The University of Newcastle and the University of Waikato

Partnership Seed Fund - Guidelines for Applicants 2024

1. **Purpose**
   1.1. In July 2022, the University of Waikato (UoW) and The University of Newcastle (UoN) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate increased engagement across research, teaching and student initiatives as well as the sharing of best practice amongst professional staff.
   1.2. To further develop our partnership and achieve the objectives of the MoU, UoN and UoW have established a partnership seed fund. The 2024 program, is the second round of seed funding.
   1.3. The University of Waikato and The University of Newcastle invite all staff members to consider this seed fund opportunity. The fund is intended to support collaborative research, teaching, and/or professional services projects between our two institutions. Applicants will need to clearly demonstrate measurable outcomes of their projects and how their collaboration will develop going forward.
   1.4. We particularly encourage proposals that are led by or include early career staff and/or Indigenous staff.
   1.5. Priority will be given to high quality proposals that support one or more of the following aims:
       1.5.1. Research collaboration, including the promulgation of research outcomes;
       1.5.2. Collaborative teaching initiatives that enrich the student experience;
       1.5.3. Exchange of academic and professional knowledge, including sharing of good practice;
       1.5.4. Acquisition of joint research funding;
       1.5.5. Joint centres of teaching / professional excellence / research;
       1.5.6. Exchange programs, including researchers, academic and professional staff;
       1.5.7. Joint activities, including meetings, seminars, symposia, lectures, workshops, and conferences.

2. **Eligibility**
   2.1. A lead investigator/project lead is required from both UoN and UoW. Leads must be staff on continuing appointments or fixed term staff whose contract extends beyond the term of the funding. Funding can be used to support the travel of PhD students.
   2.2. Individuals may only be involved in <u>up to two proposals per year,</u> either as lead applicant on one proposal and associate applicant on another, or as an associate applicant on two proposals.
   2.3. Lead investigators on projects funded in the previous year's round may not apply as a lead investigator in this round. They may apply as an associate investigator.
   2.4. An applicant from a university other than UoN / UoW can be included in the project team, but you cannot apply for funding to support them or their activities/travel.

3. **Value**
   3.1. The maximum value of each project is $15,000 (AUD). Funding will not be transferred between organisations, so activities delivered at UoN or at UoW will be funded by the relevant host organisation.

3.2.   The total funding pool available for this call is $50,000 AUD from UoN and $50,000 NZD from UoW. Funding requests do not need to be matched equally up to the value of $15,000 but full funding requests from one partner are only to be considered in exceptional circumstances.

3.3.   It is the intention that each round will fund projects in all three streams (research, teaching and professional services). The amount allocated to each stream will vary, depending on the submissions received and the priorities of the two universities.

3.4.   Funding must be spent within this financial year.

4.   Applications

In 2024 there will be one call for applications. We anticipate a further round in 2025.

Applications open	5 February 2024
Applications due	11 March 2024
Peer review and funding panel	March-April
Applicants notified	6 May 2024
Project time	May-December2024
Reports due	17 February 2025

4.1.   Head of School/Division/Department/Director sign off is required before the application form can be submitted.
Applications can be made by completing the seed fund application form. This form contains details of any further information required (including CV and budget form).
One of the project leads should send the jointly completed form to global@waikato.ac.nz and Global-Partnerships@newcastle.edu.au

5.   Seed Fund Budget
5.1.   Applicants must provide a costing within their application. This should include a breakdown of the projected costs. This costing will inform the selection panel when awarding funding.

5.2.   Project teams are advised to work with their Research Management Advisor/Line Manager (UoW) or Executive Officer/Finance Business Partner to prepare a realistic budget and complete the separate budget spreadsheet.

5.3.   Eligible costs

Eligible	Ineligible
• Research materials / consumables • Analytical costs • Fieldwork/data collection • Reasonable travel costs (including visas), accommodation[1] and subsistence (for guidance see your institution's policies[2]) • Software access (for collaborative projects/benefit) • Short-term research or specialist support deemed vital to the project • Costs associated with organising hybrid events/conferences/workshops • Costs associated with appropriate cultural support (for example, koha, kaumatua etc.) • Translation costs • Travel to meet up at a research facility or other global partner's campus	• Salary costs[3] • Overheads • Capital expenditure • Open access fees / other publication fees • Travel to conferences/conference fees

6.   Selection

6.1.   Proposals will initially be assessed internally (by international deans, associate deans research and/or peer reviewers, as appropriate).

6.2.   Funding decisions will then be made by a joint committee with members from both UoN and UoW (representing expertise in research, teaching and professional services).

6.3.   Decisions will be based on proposal quality and budget. Final decisions will be made with an overarching consideration for the need for balanced support of teaching, professional services and research projects.

6.4.   Funding will then be allocated from either/both universities. All applications need to be written in language that is suitable for a multi-disciplinary panel to read and assess.

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[1] Accommodation costs are to be included in the budget of the home institution. For example, a Waikato staff member travelling to Newcastle needs to include accommodation costs in the Waikato budget.

[2] The seed fund will cover flights in economy class.

[3] The fund is not intended to cover staff costs or time, or to fund fixed term contract extensions

Whereas staff salary costs are not eligible to be funded – costs for very short-term research or specialist support, vital to the success of the project will be considered i.e costs to employ students and / or research assistants in support of the PI / project

7. Assessment Criteria

    7.1. Funding decisions will be made on a several criteria.

    7.2. The assessment panel will allocate funding across the three streams (teaching, research, professional)

Criteria	What are we looking for?	Score out of
Excellence	• Robust project proposal • Clearly articulated aims and methods • Clearly defined deliverables/outcomes • Aligned to the partnership seed fund priorities (e.g., Is it likely to lead to outcomes such as successful competitive grant applications, co-published papers, co-hosted events, increased student mobility, enhanced student experience and/or improved processes?)	20
Novelty/ innovation	• Project has the potential to generate novel ideas, theories, interpretations, systems, approaches or fresh perspectives on a problem or process • Project goes beyond 'business as usual' or fosters a new interdisciplinary team or collaboration	20
Project impacts	• Feasible in given timeframe • Reasonable project budget and justification for any physical travel (e.g., flights) • Potential for long-term benefits or the ability to be scaled up, expanded, replicated, or applied to different contexts in the future	25
Partnership impact	• Robust project team drawing on relevant experience/expertise from each institution • Strength of connection established to date (e.g., clear that it's a joint application with shared understanding, vision, and commitment from both sides) • The project is likely to strengthen the connectivity and relationship between University of Waikato and University of Newcastle • Early career staff included in the project team	25
Reputation building / enhancement	• Project outcomes will enhance the internal and external reputation of the partnership/Universities (e.g., enhanced research reputation, increased visibility/publicity, stakeholder or industry engagement etc.)	10

8. **Awarding**

    8.1.   Upon confirmation from the International Office/Global Division that an application for seed funding has been successful, applicants are permitted to commence their projects.

    8.2.   Please note that if a successful applicant cancels their project, they must inform the International Office/Global Division immediately so that funding records can be updated/recouped.

    8.3.   At Waikato - the funds will be transferred to the principal investigator's existing Research Trust Account or set up as a project account in the project accounting system.

    8.4.   At Newcastle - The funds will be allocated to a relevant cost collector within the School.

    8.5.   Accommodation/travel bookings, visas, Covid-19 testing/vaccination requirements and changes to government travel advice is the responsibility of the applicants in accordance with relevant University Travel Policy and Procedures. University accommodation cannot be guaranteed.

9. **Reporting Conditions**

    9.1.   The outcomes described in the application form will provide the basis for measuring the project's success.

    9.2.   Recipients of the seed fund are expected to provide a final report on the project within 2 months of completion of the project and there will be an additional follow up from the International Office/Global Division within 12 months to capture outputs, next stage funding etc.

    9.3.   Any unspent funds will be recouped at the end of the funding period.

    9.4.   Please return completed reports to global@waikato.ac.nz and Global-Partnerships@newcastle.edu.au

    9.5.   Individuals will not be able to partake in applications for future rounds of funding if they have an outstanding report from a previously funded project.