Imperial-Nanyang Technological University Collaboration Fund
Open Theme Call

CALL DOCUMENT AND GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

1. Purpose

The NTU-Imperial Research Collaboration Fund aims to help kick-start early-stage, risky and 'blue skies' research ideas that might not otherwise be pursued. The Fund promotes and supports early-stage collaboration among academics, researchers and students at NTU and Imperial by facilitating exchange between participating research groups through provision of grants to cover travel, workshops, meetings, hackathons, networks and other activities to explore research directions.

2. Imperial-Nanyang Technological University Collaboration Fund

For the 2023/24 funding round, Imperial and NTU have agreed on an Open Theme approach. Interested applicants may also consider, including but not limited to the following suggested topics:

- Health & Society
- Culture, Organisations & Society
- Artificial & Augmented Intelligence
- Resilient Urbanisation & Natural Ecosystems
- Future of Industry
- Brain & Learning

A total sum of £60,000 from Imperial and SGD$100,000 from NTU in this financial year will be awarded to successful Imperial and NTU teams, to develop and reinforce lasting contacts with the very best researchers in their field. The call will support collaborations that fall within the remit of data and its applications.

Funds can be requested to support one or more of the following activities:

- Exploratory research, travel costs and other activities that often do not receive financial support at the earliest stages. Imperial funds can also be used to support small-scale experiments or the development of prototypes;
- Outward/inward visits for academics, research staff and students to investigate the potential for, initiate, follow-up, or work on a collaborative project or training opportunity, and for other stakeholder engagement;
- 'Hackathon' or other collaborative day or week-long events involving staff and students from both institutions to explore new risky and 'blue skies' research directions and ideas;
- Longer stays for students or research staff (up to maximum 2 months) to learn new techniques, analyse results or undertake other activities;
- Set up of new networks to promote the exchange of ideas, best practice, and other research goals;
- Networking events such as workshops and seminars to bring together researchers to foster new links or strengthen existing collaborations;
- Facilitation fees for online workshops (to encourage innovative ways of online interaction;
- Payment for student assistance (to encourage student engagement in projects); and
- Research consumables/datasets, etc.

The goal is for these collaborations to support both Imperial and NTU academics to initiate and pursue collaborations that ideally lead to new science and to future applications for external funding.

3. Funding and Project Duration

This call has an indicative budget of **£60,000 and SGD$100,000** to be awarded to **8 to 10 successful Imperial and NTU collaborating teams** respectively.

Budget requests should not exceed £8,000 from Imperial and SGD$14,000 from NTU per project. Funds can only be spent on activities that fit the purpose of this call. Applicants should itemise their budget using the tables in the application form.

The maximum project duration is **1 year**.

Please refer to the list of fundable/ non-fundable items below:

Fundable (Y/N)	Imperial & NTU
Salary	N
Limited Research Consumables	Y
Travel	Y
Accommodation	Y
Subsistence	Y
Networking events such as e-workshops and e-seminars	Y
Equipment	N
Bench fees	N
Indirect and estate costs	N

4. How to Apply

This is an Open Call. At NTU, the fund is open to all full time faculty members who hold primary full-time appointment (defined as a minimum of 9 months a year). At Imperial, At Imperial, applicants must be staff with a permanent academic contract, or an independent fellow eligible to apply for external funding. Proposals must be submitted to both globalseedfunds@imperial.ac.uk and *RISE (for NTU submissions only).* Only applications submitted to these two application channels, and before the deadline, will be considered.

One proposal per Principal Applicant per call is permitted.

Each application should have one Principal Applicant based at Imperial and one Principal Applicant based at NTU and should contain:

- A written case for support (maximum 2 pages) to include:
    - A description of the relevant research/training conducted by the Imperial-based individual/group in recent years;
    - A description of the activities and collaboration proposed;
    - Explanation of how the activities proposed will generate demonstrable added value to the PI / Research Group / Department / Faculty / College
    - A description of the opportunities available for leveraging funding, especially from overseas sources;

- A financial summary: Each application should provide information on the requested costs using the budget section of the application template (see 'Funding Requested').

- Applicable only to Imperial Applicants: A WorkTribe statement is not needed.

Researchers from **other institutions** may also participate as a Co-Investigators and at their own expense.

Applications must be completed on the template provided and within the page limit stated.

5. Application Deadline and Project Milestones

- Deadline for the submission of applications : **5 January 2024 (Fri)**
- Release date of the results : February 2024
- Start date of the awarded projects : March 2024

6. Review and Selection of Applications

At Imperial, all eligible applications will be considered for funding by the Vice-Provost (Research and Enterprise) with assistance of the Cross-College Research Proposals Review Group and the International Relations Office. The Group will rank the proposals based on excellence of research, fit to call, value for money, potential strategic value of the partnership (including potential for opportunity to leverage European funding) and the impact the award would bring to the applicant, based on their career stage and any existing networks or support.

At NTU, eligible applications will be assessed by an internal review panel, which comprises Vice President Research (or his representative) and other senior faculty from NTU. The evaluation criteria are as follows:
•   Quality of proposed research activities
•   Value of the partnership
•   Future funding opportunities to leverage on
•   Impact of proposal (including academic gain)

NTU and Imperial will then jointly review applications to make a final decision on which applications will receive funding.

7. Accessing Funds

At Imperial, Faculty Finance Officers will be informed of decisions and will arrange the set-up of an award account code, where all project related expenditure should be charged.

At NTU, awarded PI will be contacted by Staff from the Research Support Office (RSO), who will guide the PI on the account creation and access of funds.

8. Reporting

Principal Applicants who are successful in receiving an award are required to provide a report within 2 weeks of the end of the award period, to both globalseedfunds@imperial.ac.uk and minghui.low@ntu.edu.sg, using a template provided. The narrative element of the report should provide details of the relevant activities supported and how these have addressed the objectives of the call. The financial element of the report serves as a Final Expenditure Statement and should detail the award amount and the award spent. Responsibility remains with the PI to ensure all spend has been charged to the correct award code.

Imperial is a proud signatory to the San-Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), which means that in hiring, promotion and research funding decisions we will evaluate applicants on the quality of their work, not the impact factor of the journal where it is published. More information is available at https://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/about-imperial-research/research-evaluation/.

9. Contacts

Please contact your respective institution's coordinator if you have any queries about this grant:

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