

**Aims of the Seed-corn Fund:**

Seed Corn Funding

Internal Call

June 2024

To support HASS led challenge-facing and innovative research projects, where there is a clear and convincing pathway to an externally funded research project application.

Priority will be given to those project proposals with the ambition to develop research practice that reaches beyond the conventions of the base discipline, drawing on exciting and novel knowledge, methods and specialist skills.

Successful applicants are expected to engage with SCI in the following ways:

* Agreeing wording for project promotion on the SCI website & E-news.
* Completing a short (1 sided) completion report.
* Jointly holding a seminar or workshop relating to the completed research.
* Notifying SCI when a relevant external application is submitted.
* Volunteering to act as Peer Reviews for future rounds of Seed Corn Funding.

**Submitting Applications:**

All applications must be submitted using the Societies and Cultures Institute (SCI) Seed-corn Fund Application Form**. Please email:** **societiesandcultures@exeter.ac.uk**to request an application form(so we can monitor interest).

**The deadline for applications: 12 midday on Monday 25th November 2024.** Please submit application by email (and ‘cc’ in your DoRI) to: **societiesandcultures@exeter.ac.uk**

**All applications must:**

* Support a new or emerging research idea/project
* Be discussed and approved by your DoRI before submission. (Please ‘cc’ in your DoRI on final submission).
* Indicate if you are applying for the £2000 pot (contained project of a few months) or the £5000 pot (a six or seven month project) and justify the budget accordingly.
* Indicate if you are an ECR PI. You will be considered an “ECR PI” (in this instance) if you are within two years of your first permanent contract appointment at Exeter.
* Present a plausible pathway (with a timeline) to applying to a named external funding award by December 2025.
* Plan to spend all funds by 31st July 2025.

**Timeline:**

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| **Submissions open:** | Monday 24th June 2024. |
| **Application deadline:** | Monday 25th November 2024, 12 midday. |
| **Assessment and funding decisions:** | By Friday 13th December 2024. |
| **Projects to start from:** | Monday 13th January 2025. |
| **Latest project end date:** | Thursday 31st July 20245. |

**Eligible Directly Incurred (DI) activities for funding:**

* Travel and subsistence:
	+ For UoE staff at 100%.
	+ For any partner or Co-Is, T&S needs to be fully justified in detail.
* Delivering workshops, focus groups & interviews etc.
* Transcription/printing.
* Access to data sources/analysis.
* Community engagement.
* Training.
* Fieldwork & consumables.
* Temporary staff e.g. PGR or GRA day rates or Intern costs. Please specify how you calculated this and how you plan to recruit.

**What we won’t fund:**

* Conference fees or T&S for conferences.
* PI or Co-I FTE time.
* PDRA FTE time/extensions to contracts.
* Initial stage networking and collaboration building activity with no clear project aims/ideas for an external application.
* ‘Completion funding’ for a mature project which has unfinished or add-on activities. **BUT** we will fund activity associated with a project already funded, if it is to facilitate external follow-on funding or a second stag externally funded project.

**Assessment Criteria:**

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. **Research Excellence:**
* How original is the research?
* How innovative are the concepts and methods being applied?
* Is it clear why the research is needed now and are their measurable impacts to be made outside the HEI environment?
1. **Interdisciplinarity:**
* Is there evidence that external partners have been considered or involved? OR
* Is there planned engagement with external partners where potential value could be added?
* Are the collaborators appropriate to deliver the aims, objectives and chosen methodology?
* If it isn’t interdisciplinary, is there good reason for this?
1. **Value for money:**
* Are the resources that have been asked for essential to test innovative ideas &/or build an evidence base?
* Are the resources aiding a plausible plan to submit to an external funding call by December 2025?
* Has the research idea already received internal or external pump priming or seed corn funding?
* Is the budget requested enabling a ‘step change’ to what could otherwise be progressed?

**Scoring System:**

Each application will be discussed at a Panel meeting where funds will be awarded.

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| **Score** | **Description** |
| 6 (Outstanding) | The proposal is OUTSTANDING in terms of its potential scientific merit. |
| 5 (Excellent) | The proposal is EXCELLENT in terms of its potential scientific merit. |
| 4 (Good) | The proposal is IMPORTANT as it has considerable potential merit. |
| 3 (Satisfactory) | The proposal has SIGNIFICAT potential scientific merit but is not of a consistently high quality. |
| 2 (Fair/Some Weakness) | The proposal will add to understanding and is WORTHY of support but is of lesser quality or urgency than more highly rated proposals. Such proposals are unlikely to have a significant influence on the development of research. |
| 1 (Poor) | The proposal is FLAWED in its scientific approach, or is repetitious of other work, or judged not worth pursuing; or, though it possibly has sound objectives, appears seriously defective in its methodology. |

**Further key points below**

* This does NOT need to go through your Research Services Cluster for costing or be added onto Worktribe.
* All funds will be held by the PI and manged in T1. The PI cannot transfer funds to external Co-Is or partners – although expenses can be claimed.
* If you are successful in your application and need to log the project on Worktribe to gain Ethics approval, please alert your Research Services Cluster that the transfer of funds is being managed by the Societies and Cultures Institute and does not need involvement from Research Finance.

Any queries, please email: societiesandcultures@exeter.ac.uk