

Horizon Europe Partnership Development Seed Grants

Amendment: March 20, 2025

Introduction

The Office of the Vice-President, International (OVPI), in collaboration with the Division of the Vice-President, Research & Innovation (VPRI), is launching a seed grant competition to assist U of T Principal Investigators (PI) establish or enhance international partnerships that can lead to the development of successful Horizon Europe (Pillar II) applications.

Funding supports U of T PIs from all disciplines to collaborate in developing Horizon Europe proposals with researchers from [European member states](#) and [Horizon Europe associate countries](#). Collaborating researchers can be employed by universities, industry, and/or non-profit and charity sector.

This grant can be used as matching funds for the Government of Canada's SSHRC [Destination Horizon Grants](#) of up to \$15,000.

About Horizon Europe Pillar II

[Horizon Europe](#) is the European Union's (EU) main research and innovation program and the world's largest, with a total budget of €95.5 billion (2021-2027). Canada joined Horizon Europe in July 2024 as an associate country under Pillar II: Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness.

Pillar II grant sizes typically range from €4-15 million.

[Pillar II](#) is organised into 6 clusters (i.e., themes); within each cluster are a number of calls for proposals with corresponding topics, which have unique criteria and deadlines. All applications must involve projects developed by a consortium (partnership of organizations across different nations, including a [European member](#) state and Horizon Europe [associated country](#)). For more information on Horizon Europe, see resources linked at the end of this document.

Value and Duration

The maximum seed grant amount that can be applied for is \$10,000 CAD, which must be spent within one (1) year of the award date. The amount could also be used towards the institutional match for a SSHRC [Destination Horizon grant](#) of up to \$15,000.

Applicants for the upcoming SSHRC Destination Horizon competition will automatically be considered for the OVPI Horizon Europe Partnership Development Seed Grants. There is no need to submit a separate application for the OVPI seed grant. However, we strongly encourage all applicants to seek additional match funding, as not everyone will receive the OVPI match for the SSHRC grant.

Funds from this grant must be used to support U of T PIs to build or strengthen international partnerships that are intended to build towards a Horizon Europe proposal/collaboration. U of T PIs' international partners are expected to fund their own partnership-development costs (refer to the 'Useful Resources' section for partner funding tips).

Eligibility of Applicants and Costs

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. U of T PIs who are collaborating on a proposal should submit one joint application.

Proposals from all disciplines will be accepted.

The following activities are eligible for funding:

- Travel costs including flights and hotels for the U of T PI(s) and/or the PI's U of T team to meet with proposed Horizon Europe international collaborators.
- Costs associated with organizing workshops or meetings to develop the Horizon Europe partnership and/or a Horizon Europe proposal. This includes venue and catering costs, and can be a contribution to a partner who is hosting.
- The OVPI Seed Grant can be used to match funds of up to \$15,000 for the Government of Canada's SSHRC [Destination Horizon Grants](#).

Note: Existing staff time cannot be costed to the project. The fund does not support equipment, scholarships, conference attendance, PhD stipends, honoraria, or tuition fees.

Application Procedure & Deadlines

Proposals must comprise:

- A. An online application submitted through [OVPI's Application Portal](#) with project team details. If applying to the SSHRC Destination Horizon Grant, skip part B and forward the most complete version of the SSHRC application to Mark Bold, mark.bold@utoronto.ca by the deadline noted below.
- B. Submission of a completed application as a single PDF document, including the following information:
 1. Names, institutions, and expertise of the U of T PI(s), along with details of their existing relationships with the proposed international collaborators (including researchers, partners, networks, and/or consortia from the European Union and associated countries);
 2. Description of the planned partnership activities – including the anticipated Horizon Europe Pillar II [Cluster](#). If the applicant intends to apply for the 2025-2026 Work Programme, indicate [cluster and theme](#)).
 3. Budget and budget justification
 4. Abbreviated CVs of the researchers (U of T and the Partner)

The application must not exceed 5 pages (not including the CVs) and must be uploaded to the OVPI's Application Portal under Section 7A.

There are four application deadlines:

- Deadline 1: Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 11:59 PM (EST)
- Deadline 2: Thursday, August 21, 2025, at 11:59 PM (EST)
- Deadline 3: Thursday, November 27, 2025, at 11:59 PM (EST)

The applicants shall be informed about the decision of the assessment committee within six (6) weeks of submission.

Key Assessment Criteria

1. Complementarity of Research Partners or Team: The collaboration should leverage the strengths and expertise of each partner, forming a well-rounded and highly competitive research team able to submit a strong Horizon Europe application.
2. Potential of proposed team to lead a strong Horizon Europe Pillar 2 application.

U of T aims to increase tri-agency 'market share' and the associated allocation benefits that accrue. When evaluating closely ranked proposals, preference will be given to U of T PIs who currently hold tri-agency funding or have an active application in progress for a tri-agency funding opportunity.

Reporting

As a condition of receiving an award under this call, all awardees are required to submit a one-page narrative report at the end of the grant period, detailing the funded activities, including a breakdown of costs and the outcomes of the collaboration.

Information About This Call

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Useful Resources

Partner Resources

Several European institutions provide funds for building partnerships under Horizon Europe. Collaborators of U of T researchers may be eligible to apply for funding from their own institutions. We encourage U of T applicants' international collaborators to explore potential additional funding opportunities. Please note that the terms and conditions for these partner funds may vary.

The following universities offer funding specifically for partnership building:

- **CNRS** – PIs are encouraged to collaborate with CNRS, which has made significant investments in Horizon Europe supports. This collaboration can greatly benefit U of T PIs who are forming a consortium with French partners.
- **University College London** – up to £5K, available until 31st July 2025. Contact [Global Engagement](#) for further information.
- **University of Warwick** - up to £7.5k, The Warwick Seed Fund
- **Lund University** – [Get Started Funding](#)
- **University of Vienna** – Funds administrated by the [International Office](#)

Other resources

2025-2026 Horizon Europe Work Program Summaries (i.e. specific topics for 2025-26 calls) - [UofT Horizon Europe: Pillar II | Research & Innovation](#)

U of T Centre for Research & Innovation:

- [Let's talk International Partnerships session on Horizon Europe](#) (requires UTORID)
- [Horizon Europe - University of Toronto Information Session](#)

Existing U of T International Partnerships:

- OVPI collaborates with various partners across Europe and other countries that are associate members of Horizon Europe. We encourage applicants to visit our website regularly to explore other [seed funding opportunities](#). If you need assistance in developing a partnership, please feel free to reach out to our office for support.

Additional funding:

- [Destination Horizon Grants](#) - Government of Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)