

Mahidol Sussex Seed Fund (Round 3: 2025/26)

Programme Specification

BACKGROUND

This scheme is financed jointly by the Global Engagement office at the University of Sussex (UK) and the Global Partnerships Division at Mahidol University (Thailand). It underpins the strategic institutional partnership between the two universities through investment in international collaborative projects.

PURPOSE OF THE SCHEME

The Mahidol Sussex Seed Fund supports the cultivation or expansion of research collaborations to address global challenges, contribute to international development at both universities and grow the reputation of our researcher teams. Bids should result in tangible outputs between groups of researchers as specified below (e.g. workshops, capacity building, PhD co-supervision, publications and grant applications). Applicants are expected to demonstrate the feasibility of their plan.

Eligible activities would include but are not limited to:

- Preparation of collaborative bids to attract research funding.
- Facilitating internationally co-authored publications (including joint workshops or conferences)
- Development of new interdisciplinary research programmes.
- Visits to link research groups to establish new contacts and explore possibilities for collaboration and capacity building.
- Other items that facilitate the collaboration among research groups at both universities.

FUNDING AND ELIGIBLE COSTS

Proposals can be made for periods of up to one year. **The maximum funding that can be applied for is £10,000 from each institution.**

One year period projects are as welcome as shorter-term initiatives. Internal funds are limited, and we wish to maximise the number and range of activities that can be supported. This means that applicants are expected to strive for the greatest possible economies in achieving their objectives.

- Projects towards the maximum end of the funding scale must demonstrate a compelling rationale.
- Applicants must demonstrate that the timeframe and costing of the project is realistic.
- The primary use of funding must be associated with research activities.
- Costs may be used for travel, accommodation, workshops, facilities and equipment use, and other expenses related to meetings or the preparation of external funding proposals, as specified at the time of the proposal. Funds allocated to the Travel category must not exceed 25% at Mahidol University or 30% at the University of Sussex (the difference in percentages at each institution is due to higher prices in the UK and the unavailability of additional sources of funding at Sussex).
- If consultancy fees are essential to the project, a particularly compelling case for their inclusion must be included.
- If bidding for Research Assistants, applicants should indicate clearly what their work would include.
- If more than one external funding opportunity is targeted, applicants must explain how the proposal will be adapted for each funder to meet different funder priorities and remits.
- Please note that funds may not be used to support an applicant's salary, or to replace the salary or scholarship of any assistant or student already receiving funding from another source.

For costing queries and guidance applicants should contact the Fund Manager at their respective institution.

Mahidol University will provide its own main applicant with awarded funds in October 2025 which must be spent over the course of a maximum of 12 months and by the project end date. The University of Sussex will provide its own main applicant with awarded funds that must be spent within the 25/26 financial year which ends on **31st July 2026**.

ELIGIBILITY

The third round is open to University of Sussex and Mahidol University Researchers of all disciplines.

- Applications should seek to build multifaceted, purposeful and enduring links between groups of researchers.
- Proposals are required to have both Sussex and Mahidol Principal Applicants, and the approval of the relevant Associate Dean for Global and Civic Engagement at Sussex, and the Head of Department at Mahidol.
- Priority will be given to applications that extend opportunities to early career researchers (PhD students and/or post-doctoral researchers).
- Principal Applicants may be of any faculty rank at Mahidol or Sussex. At Sussex, the Fund is open to all members of academic faculty and professional services staff, whose contract of employment extends to at least the end of the proposed funding period.
- Those who are registered as students (including PhDs) are not eligible to apply directly but may be included within a proposal.
- A faculty member can serve as Principal Applicant on no more than one application per application cycle.
- There is no limit to the number of applications a faculty member can participate in as a team member.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications to the Fund should be prepared using the Mahidol Sussex Seed Fund Application Form. It is expected that applications will be discussed jointly and reviewed by the Seed Fund Panel. A nominated Principal Applicant is required to submit the application form, on behalf of both applicants, to their respective institution along with:

- A statement of support from each Principal Applicant's respective Head of Department/Associate Dean for Global and Civic Engagement.
- A statement of support from the Principal Applicant at the other institution

Applicants may only submit one application to the Fund and should bear in mind the need to write for a panel comprising of non-specialists in their field. Sussex and Mahidol will share the submitted applications following the closure of round three.

Applications will be open from Wednesday 23rd April to Friday 27th June 2025, 23.59 GMT.

At Sussex forms should be submitted to Inken Dunphy, Global Partnerships Senior Administrator, at I.Dunphy@sussex.ac.uk

At Mahidol, forms should be submitted to Chatinee Kanayart, Global Partnerships Office, at chatinee.kan@mahidol.ac.th

REVIEW PROCEDURE

Applications will be considered jointly by the Seed Fund Panel with representatives from each institution. Where not available, Panel members may nominate a substitute, and other academic reviewers with relevant expertise may be consulted if necessary.

In round three the Seed Fund Panel members will consist of the following staff:

At Mahidol:

- Vice President for Global Partnerships and University Council
- TBC
- TBC
- TBC

At Sussex:

- the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Global and Civic Engagement
- the Director of Research and Innovation Services
- Global Partnerships Manager
- TBC

REVIEW CRITERIA

The Seed Fund Panel will assess applications according to the:

- potential to demonstrate clearly **the impact of enhanced partnerships between groups of researchers/research centres** (e.g. enhancing the centres' reputation/profile, new avenues of research, generation of high-quality research outputs (as below)), and, including scope for the continued development of the partnership/network once the initial funding period has ended.
- potential for the activity to deliver its specified goals.
- potential for generating high quality research outputs (e.g. enhanced capacity, preparedness for future collaborative research bids and joint publications, income generation).
- appropriateness of proposed participants, and capacity to extend opportunities to early career researchers (PhD students and/or post-doctoral researchers).
- the potential for the visit/activity to engage the wider community and contribute to broader institutional partnership.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Successful Principal Applicants will be expected to submit an interim report and a final report detailing progress towards anticipated outcomes and outcomes to date. Reports will be shared with both partner institutions.

The Global Partnerships Division/Global Engagement Office and the Research Office may publicise the activities supported by this scheme for university marketing purposes and applicants are expected to engage in this process.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Colleagues are strongly encouraged to discuss their application with Fund Managers. If you would like to discuss an application or the application process, please contact the lead for the institution in the first instance:

Mahidol University, Thailand

- Chatinee Kanayart – Global Partnerships Division
chatinee.kan@mahidol.ac.th

University of Sussex

- Louise Turton - Global Partnerships Office
L.A.Turton@sussex.ac.uk