



## **University of Sheffield (USheffield) University of Alberta (UAlberta)**

### **Seed Grant Program - Guidelines**

#### **Purpose**

UAlberta and USheffield recognize the partnership that exists between the two institutions and wish to further those partnerships in energy, health, Artificial Intelligence, sustainable food, neuroscience, advanced manufacturing, or other areas of mutual interest.

The intent of this competitive seed grant program is to encourage and catalyze international collaborations between UAlberta and USheffield in new and innovative research directions that lead to larger-scale and longer-term partnerships funded by external sources.

#### **General Parameters**

- UAlberta will commit CAN \$50,000 per year and USheffield will commit £28,000 per year in funding for the seed grant program.
- Proposals may request up to a maximum of CAN \$25,000 from UAlberta and £14,000 from USheffield.
- Unallocated funds will not be carried forward to future years.
- Both parties will agree on the area(s) of mutual interest for each year's program.
- Funds from each institution allocated to successful proposals will stay with the funding institution for use by the institution's own faculty members; that is, there is no transfer of funds between institutions.
- Proposals must describe their plan to develop a joint research project or program. Successful proposals must include a description of the project's objectives, intended outcomes, and how the research will be sustained beyond the life of the seed grant.
- The Co-Principal Investigators from UAlberta and USheffield will be required to report on project outcomes.
- Funds may be used to support activities such as: exploratory research initiatives, planning workshops and meetings, and mobility of staff, students and post-doctoral fellows.
- Applicants are encouraged to include early career researchers, opportunities for graduate training and advance the principles of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

#### **Eligibility**

Each proposal must include one Co-Principal Investigator from UAlberta and one Co-Principal Investigator from USheffield.

Co-Principal Investigators must be current academic staff (faculty members) at UAlberta and USheffield respectively.

In addition to the two Co-PIs, applications may include other UAlberta or USheffield faculty members or post-doctoral fellows as team members.

If appropriate, applications may include team members from other institutions or industry partners.

A faculty member can serve as a Co-PI on no more than one application per application cycle. There is no limit to the number of applications a faculty member can participate on as a team member.

### **Application Process and Timelines**

Once per year a call for proposals will be initiated at both institutions for joint research proposals. A complete proposal will include:

- A completed application form including budget and budget justification.
- A short-version Curriculum Vitae from each of the UAlberta and USheffield Co-Principal Investigators.

#### *Timeline\*:*

February 1 – Application process opens.

April 1 – Application deadline.

June 1 – Applicants notified of the outcome of their applications.

July 1 – Project start date.

June 30 – Project end date (one year from project start date).

August 31 – Deadline for project final report.

*\*Suggested timeline; can be modified as needed by mutual agreement between the institutions.*

### **Selection Process**

A joint evaluation committee of senior administrators / faculty members will be put in place by the two institutions, with three members representing each institution. External expert reviews may be requested if required.

#### *Selection Criteria:*

1) *Objectives / Scientific merit* – The project falls within the scope of priority areas for both UAlberta and USheffield. The proposed research is novel and innovative and of high academic quality. The anticipated outcomes of the potential longer-term research collaboration are high impact and likely to be of interest to major national or international funding agencies.

2) *Project Plan* – The proposal describes a reasonable plan of activities for the timeframe, which will enable the collaborators to build towards a sustainable research partnership.

3) *Team* – The team includes the expertise required for successful completion of the project. The advantage created by the complementary expertise between UAlberta and USheffield has been explained.

As appropriate, the team structure includes early career researchers, opportunities for post-doctoral or graduate training and application of the principles of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

4) *Sustainability* – The proposal describes how this seed grant will help build towards larger national and/or international funding opportunities. Specific funding opportunities and timelines are identified.

### **Eligible expenses**

The funding is intended to catalyze research collaborations and build towards larger external funding opportunities that will sustain the partnerships.

Funds may be used to support activities such as: exploratory research initiatives, planning workshops and meetings, mobility of staff, students and post-doctoral fellows, and salaries/stipends of graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and research personnel such as laboratory technicians.

Funding cannot be used for management fees, course or bench fees, or overhead, salaries or salary supplementation of faculty or administrative staff, purchase of capital assets, equipment depreciation, or scholarships.

### **Grant Administration**

Seed grants are awarded for a maximum one-year period. Extensions are not automatic and will be subject to the approval of both institutions.

Proposals may request up to a maximum of up to \$25,000 to be provided by UAlberta and £14,000 to be provided by USheffield.

Funds from each institution allocated to successful proposals will stay with the funding institution for use by the institution's own faculty members; that is, there is no transfer of funds between institutions.

Once an application has been approved, an award letter will be sent by each institution to the institution's respective Co-PI. Each Co-PI will then work with their institution's research office to access and manage the funds according to the approved budget as well as the policies and procedures of their institution.

### **Reporting**

The Co-PIs will be required to provide a final report to the offices of the Vice-Presidents Research and Innovation of both UAlberta and USheffield within two months of the project end date. The major criteria for judging the success of the partnership will be the project outcomes (relative to the project plan) and future direction of the research including attraction of major external funding awards.

### **Third Parties**

Where projects involve collaborators from other institutions, UAlberta and USheffield expect that there will be appropriate agreements put in place depending on the projects and nature of collaboration (i.e., confidentiality, IP) to ensure that projects are completed in accordance with the expectations of the Seed Program.