

Institute of Science Tokyo-Imperial College London Research Collaboration Fund

2026/27 CALL DOCUMENT AND GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

Purpose

The Science Tokyo-Imperial Research Collaboration Fund aims to help kick-start early-stage research and relationships ideas that might not otherwise be pursued. The Fund promotes and supports early-stage collaboration among academics, researchers and students at Science Tokyo 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.

Collaboration Fund

For the 2026/27 funding round, Imperial and Science Tokyo particularly encourage applications aligned with Science Tokyo's [Visionary Initiatives](#) and Imperial's [School of Convergence Science](#), while keeping the program open to proposals from all academic fields.

In this financial year, Imperial and Science Tokyo are committed to award up to 10 successful Imperial and Science Tokyo teams, to develop and reinforce lasting contacts with the very best researchers in their field.

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)
- Research consumables/datasets, etc.

This above list is not exhaustive. Science Tokyo and Imperial are open to innovative ideas that support both Imperial and Science Tokyo academics to initiate and pursue collaborations that ideally lead to new science and to future applications for external funding.

Funding and Project Duration

Budget requests should be no more than £5,000 from Imperial and ¥1,000,000 (approx. £5,000) from Science Tokyo per project. The project duration should be contained within the project start and completion dates as outlined in the timeline, starting no earlier than 1 October 2026, and ending no later than 31 July 2027. 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.

Existing staff time including the Co-PIs time cannot be costed to the project. Each Institution's contributions will be used exclusively to fund its own researcher and their research expenses and will not be co-mingled. The award of any funds from either Institution will be subject, in each case, to the internal processes and procedures of such Institution. All travel activities must comply with the guidelines of the respective universities.

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

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

How to Apply

This is an Open Call. Only applications submitted before the deadline will be considered.

One proposal per Principal Applicant per call is permitted.

Joint teams led by one Principal Applicant from each institution may apply. At Imperial, applicants must be staff with a permanent academic contract, or an independent fellow eligible to apply for external funding. At Science Tokyo, eligible Principal Applicants are Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors or fulltime Specially Appointed Professors, Specially Appointed Associate Professors and Specially Appointed Assistant Professors.

Each application should be submitted using the provided application form and must include the following:

- A written case for support (maximum 2 page), comprising:
 - 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 provided template in English and within the page limit stated.

Application Deadline and Project Milestones

- Joint grant call opens: 15 June 2026
- Deadline for the submission of joint application: 31 July 2026
- Release date of the results: 14 September 2026
- Start date of the awarded projects: 1 October 2026
- Project Completion: 31 July 2027
- Final Report: 30 September 2027

Review and Selection of Applications

At Imperial, all eligible applications will be considered for funding by the Vice-Provost (Research and Enterprise) with assistance from faculty representatives and the International Relations Office. They 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 future funding) and the impact the award would bring to the applicant, based on their career stage and any existing networks or support.

At Science Tokyo, all eligible applications will be considered for funding by the Executive Vice President for Global Affairs and the Executive Vice President for Education with assistance from faculty representatives and the International Division. Proposals will be evaluated and ranked based on the excellence of the research, alignment with the objectives of the call, value for money, and the strategic value of the partnership (including its potential to leverage future funding). In addition, consideration will be given to the extent to which the proposed research aligns with Science Tokyo's Visionary Initiatives, as well as its anticipated impact on the development and engagement of early-career researchers and students.

Science Tokyo and Imperial will then jointly decide on the final agreed selections.

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 Science Tokyo, the Office of Global Affairs will inform the relevant faculty or department of the Principal Applicant and provide the project code for the funds. The receiving project group will be responsible for managing all project-related expenditure.

Reporting

Principal Applicants who are successful in receiving an award are required to provide a report within 8 weeks of the end of the award period, to both globalseedfunds@imperial.ac.uk and sciencetokyo.global@adm.isct.ac.jp, 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/>.

Application Method

All applications should be submitted as one PDF file with the completed application form. All applications should be submitted via one email addressed to both institutions before the deadline:

- Imperial (globalseedfunds@imperial.ac.uk)
- Science Tokyo (sciencetokyo.global@adm.isct.ac.jp)

Contacts

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

Imperial College London

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Institute of Science Tokyo

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