

Office of the Vice-President, International
Horizon Europe Consortium-Development Seed Grants:
Call for Proposals
(Amended on April 1)

Introduction

The Office of the Vice-President, International (OVPI), in collaboration with the Division of the Vice-President, Research & Innovation (VPRI), invites proposals from U of T Principal Investigators (PIs) who are forming international consortia in order to prepare a Horizon Europe Pillar II proposal.

Funding supports U of T PIs from all disciplines to:

1. Develop Horizon Europe consortia with entities from [European member states](#) and [Horizon Europe associate countries](#), and/or
2. Prepare their Pillar II proposal.

Consortium members can be employed by universities, research centres, industry, government, and/or the non-profit and charity sector, or be consultants. Highly ranked Horizon Europe proposals typically incorporate industry partners and include plans for implementation of the project and societal impact. All Horizon Europe proposals must have a minimum of three partners from EU member states or Associate members, and much larger consortiums (8-15) are typical. These larger consortiums help ensure fulfilment of the variety of roles/areas of expertise required by the project, with a focus on implementation.

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](#) (for more information on Horizon Europe, see resources linked at the end of this document).

Value and Duration

PIs may request up to \$10,000 CAD in seed funds, with all funds to be expended by April 30, 2027.

Eligibility of Applicants and Proposals

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; Status-only PIs must hold grant funds in an account within the University.

Proposals from all disciplines will be accepted.

U of T PIs collaborating in the same Horizon Europe Pillar II consortium should submit one joint application.

Successful applicants for this award must agree to list the University of Toronto as a [Beneficiary](#) in their Horizon Europe Pillar II application.

Eligible and Ineligible Costs

Eligible: consortium-building or proposal-development activities, such as:

- **Travel** (e.g., flights, hotels) for U of T PI(s)/team to meet international members of the consortium.
- **Costs associated with workshops/meetings** to develop the consortium and/or Horizon Europe proposal, including stakeholder workshops, roundtables, or policy and impact design sessions (venue, catering; contributions to a partner host are permitted).
- **Grant-writing support** via external contractors or grant-supported internal U of T staff (e.g. postdoctoral fellows, research associates, etc.). The seed fund is not intended to underwrite salary of existing staff members that are paid from divisional operating budgets.
- The OVPI Seed Grant can be used to match funds for the Government of Canada's 2026 SSHRC [Destination Horizon Grants](#).

Ineligible costs: Equipment, per diem, scholarships, conference attendance, PhD stipends, honoraria, tuition fees, and any costs incurred prior to the award date. Existing staff time cannot be costed to the project.

How to Apply

Proposals must comprise:

- A. An online application submitted through [OVPI's Application Portal](#).
- B. Single PDF (max. 8 pages, excluding abbreviated CVs) including:
 1. Name and expertise of the U of T PI(s), along with details of any existing relationships with the proposed international consortium members
 2. Outline of proposed consortium members (including researchers, industry partners, consultants, non-profits or civil society members, and/or consortia from the European Union and associated countries) and the anticipated roles played by each in the consortium. A section outlining which members will be responsible for implementation and impact of the project is required.
 3. The Horizon Europe Pillar II 2026-2027 cluster and topic for which the applicant intends to apply.
 4. Description of the planned consortium development or proposal development activities.
 5. Budget and budget justification
 6. Abbreviated CVs of the U of T and university researchers only, including any co-publications authored jointly by the U of T PI and any of the academic collaborators in the consortium

Upload the PDF to your online application in OVPI's Application Portal under Section 7A.

Deadlines & Decision Timeline

Application deadlines (11:59 PM EST unless otherwise noted):

- Thursday, April 16, 2026
- Thursday, August 13, 2026
- Thursday, November 19, 2026

Notification: Results are issued six (6) weeks after each deadline.

Assessment Criteria

1. **Consortium member complementarity & track record:** The proposed consortium 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 and previous Horizon Europe proposal development and success will also be considered a strength.
2. **Prospects for a competitive Pillar II application:** Clear outline of a strong consortium or a robust plan for consortium formation, along with a defined pathway to submitting a Pillar II application by early 2027.
3. **Clear plan for implementation and impact of the proposed research project,** including anticipated metrics.

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

Awardees must submit a one-page narrative report at the end of the grant period, summarizing whether the Horizon Europe proposal has been submitted and results, whether U of T acted as the proposal coordinator, members (and their nationalities) added to the consortium as a result of funded activities, and list of funded activities and cost breakdown.

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. Terms and conditions vary.

The following universities offer funding specifically for partnership building; terms and dates vary:

- **CNRS (France)** – 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 (UK)** – up to £5K. Contact [Global Engagement](#) for further information.
- **University of Warwick (UK)**- up to £7.5K, The Warwick Seed Fund
- **Lund University (Sweden)** – [Get Started Funding](#)
- **University of Vienna (Austria)** – Funds administrated by the [International Office](#)
- **KU Leuven (Belgium)** – [Global Seed Fund](#)
- **Vilnius University**

Other resources

[UofT Horizon Europe: Pillar II | Research & Innovation](#): Find more resources including recorded information sessions on how to develop a proposal, support available from the Research Services Office, and key internal deadlines and processes (requires UTORID):

- [Horizon Europe Series](#)
- [Horizon Europe Secretariat \(ISED\)](#)

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 and related funding:

- [Destination Horizon Grants](#) - Government of Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)
- [International Mobility Award](#) - Mitacs
- [2026 International Joint Initiative for Research Harnessing Disruptive Technologies to Address Global Challenges](#) - New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF)