SEED4EU+

Call for Applications

March 2023

4eu+

Over the past four years, the 4EU+ Alliance has seen growth in collaborations and initiatives that gave rise to new educational frameworks and mobility schemes, innovative training and peer learning opportunities as well as joint R&I activities.

Our seven member institutions: Charles University, Heidelberg University, Sorbonne University, Universities of Copenhagen, Geneva, Milan and Warsaw are now committed to further deepening the cooperation in the Alliance within and across the areas of education, research and innovation, as well as in service of society and the 4EU+ community itself.

The 4EU+ mission is to develop a barrier-free and continuously growing cooperation in education, research and innovation within the Alliance.

Based on a mutual understanding of the idea of a European University which builds upon its core values, including academic freedom and autonomy, and ensures fair access to education, this open call reflects the ambition of the 4EU+ Alliance to further integrate and intertwine all university missions.

It offers our academic community the opportunity to fund out-of-the-box initiatives that do not necessarily fit into customary calls for project proposals, thus allowing them to broaden their creative horizons.

We invite all researchers and academics of the 4EU+ member institutions to submit joint, innovative proposals that will make a significant impact on strengthening 4EU+ and our strategic partnership!

The programme is funded directly from the budgets of 4EU+ member universities.

1.   Purpose and Objectives

The aims of this call are to:
- strengthen the current cooperation within 4EU+ in education, research and innovation beyond the limits set up by the ongoing Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 projects co-funded by the European Commission,
- broaden the engagement of the communities of all 4EU+ universities in creating and developing One Comprehensive Research-Intensive European University,
- provide seed funding for the implementation of novel ideas within and across the above-mentioned main areas of the 4EU+ cooperation, as well as other areas such as societal engagement and citizen science,
- contribute to the general sustainability of cooperation within 4EU+.

2. Eligibility

2.1. Who can apply?

Researchers and academics starting from postgraduate level[1] and affiliated to any of the seven 4EU+ universities participating in the call can apply. Please note the restrictions concerning the role of the PI and/or a local co-PI referred to in point 2.3.

2.2. Number of members per application

Proposals are submitted by teams including participants from minimum three 4EU+ member universities participating in the call.

Proposals including four or more 4EU+ member universities are strongly encouraged.

2.3. PI(s)/Main Applicant

Each proposal must have:
- one designated Principal Investigator (PI) at one of the 4EU+ member institutions,
- one local project coordinator in charge at each of the participating member institutions.

The PI is responsible for the project coordination and for monitoring the overall implementation of the project, with support of the local coordinators. The PI and the local coordinators must hold at least a PhD degree and an employment contract at one of the 4EU+ member universities covering the entire duration of the envisioned project as a minimum.

If the PI/ Main Applicant leaves their university during the project, they shall assure a timely replacement at their institution. Such changes will need to be approved and documented internally by the institutions and the 4EU+ Secretary General.

2.4. Project Teams

The participation of early-stage researchers and students is strongly encouraged.

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[1] The person in charge of the proposal must hold at least a PhD and a contract for the whole period of implementation of the project.

The participation of external partners is possible. However, they will not be able to lead a project and will not be eligible for direct funding under this call. They will possibly join projects with their own financial contribution. Member universities, moreover, may decide to allocate additional funds (outside the predefined call budget) to external partners to enable them to become involved in the projects.

2.5. Language

Proposals must be submitted in English.

3. Duration of the Project

Projects can run for a period of up to 12 months. An extension up to 24 months is possible on justified request, at least 3 months before project close.

4. Available Funding

The maximum funding available per project is 50,000 euros.

5. Type of Projects /Funded Activities

Proposals can focus on research in any scientific area, education, innovation, and/or public engagement/citizen science activities.

Interdisciplinary projects as well as projects addressing or embedded in the four 4EU+ Flagships are strongly encouraged.

All proposals must include a precise and realistic **sustainability plan** addressing the perspectives for continuous collaboration of the project members beyond the project duration. In particular projects foreseeing the preparation of joint proposals for external funding are strongly encouraged.

> **Examples of research and innovation activities that can be funded:**
> - Exploratory workshops to prepare joint externally funded proposals
> - Innovation projects with the objective of developing partnerships with external partners
> - Collaborative research stays for researchers and doctoral students
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> **Examples of education/teaching and learning activities/types of projects that can be funded:**
> - Development of study programmes (full Bachelors, Masters, PhD programmes, PhD schools) with the stated aim of joint research-based learning modules or programs with the stated aim:
>   a. to submit, at the end of the project financed under this call, a joint project to obtain external funding
>   b. to finalise the integration of the programme into the regular offer of the 4EU+ partner universities
> - Development and implementation of innovative teaching and learning methods
> - Creation of innovative research-based teaching material

6.   Application Process

All proposals must be submitted electronically via the online application form no later than by 1 June 2023, 16:00 CET.

A full application form is available under this link.

Together with the online application form, the applicants are requested to submit the following annexes:

- Letters of intent from the involved universities (e-mail version accepted, as per instructions on the letters of intent)
- A budget form (template will be available shortly)

Please note:

- Applications may be submitted only in accordance with the deadlines set out in the timeline below.

- Applications received before or after the deadline will not be considered. Incomplete applications will not be returned for completion.

Timeline

Application open	17.03.2023
Application close	01.06.2023, 16:00 CET

Notification to applicants	15.07.2023
Latest date for projects to start	01.10.2023
Latest date for projects to end	30.09.2024 (30.09.2025 for projects with approved request for extension)
Final report due	End of project + 2 months

7. Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Activity/Cost	
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/not eligible
Publications (related to collaborative research) costs, including Open Access fees	eligible
Hiring student assistants	eligible
Internship stipends	eligible
Salaries for support teams (scientific, administrative)	eligible
Internal invoicing for access to research infrastructures	eligible
Subcontracting	eligible/not eligible*
Scientific equipment	eligible/not eligible*
Stipend payments to non 4EU+ member institutions individuals	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

Each university covers the costs related to the participation of its own staff and students up to the limits foreseen in the rules of this call. Cross payments between the 4EU+ universities are not allowed.

* The definition of cost categories and accounting regulations may vary from one member university to another. Applicants are requested to contact the 4EU+ Local Offices at their respective home universities (please see point 9 below) before submission of the proposal to make sure their budget calculations and selected types of expenses follow their home university costs eligibility rules.

All travel activities must comply with internal rules of the respective universities. 4EU+ strongly encourages climate-friendly travel arrangements.

8.   Evaluation Process

- An eligibility check will be performed by a task force composed of representatives of 4EU+ Local Offices.
- The review will be carried out by a selection committee composed of representatives of each institution, a member appointed by the Academic Council and a student representative.
- Depending on the number and nature of proposals, the selection committee will call upon reviewers from the 4EU+ Flagships, institutions or working groups of the 4EU+ Alliance.
- The selection committee will make a prioritized list of projects and submit it to the 4EU+ Management Committee and Governing Board for final validation and decision-making.

Evaluation Criteria

- Relevance for 4EU+ mission and vision
- Quality: Project objectives and expected results
- Expected impact of the project results on 4EU+ goals and/or specific objectives
- Past performance and synergies with previous 4EU+ initiatives
- Novelty/innovation
- Quality of the sustainability plan presented in the proposal
- Quality and efficiency of implementation
- Degree of involvement of alliance partners

9. Templates and Other Resources

- Budget form (to be attached to the application form) will be available shortly
- Instructions on the letters of intent (download)

10. Contacts

For further information, please contact:

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