

Seed Fund to Support University-Wide Research Initiatives

Between the University of Liverpool, UK and Vanderbilt University, USA

Vanderbilt University and the University of Liverpool have historic similarities, shared interests and are committed to developing global research collaborations leading to long-term impact.

The Fund aims to support new initiatives by providing bridge-funding between ideas and the first grant, or academic initiative. The funding is designed to enable individuals to identify complementary strengths, leverage synergy, and design new outstanding research projects and opportunities for academic excellence across all disciplines.

In addition, we are particularly looking for opportunities to support early career researchers, including PhD students, in the development of skills and expertise. We encourage you to think how the funding could provide these wider benefits through development of skills and expertise.

It is designed to enable individuals/groups to identify complementary strengths and co-produce ideas for new joint activities that cannot be achieved by either side alone and could include:

- Intensive research and/or academic workshops leading to future long-term collaborations.
- Short-term individual research visits for both young and established faculty members researchers, enabling new and innovative long-term collaborations.
- Research-oriented teaching opportunities, such as for instance the development of new experiential seminars, co-taught programs and the bringing together of PhD Candidates and Post-Doctoral Fellows such as through national programs or other PhD mobility schemes.

Bids for access to funding should target one or more of the outcomes below:

- Draw up joint proposals for funding from respective funding agencies.
- Joint proposals for funding and engagement with business/ industry/cultural and creative institutions.
- Joint submissions to high impact academic journals.
- Joint research and/or activities leading to new intellectual property, development of prototypes for commercialisation, or large-scale studies/datasets with social impact.
- Joint proposals to support talent development and mobility (e.g. mobility of PhD students and Postdoctoral Researchers).

Joint proposals to city/ regional government/other entities for civic/social/creative impact and engagement.

Funding

The Fund has an annual budget of GBP 40,000 and USD 50,000 for each of the next three years. We expect to fund 4- 6 projects per year.

The fund will support the development of collaboration in areas of complementary strength and is open to applications from all disciplines. We also encourage applications in the following priority research areas, however applications in other areas are welcome.

- Music and Creative Industries, broadly defined including museums, center, department partnerships representing institutional strengths
- Defence and security- cybersecurity, infrastructure security and resilience, maritime and ports
- Healthcare and Life Sciences
- Energy, Climate, and Sustainability
- Generative AI
- North American Slavery, British Slavery and Abolition, Haiti and Francophone Worlds
- Other areas may be considered.

Accessing the Fund

Faculty and staff wishing to access funding should do so by submitting a written project proposal within the application template.

A complete proposal MUST contain:

A completed application in the template required by your institution that includes

- A clearly articulated description of the project including identification of the primary applicants (a minimum of one co-applicant from Vanderbilt University and University of Liverpool).
- The motivation for the collaboration and the identified synergy.
- The short- and long-term objectives and anticipated outcomes.
- SDGs which will be advanced by the project (see: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>);
- Identification of likely future funding opportunities.

An application must also include:

- ✓ Two letters of support (one from each of the primary applicant's Department Chair and/or Faculty/School/Institute Head)
- ✓ Completed application form to include:
 - ❖ A detailed timeline / workplan with milestones and deliverables
 - ❖ A detailed budget
- ✓ Co-PI CV

Note: Applications should to the degree possible, include a teaching/seminar component, such as a lecture, compact seminar, or workshop open to students, and if possible, to the public, at the hosting university.

Third party universities non-profit institution organizations may join an application, on the condition that it/they bring matching funds or in-kind support (space, etc) to the project. For profit entities must match funds.

Proposals must be addressed to the Committee Secretary listed at the end of this document and must be submitted complete. As a rule, no 'to follow' will be considered when evaluating an application.

The primary applicants must hold full-time, permanent positions at their respective universities.

Eligible expense budget items include:

- Travel costs (economy class airfare only)
- Accommodation costs
- Per-diems, or expenses by individual receipts in accordance with travel guidelines of the home institution.
- Hosting (meeting rooms, food and beverage, etc.)
- Workshop, or seminar materials (hand-outs, etc.)
- Laboratory consumables related to the project.

All eligible expenses MUST occur within the dates set for the funding of the project. The budget and milestones will be carefully evaluated, and a lesser amount may be awarded to a successful project than that which was applied for.

Selection Criteria and Deadlines:

The Fund is intended to seed joint initiatives and is therefore limited to one financial year of activities. It is the expectation of the evaluation committee that reasonable opportunities for continued funding be identified in each application. Funds will be awarded on a competitive basis.

Key criteria are: well-articulated short- and long-term collective benefit to both universities; identification of realistic future funding models, where applicable; advancing of research outcomes at both universities; benefit to current and future students at both universities use of external mobility schemes would be advantageous; and the continued advancing of UN's SDGs at both universities.

Applications must be received before 12:00 midnight CST on the **Closing date: May 30, 2025**

Funding will be awarded by a review panel made up of equal representatives from Vanderbilt University and University of Liverpool with each partner selecting appropriate representatives.

Applicants are expected to be informed within turnaround within 30 days of the closing date with funds available 30 days following the award.

All Committee decisions are final and may not be appealed.

Applications must be sent electronically (pdf) to your institution's Committee Secretary/Office of Global Engagement:

Vanderbilt University- Office of the Vice Provost for Arts, Libraries, and Global Engagement (ovp-global@vanderbilt.edu)

University of Liverpool - Ms Helen Carlin (hcarlin@liverpool.ac.uk) in the Global Partnerships and Engagement Office