

EPICUR-SHAPE-IT

EPICUR SEED Funding Scheme 2026 – Call for applications

FREQUENT ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

What is the scope of the Seed Funding scheme?

The EPICUR Seed Funding Scheme invites researchers affiliated to one of the EPICUR partner institutions to submit proposals for one-year joint research project grants with colleagues from EPICUR universities. It aims to facilitate the development of ideas for research cooperation, proofs of concept and foster collaborative joint research projects. The selected projects are expected to develop two specific outputs:

- The submission of an application for a project financed by a third party (Horizon Europe, Cofund, etc.) up to 12 months after the end of the Seed Funding project.
- A joint learning activity that will be offered in the framework of EPICUR either during the lifetime of the Seed Funding project or up to 6 months after its end.

What type of activities can be funded with the seed funding grant money?

The Seed Funding scheme can finance the following types of activities (not exhaustive):

- Scientific activities to prepare pilot studies or research, establish proof of concepts;
- Activities to initiate a research cooperation (meetings, seminars, workshops, etc.);
- Activities related to developing a future funding application;
- Joint learning activities that will be offered in the framework of EPICUR.

What types of joint learning activities are eligible?

The joint research based learning activities can be developed as curricular or co-curricular offerings and each learning activity must be the equivalent of at least 6 hours of teaching. Some examples of joint learning activities are the following (not exhaustive list):

- Courses;
- Summer schools;
- Learning Pathways
- Seminars;
- Workshops;
- Master classes;
- Pop-up courses;
- Conferences.

Who can apply?

Researchers, of any scientific area, affiliated to one of the 9 EPICUR partner universities can apply to the EPICUR Seed Funding Scheme. R2- and R3- level Early Career Researchers are actively encouraged to participate in the consortium.

Are there a minimum number of participants in a consortium?

Only researchers contractually affiliated to the eight EPICUR partner universities can participate and receive funding.

Projects should have at least 3 partners from 3 different EPICUR countries.

Each project should identify 1 lead principal investigator (PI), 1 co-lead PI and 1 PI for each participating partner institution.

Can a PhD project be part of EPICUR and can PhD Candidate receive funding through the project?

The Seed Funding is for collaborative research projects that aim to apply for further third-party funding and provide a teaching element for the EPICUR learning offer. A PhD project is not financed through this call, but a PhD candidate may take part in a collaborative project along with the other partner universities researchers. This might depend on the institution, so it's best to contact the institutional contact

Can External Higher Education Institutions participate in the consortium and receive grants from the Seed Funding Scheme?

The Seed Funding Scheme is aimed to foster scientific collaboration between EPICUR full partner universities (<https://epicur.edu.eu/about-epicur/presentation-epicur/>). However, in view of the future modifications in the configuration of the EPICUR Alliance, the University of Amsterdam, the University of Pablo Olavide (Spain), the University Roma Tre (Italy), and the University of Basel (Switzerland) may only participate in the 2026 call without funding as no internal institutional budget has been allocated to the 2026 call. These partners would not receive budget from EPICUR, and cannot serve as the main coordinator/lead PI, and do not count toward the required number of EPICUR partners involved. No other external HEIs are eligible to participate.

External non-HEI institutions, such as industry, start-ups, civil society, and governmental bodies, can take part in the project, with the same financial and administrative regulations as external HEIs

The EPICUR Seed Funding Scheme uses a virtual pot, how does this work?

Applicants can only be awarded funding from their own affiliated university. The final funding amount for each project will be allocated based on the results of the scientific evaluation score and the total budget available at each partner institution.

What is the maximum amount that can be awarded to one project?

The maximum amount that can be awarded to one project is 150.000EUR but it depends on the selected projects and the available institutional grants.

Is there a maximum amount that can be awarded to each project partner?

Applicants can only be awarded funding from their own affiliated university.

The total budget per EPICUR partner earmarked for the funding of all projects under the 2026 call is indicated in the call documents. Potential applicants should contact their affiliated university institutional contact concerning the maximum budget available from their institution per project application.

As guidance, the suggested maximum amounts requested as a project coordinator or project partner per institution are indicated below:

Partner	AMU	AUTH	BOKU	KIT	SDU	UHA	UFR	UNISTRA
2026 budget in EUR	50.000	50.000 ¹	60.000	170.000	200.000	50.000	50.000	100.000
Suggested maximum budget per project as coordinating partner	30.000	TBC	TBC	TBC	70.000	30.000	30.000	40.000-50.000
Suggested maximum budget per project as partner	20.000	TBC	TBC	TBC	50.000	20.000	20.000	20.000-30.000

¹To be confirmed following the decision of the internal Research Committee of AUTH

What types of costs are eligible?

The types of costs eligible depend on each beneficiary's affiliated institution, and could include (not exhaustive):

- Staff costs;
- Travel costs;
- Research costs;
- Communication and dissemination.

Potential project applicants should contact their local institutional contacts for more information.

What is the difference between project lead and project partner?

The project lead is the principal investigator (PI) from the University who is leading the proposal.

The project partners are the principal investigators from the Universities participating in the consortium.

When can I apply?

The second Seed Funding call will be launched on the 29 April 2026 and will close on 15th September 2026 at 23:59 CET.

The provisional timetable is given below:

Publication of the Call	Deadline for submission	Evaluation	Information on evaluation results	Expected project start date
29 April 2026	15 September 2026 – 23.59 CET	Mid-September-October 2026	December 2026	From January 2027

What documents do I need to provide to apply?

All call documents can be downloaded from this Seafire repository here:

<https://seafire.unistra.fr/d/d0bf86c3175f463b8c51/>

The project applications should be submitted in English as one folder labelled “PROJECTname_CoordinatingInstitution”, including the following four documents:

- Application form;
- Budget form;
- Short CV of all applicants in the consortium in one PDF file;
- Letter of intent from all participants in the project (lead and partners) in one PDF file.

Where do the application documents have to be submitted?

The application documents must be submitted via the SEED FUNDING file link based at the University of Strasbourg: <https://seafire.unistra.fr/u/d/23f673afad1943528a77/>.

Who should countersign the application form?

The application form should be countersigned by the lead principal investigator’s direct supervisor or the head of their relevant affiliated structure (e.g., department, lab, or research unit). This signature confirms the researcher’s affiliation with the institution and acknowledges institutional agreement to participate in the Seed Funding call.

Who should sign the Letter of Intent on behalf of the institution?

The Letter of Intent should be signed by either the principal investigator's direct supervisor or the head of their relevant affiliated structure (e.g., department, lab, or research unit). This signature confirms the researcher's affiliation with the institution and acknowledges institutional agreement to participate in the Seed Funding call. One Letter of Intent is required per project partner.

How does the scheme ensure the avoidance of conflicts of interest throughout the evaluation process, given that evaluators come from EPICUR institutions?

Evaluators only come from different partner universities from the applicants and must declare there is no conflict of interest prior to starting the evaluation process.

As a general rule, researchers will not be selected for evaluation if they are also participating in the call.

How developed does the project idea need to be at the application stage?

The application is restricted in terms of content - you need to make sure that enough information is available so that the evaluators understand the project and its actions

Is there any limit on the number of proposals that can be submitted from the same faculty/institution? Is there a limit on the number of projects that can be funded per institution?

No limitations - just the budget available

How could we find partners from other institutions? Is there a catalogue with those who are interested or we have to contact anyone we think is probably interested?

Please contact your local coordinator who can circulate requests among the Alliance and you can also use the EPIC TLC platform:

https://learn.epicur.education/login.php?target=crs_1561&cmd=force_login&lang=en

Could a proposal be eligible involving more than one research groups from the same institution?

Yes - but you still need to follow the 3 partners, 3 countries rule.

Is the topic of collaboration open or focused on certain sciences ?

Open, but EPICUR thematic areas are appreciated: European Values/ Global Health / Sustainability / Future intelligence

Who should I contact If I would like further information?

For general information about the call conditions: epicur_seedfunding@epicur.edu.eu

For any specific questions concerning one of the EPICUR partner's Universities and their funding rules:

AMU – epicur@amu.edu.pl

AUTH – Nikos Theodosiou / niktheod@civil.auth.gr

BOKU – Nicholas Sheppard / nicholas.sheppard@boku.ac.at

KIT – Michael Zacherle / Birgitta Kappes / epicur@kit.edu

SDU – Ida Thostesen / epicur@sdu.dk

UFR – Charlotte Langowski / charlotte.langowski@zv.uni-freiburg.de

UHA – epicur@uha.fr

Unistra – Ian Roszak / iroszak@unistra.fr

UvA – epicur_uva-BB@uva.nl
