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Exeter – Université Paris-Saclay Strategic Partnership

Accelerator Grant Guidelines for Applicants

Background The University of Exeter and Université Paris-Saclay partner for a range of collaborative activities, built upon a foundation of research and education links plus shared strategic priorities. We have established research cooperation in Climate Science, Sports Science, and Computer Sciences; along with emerging cooperation in areas including Antimicrobial Resistance from a One Health perspective and broader Global Health research in areas such as public health, healthy ageing and health inequalities. We have established a five-year 'Cotutelle agreement', enabling delivery of a series of double PhD degree projects with match-funding and co-supervision from both institutions in which successful students will obtain PhD awards from both Exeter and Université Paris-Saclay. We have established a research internship student exchange, offering clinical electives for outbound and inbound medical students each year, allowing our students to explore different medical specialties and healthcare environments by observing clinical practice.

Through **Accelerator Grant** opportunities we aim to support Exeter & Université Paris-Saclay faculty members in:

- Increasing the impact of their research or education activities domestically and internationally.
- The development of novel, interdisciplinary research and/or teaching and learning concepts to the point of implementation and submission of bid(s) for external funding.
- Developing initiatives to the point of achieving high impact / high influence publications or equivalent.

The 2025/26 **Accelerator Grants** are now open for applications, with a closing date of **10th November 2025**.

Objectives

Accelerator Grants are intended to support larger scale initiatives with the aim of securing external funding and/or producing high level outputs and impact. It is anticipated that academic staff at both Universities, with excellent and complementary expertise and capability, may have already established a working relationship; and track record with international collaborations that can be demonstrated as part of the application.

In summary, the **key aims of the Accelerator Grants** are:

- To position the project group to win major external funding, publish significant research, and/or to influence national/international policy.
- To address research questions and/or to develop innovative teaching and learning initiatives with potential for high impact that could not be as effectively carried out by a partner on its own.



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- To facilitate further development of novel research and/or teaching and learning concepts to the point of submission of bid(s) for significant external funding.
- To expedite ground-breaking interdisciplinary research and/or teaching and learning initiatives, taking them to the next level.

Funding details

Applications up to **a maximum €10,000 / GBP £8,500** are invited.

Funding will be provided to the nominated lead applicant who will be responsible for the budget and for all arrangements for any events, activities, and participation. Funded applications will be promoted via the University websites and are expected to be completed by the end of July 2026.

Eligibility Criteria

The Accelerator Grants will be available to the whole academic community at Exeter and Saclay. Holding a previous Fellowship or Project Grant is not a requirement. Eligible costs include:

- travel and subsistence
- research consumables
- external speakers/facilitators
- meeting, venue and catering costs
- costs of non-academic (research, or technical) staff time (in the UK these are called directly incurred staff costs). Where funding is requested for research or technical posts that are also partially funded by another grant / source of funding, please check the terms and conditions of any pre-existing contract to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest.

The following items are not eligible for funding under this scheme:

- academic salaries
- third-party travel costs
- equipment
- publication costs
- student fees / tuition
- indirect costs, estates costs and overheads associated with internal research facilities.

Application Process

Applicants will need to complete the Accelerator Grant application form in conjunction with their counterpart(s) at the partner institution. Both a lead applicant and co-applicant at the partner institution will need to be nominated for each application. Funding will be provided to the nominated lead applicant who will be responsible for all arrangements for any events, activities, and participation.



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Applicants should ensure that activities are planned and scheduled so that in the event of an award, activities can be undertaken soon after. We expect projects to be completed within the stated timeframes.

Identical copies of the application should be submitted to both institutions at the below email addresses by **20th October 2025**.

Exeter: GP-Funding@exeter.ac.uk

Université Paris-Saclay: strategic.partnerships@universite-paris-saclay.fr

Applications will be jointly assessed by a panel of senior administrator and key academic leads for the partnership. Lead applicants will be notified within the specified timeframe (see Key Dates).

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed via a competitive selection process based on the following criteria:

- Quality of initiative / activity plan as outlined in the application.
- Potential to produce tangible outputs and benefits.
- Potential to leverage external funding.
- Potential for generating non-academic benefits and impact.
- Perceived value from investment.
- Potential to expand upon existing or newly identified collaboration.
- Contribution to advancing and sustaining the UPSaclay – Exeter partnership.

Feedback and Submissions

Feedback is not usually provided for Accelerator Grant applications. Resubmission is by invitation only.

Key Dates

Date	Activity
July 2025	Calls for applications issued
20 October 2025	Application deadline
End November 2025	Applicants notified of outcome
Early December 2025	Project start date
31 July 2026	Project completion deadline
15 September 2026	Post-project report submission deadline



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Grant acquittal and reporting

Awardees must agree to adhere to all requirements related to the receipt of funding including deadlines and procedures for acquittal of funds and reporting on outcomes.

Awardees will have up to a maximum of 10 months after the award date to utilize the funds for the project or initiative. Funds that are not utilized within the specified period will be withdrawn.

Within 6 weeks of the project completion date, awardees will be required to submit a brief report outlining the successes and outcomes of the project. Report forms will be provided to Project Leads.

This report will be utilized for the follow up of potential opportunities, reporting on outcomes and to highlight successes of the initiative between Université Paris-Saclay & Exeter.

Awardees who embark on international travel are required to abide by official reporting, insurance and registration requirements as outlined in:

Exeter policies:

https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/governanceandcompliance/University_Travel_Policy_Jan_2024.pdf

Contacts

Please consult your home institution contacts if you would like any additional information.

Exeter: Stuart Westhead (Global Partnerships Regional Head – North America & Europe)

S.westhead@exeter.ac.uk

Université Paris-Saclay: Sergei Shikalov (International Projects and Partnerships Coordinator)

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Annex A

Assessment Criteria

This guidance has been drawn up to assist applicants when completing their Seed Fund Grant application forms. The purpose is to explain what type of information and evidence is required to satisfy the assessment criteria.

Assessment Criteria	Evidence Required
Strategic fit	Clear information on how the proposed project would enhance the development of one of the established themes and, if applicable, subthemes.
Quality of initiative/activity	How well the application has been considered and planned, and the strength of its potential for taking forward a development or collaboration. Are the goals stretching but achievable? Using data to substantiate, the bid should



	<p>identify the need for and value of the proposed project and how it fits with UoE and UPSaclay objectives. Include details on how the project would be enhanced by being undertaken through this initiative.</p> <p>Considerations for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concrete actions to address equity, diversity and inclusion at stage of the research process are described. ▪ Considerations for how the research environment can be made more accessible and inclusive to the research team/trainees, and how to provide equitable opportunities for all members of the team to engage with the work being conducted are presented.
Perceived value from the investment	<p>Is the proposal offering value for money? Is it communicating clear evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a unique opportunity that is in line with the initiative's purpose • mobilizing a new or already interested, but perhaps disparate, research group, or disciplines, to come together and collaborate for the purpose of step change quality research and teaching • project management capabilities of the proposers - reassurance that, if funded, the project will run on time, to budget and deliver against agreed aims, activities and outcomes • tangible and quantifiable outcomes and impact for the benefit of the institutions as well as the more immediate group • the potential to publish high quality papers, influence policy, and leverage external funding
Potential to expand upon existing or newly identified collaboration	<p>Evidence of strength and potential of the relationship. How can the group and its work develop beyond the project? What mechanisms will be used to ensure ongoing communications and interaction? Clear sense of potential trajectory for the project and the relationship.</p>