

Horizon Europe Partnership Development Seed Grants

Amendment: October 25, 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 (PIs) 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, government, and/or non-profit and charity sector.

This grant can be used as matching funds for the Government of Canada's 2026 SSHRC [Destination Horizon Grants](#).

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), [5 Missions](#), and various [European partnerships](#); 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 by December 31, 2027.

Funds from this grant must be used to support U of T PIs to build or strengthen international partnerships that are intended to result in a Horizon Europe Pillar II application. 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.

Successful applicants of this award must list the University of Toronto as a beneficiary or affiliated institution in their Horizon Europe Pillar II application.

U of T PIs who are collaborating or intend to collaborate in a Horizon Europe 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 it can be a contribution to a partner who is hosting.
- Costs of hiring grant writers.
- The OVPI Seed Grant can be used to match funds for the Government of Canada's 2026 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.
- 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 2026-2027 cluster and topic for which the applicant intends to apply
 3. Budget and budget justification
 4. Abbreviated CVs of the researchers (both U of T and partner institutions), including any co-publications authored jointly by the U of T PI and their collaborators in this project

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

Application deadline: **Thursday, November 27, 2025, at 11:59 PM (EST)**

The applicants shall be informed about the decision of the assessment committee by December 23, 2025.

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. Evidence of prior collaboration will also be considered a strength.
2. Potential of proposed team to lead a strong Horizon Europe Pillar II application.

U of T aims to increase the 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. 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

[UofT Horizon Europe: Pillar II | Research & Innovation](#): Find more resources, support available from the Research Services Office, and key internal deadlines and processes.

U of T Centre for Research & Innovation (requires UTORID):

- [Let's talk International Partnerships session on Horizon Europe](#)
- [Horizon Europe Series](#)

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)