Procedure to leverage joint research activities

Seed funding 2023

1. General information

Through top level education and research, EU GREEN, the European University for Sustainability, aims at addressing sustainability from the periphery and for the periphery. EU GREEN partners aim to place societal responsibility at the heart of their mission, as a guiding principle that defines the way we teach and the focus of our research.

EU GREEN has established a yearly joint procedure for proposals to stimulate research collaboration among our 9 universities. Researchers from EU GREEN partner universities can submit proposals for seed funding to develop collaborative research and innovation projects. This procedure, implemented by the Work Package Research (WP3), is intended to leverage inter-university collaboration.

The objectives of the seed funding are to:

- provide support to the EU GREEN researchers for joint research projects,

- leverage inter-university collaboration,

- pave the way to more extended research, research based-learning and innovation projects to be submitted to future EU Horizon calls.

The topic of the proposals should be linked with the 6 EU GREEN cluster thematics (at least one) and the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The proposals should clearly explain those links. A maximum of only three projects per cluster will be allowed for each annual call.

2. Funding

The maximum budget allocated per project is limited to €30,000 which can be split between involved partners. Each university will finance the expenses of its participating researchers.

The project may include external partners, but they will be non-eligible for direct funding.

3. Project eligibility: Characteristics of the projects

The projects must:
- Include at least three EU GREEN partners,
- Cover at least one EU GREEN cluster topic,
- Be completed within two years or less,
- Not exceed a total budget €30,000 for the whole project,
- Respond to sustainability challenges at the European or global level,
- Not involving European double funding, i.e.: The same expenditure cannot be allocated twice to European funds. For example, the beneficiary cannot benefit from this seed funding and from Horizon Europe or Erasmus+ funds for the same activities.

Special attention during the selection process will be given to those proposals:

□ Involving the participation of early career researchers, defined as those who finished their doctoral thesis less than 8 years ago,

□ Clearly seeding a subsequent European or international application to competitive programmes,

□ Making clear efforts towards gender balance.

Researchers in EU GREEN universities are eligible applicants. Each proposal must have one designated Principal Investigator (PI) at one of the EU GREEN partner universities and one local project coordinator in charge at each of the participating member institutions.

The proposals must have the support of at least one EU GREEN cluster.

To raise awareness of the carbon impact of the activities, researchers should estimate the carbon footprint of the project, e.g., by using the online simulator "Labos 1point5". An assessment should be provided with the application form (but will not be evaluated).

4. Eligible costs

Activities	
Travel and subsistence expenses: airfare (economy class), train, car rental, lodging, meals, visas, etc.	eligible
Costs of hosting seminars/conferences or workshops (e.g., venue rental, catering, lodging, etc.)	eligible
Consumables and supplies	eligible
Publications (related to collaborative research) costs, including Open Access fees	According to the rules of each university
Staff costs (internships, fellowships etc.)	eligible
Internal invoicing for access to research infrastructures	eligible
Subcontracting	not eligible
Other goods and services	eligible
Scientific equipment	not eligible
Fellowships, scholarships for theses	not eligible
Website development	not eligible
Entertainment costs	not eligible
Office supply and furniture	not eligible
Indirect costs	not eligible

5. Evaluation Criteria

The following nine criteria will be utilised for project assessment:

- Relevance of the project for EU GREEN mission and vision (max.10 points)
- Scientific quality and innovativeness (max.10 points)
- Feasibility (Competence and time vs aim. Track record in collaboration) (max.10 points)
- Clear response to sustainability challenges (max.10 points)
- Leverage potential (e.g. funding applications to international competitive calls) (max.10 points)
- Participation of early career researchers (max.10 points)
- Number of EU GREEN partners universities involved and degree of involvement of alliance partners and number of clusters involved. (max.10 points)
- Experience and coordination capability of project team (max.10 points)
- Gender balance and gender dimension (if applicable) (max.10 points)

Each criterion will have a maximum score of 10. The score of each criterion will be defined by the average of the marks assigned by members of the evaluation panel (JRC and representatives

of the universities). A minimum overall score of 50 is required for the project to be considered for final approval. The submitted projects with overall mark exceeding this threshold will be listed in order of score, and financed up to exhausting budget availability.

In case of a tie, priorities will be given to (a) early career researchers, and if still tie then (b) number of participating partners.

6. Submission

Proposals must be submitted through this online platform before the call deadline. It will not be possible to submit a project after the deadline. The platform will close on the 15th of November at noon (CEST – Central European Summer Time).

Projects must be submitted in English.

The application should contain:
- The application form,
- The detailed budget,
- The CV of the PI.
- The carbon footprint assessment

7. Evaluation Process

Up to 3 projects per cluster theme can be submitted. It is in the responsibility of cluster leaders and co-leaders to coordinate the submissions so that the limit of 3 is respected. The accepted and submitted projects will be assessed by the members of the Joint Research Commission composed of the vice-rectors of Research and representatives of each institution (evaluation panel) to formulate a shortlist for financing.

8. Timeline

Application open	15th of September 2023
Application close	15th of November 2023
Notification to applicants	Before the 30th of December
Latest date for projects to start	1st of January 2024
Latest date for project to end	31st of December 2025
Final report due	31st of January 2026

A second call of the seed funding will be proposed in 2024.

9. Reporting

Scientific and technical report:
The Principal Investigator must submit a final scientific report within 30 days after the end of the project. A template will be provided by the WP3 coordinator. The reports will be submitted by email at the following address: eugreenwp3@univ-angers.fr which will then disclose the reports to the JRC for a general assessment of the "Seed funding" initiative.

Financial report:
A financial report must be submitted by the responsible of the 3 or more research units to their own institution.
Example: in the case of one project with three partners, the PI sends a unique scientific/technical report to the WP3 coordinator. The 3 units responsible will internally account for their eligible expenses according to distribution and accounting rules of each university.

All results and dissemination materials must acknowledge the funding received by EU GREEN according to these guidelines (6.1 Official communication guidelines).

10. Results

Ownership or joint ownership of results and transfer of results and dissemination of results and access rights are governed by the EU GREEN Grant Agreement and the EU GREEN Consortium Agreement.

11. Questions

If you have any question on this procedure, please send it to eugreenwp3@univ-angers.fr. A Q&A document will be provided through the EU GREEN WP3 website.

An online info session will be organised on the 22nd of September 2023 from 9 to 10 AM (CEST time). The info session will be recorded, and the video will be made available here. We can access the online info session by clicking on this link.

Application form

1. **Abstract of the project (no more than 500 characters) - Note that this summary might be published (website or other communication tool) if the project is selected and thus must be comprehensible for non-specialists.**

2. General information	
Acronym of the Project	
Project title	
Project duration (24-month max.)	*in month*
Start date of the Project	
End date of the Project	
To which SDG(s) does the project refer to :	
Cluster(s) affiliation : *Tick minimum one affiliation cluster; if relevant quote "1" for the main topic and "2" for the other(s)*	□ Emerging paradigms for health and wellbeing □ Agriculture, food and environmental sustainability □ Engineering and technology for sustainable development □ Sustainable tourism for cultural and natural heritage □ Education sciences for sustainable development □ Challenges in ecosystem biodiversity and function, A macroregional evaluation

3. Please explain the *context and main objectives of your project* (1500 characters max.):

4. Description of the activities to be implemented and the justification for the planned budget (maximum 1 500 characters)

5. Project organisation: Methodology and implementation (1000 characters max.)

6. Summary table of all the people involved in the Project

University	Name	First name	Email	Date of obtention of your PhD[1]	Current position	Role in the project[2] & Skills (4 lines max)
Angers university	*Calculus*	*Cuthbert*	cuthbert.calculus@univ-angers.fr		*Professor*	Scientific coordinator Characterisation of recombinant transcription factors in in vitro systems …

add rows if necessary

7. Presentation of the research team (1500 characters max.). Description and role of the PI and his/her partners. Relevance of the team. Specify the qualities of the members of the team demonstrating their abilities to implement this project. Describe the ability of the PI to coordinate the project. Specify the status of existing relationships and contacts between the various potential network players.

Describe the staff, training and organisational resources that the coordinator and the partners will be able to draw on to successfully complete the project.

Demonstrate the complementary nature and added value of the planned cooperation between the future partners. If young researchers are involved, please precise it here.

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[1] To evaluate if the researcher is an early career researcher. The definition of the European Commission of an early career researcher is: those who finished their doctoral thesis less than 8 years ago.

[2] Each proposal must have: one designated Principal Investigator (PI) at one of the EU GREEN partner universities and one local project coordinator in charge at each of the participating member institutions.

8. Relevance of the project for <u>EU GREEN mission and vision</u>. Explain the link to the SDG and the topics of one or several clusters (1000 characters max.):

9. Give a brief description of the leverage potential of your project (1000 characters max): European and/or international calls targeted for future submission (if any) - Call Deadline.

☐ By ticking this box, I certify that I have contacted the cluster leader/co-leader who is aware of this project.

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