projects can start on 1st August 2025.

Funding will be provided for projects lasting 12 months. At Warwick, all costs must be incurred before 31st July 2026. Funds cannot be carried over from one financial year to another, and any unspent funds will no longer be available to award holders.

Timeline

Call for proposals	3 March 2025
Deadline for submission of proposal	2 May 2025 (11:45 PM EST/ 17:45 PM BST)
Communication of results to applicants	30 June 2025
Start date of projects	1 August 2025

Evaluation

Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **Joint capacity:** applicants' academic credentials, joint ability to carry out the project, complementarity of the partners (including why the initiative could not occur at either university on its own, or the additionality achieved through collaboration) **(10pts)**
- **Excellence and meaningful contribution:** the novelty of the project must be articulated for a non-specialist audience, clearly demonstrating how the proposed project will contribute to disciplinary innovation. The project must demonstrate its relevance and potential to make a meaningful contribution to tackling the challenges it seeks to address. **(10pts)**
- **Strategic focus:** the proposal should state how the initiative advances the interests of both U of T and Warwick, and the impact of the proposed activity and expected benefits for the Schools/Departments and the collaboration. **(10pts)**
- **Impact and potential:** a clear pathway to impact and/or external funding. Applicants are advised to clearly indicate:
 - how they envisage the collaboration developing beyond this project (e.g. student opportunity, building links with industry, using preliminary data collected to scale-up the project);
 - which external funding sources are available, or in development, to sustain the collaboration. **(20pts)**

Assessment Process description:

1. Applications will be jointly received by the U of T Office of the Vice-President, International and Warwick's International Strategy and Relations Team (ISR).
2. All complete applications will be forwarded to an internal review committee in each institution, along with a template for ranking the proposals.
3. The internal review committees will assess each proposal according to academic merit and the evaluation criteria below.
4. Respective reviews will be returned to the U of T Office of the Vice-President, International, and the International Strategy and Relations team at Warwick, and results/scores tabulated to rank proposals.
5. A joint committee will convene to select up to five successful proposals.
6. The outcome of the results will be announced by email to all applicants.

Application process

1. Only one proposal should be submitted per project on behalf of the team at U of T and Warwick.

2. An online application must be submitted through [OVPI's Application Portal](#) by 2 May 2025. The complete proposal must include the following elements and be uploaded as a single PDF document under section 7A:
 - o **Initiative overview** that includes a brief outline, details of the lead applicants and affiliations from each institution/organization with contact details, and any additional partner details
 - o **Initiative description** that includes the following elements:
 - i. Project summary and strategic focus
 - ii. Articulation of joint capacity/complementarity of the project team
 - iii. Description of the planned activities, rationale, and timeline
 - iv. Expected academic theoretical or practical outputs, and the potential impacts and benefits for stakeholders
 - v. Description of how the partnership may evolve over time and the potential for long-term sustainability beyond the proposed timeframe.
 - vi. Budget: details and justification of costs
 - vii. Statement of Support (Warwick only): the Warwick applicant must be endorsed to ensure activities align with Faculty/Department priorities and that sufficient resourcing is available. An e-mail from respective Heads of Department/School is sufficient as statement of support.
 - viii. Abbreviated two-page CV from the Principal Applicant at each institution.

The full proposal should be no longer than three (3) pages (not including the CVs and Statement of Support).

Costs

Eligible costs include travel and subsistence, consumables and the cost of research assistants, research associates and technicians which are directly related to the project. Existing staff time, including the Co-PI's time, cannot be costed to the project. The fund does not support equipment, scholarships, conference attendance, PhD stipends, or tuition fees. All expenditure will require receipts.

Eligible Costs	Ineligible Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable travel costs including flights, visas, accommodation and subsistence • Research costs, including consumables and research assistants (up to 20% of the total requested budget). • Costs associated with organizing workshops and meetings that are directly related to the project's development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement research/teaching costs • Directly incurred e.g. teaching assistants • Directly allocated costs including applicants' time • Indirect costs/estates costs • Equipment • Scholarships • Conference attendance • Tuition fees • Per diems • PhD stipends • Salaries and honoraria of permanent and fixed term staff

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Costs already incurred prior to submission of the proposal
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Reporting Requirements

All successful applicants will be required to provide a brief report within four months of the end of the funded project. This report should detail the use of the funds; achievement of outputs and outcomes from the award; future plans to build on the work done, and further funding applications made or planned.

The University of Warwick reserve the right to ask you for follow-up reports for up to three years after the completion of your project in order to gauge the longer-term impact of the funding.

Warwick only: Research Integrity and Ethics

Ethics

Research projects that involve human participants, their data or tissue, or animals **will** require appropriate ethical review. Research involving secondary analysis of publicly available data e.g. systematic reviews does **not** require ethics review, but secondary analysis of other data that are not publicly available does. Please note, data taken from social media, does **not** count as publicly available.

Ethics approval does not need to be applied for until funding has been awarded but **must** be obtained **before** projects can begin. Further information about ethics and other approvals, and how to apply for these is available on the [Research & Impact Services](#) webpages.

Please note that it is the researcher’s responsibility to ensure the ethics application is submitted and approved before the project begins. Warwick researchers are advised to complete a Research Integrity online training module [here](#).

Export Control Due Diligence

As part of your application **at Warwick**, you are expected to undertake the Epigeum Research Integrity Training, including the Export Control Training Module, which can be accessed [here](#). The PI is responsible for ensuring that the research complies with the UK Export Control Legislation. Follow the [guidance](#) by R&IS to determine whether export controls apply to your proposed research.

Contact

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