



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI  
DI PADOVA



University of  
St Andrews

## Call for proposals for joint initiatives in education and research

2026

University of Padua – University of St Andrews

### Aims of cooperation and possible formats

The University of Padua, hereinafter referred to as UniPD, and the University of St Andrews, hereinafter referred to as UStA, have established a joint seed funding scheme with the goal of facilitating cooperation in the framework of our strategic partnership. This represents the fifth call for proposals for joint initiatives between UniPD and UStA following its launch in 2022. The funding shall enable academic staff from all disciplines to identify complementary strengths, explore areas of synergy, and develop outstanding future projects in research, academic innovation, educational enhancement, and pedagogical development. The joint seed funding aims to support the first steps of cooperation and is not meant as complete project funding.

Possible formats for cooperation may include but are not strictly limited to:

1. Intensive research seminars or workshops
2. Pedagogical workshops (e.g. exploring digital or other course collaboration)
3. Short-term research or pedagogic research stays
4. Intensive short programmes (e.g. Graduate summer/ winter programmes)
5. Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) projects
6. Joint workshops/ short - training on sustainability-related themes

### Terms and conditions of open call

The supported activities should have a clearly defined focus and serve as a catalyst for the development of new joint projects. The activities can take place in Padua or in St Andrews; The motivation for holding the activity should be clearly explained, including how the involved UniPD and UStA faculties and schools can benefit long term from this cooperation.

- A project must be carried out by at least two applicants, one from each institution, who will work together to build a joint proposal. Applicants should be full-time or part-time academic staff with a contract of employment until at least the end of the project. For UNIPD 'academic staff' include: *professori ordinari*; *professori associati*; *RTD-B*; *RTT*<sup>1</sup>. It is strongly recommended that each institution include co-applicants (one or more); participation of early-stage researchers is also encouraged.

<sup>1</sup> Adjunct appointments (*docenti a contratto*) can be additional applicants but not project leads.

- All academic fields covered jointly by UniPD and UStA are included in the present call, and interdisciplinary projects are encouraged, as long as the resulting project is beneficial for both universities.

Projects aligning with the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) are particularly welcomed. Recipients of a grant under previous calls for proposals are eligible to apply. However, proposed projects must be entirely new and not a continuation, or further edition, of pre-existing initiatives. Moreover, applicants not having benefitted from funding under previous calls will be given priority in the selection process.

Projects may also include the participation of self-funded external investigators or partner institutions where relevant.

In 2026, up to **four projects** will be jointly funded by UniPD and UStA.

#### **Key dates**

- **Call opens:** **W/c 30 March 2026**
- **Applications close:** **Monday, 18 May 2026 (5pm CET, 4pm BST)**
- **Outcomes announced:** **by July 2026**
- **Projects commence:** **1 September 2026**
- **Projects complete:** **31 August 2027**

#### **Equality Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)**

Adherence to respective equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) policies are an important feature of this programme to ensure that all participants can do their best work, thrive and succeed. Applicant teams should consider how they can take meaningful steps in their future collaborations to foster an environment that values, supports and respects a diverse range of views, knowledge and experiences. Applicants should consider EDI as it applies to e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, (dis)ability, and career stages.

#### **Sustainable travel**

UniPD and the UStA recognise the importance of organising in-person meetings and events to support the development of collaborative projects. Therefore, both institutions encourage applicants to consider the environmental impact of their research and travel. Please refer to St Andrews' [Sustainable Research and Business Travel webpage](#) for more information.

#### **Trusted Research (For St Andrews applicants)**

Trusted Research, the term used by the UK Government and other bodies to refer to national security issues in the planning and undertaking of research, has been an increasingly prominent agenda since 2019. The University of St Andrews is required to put in place, and enforce, relevant provisions to ensure that it attends to this agenda. We have created guidance and a Trusted Research Tool to assist researchers and direct colleagues towards existing policy and process to ensure compliance where necessary. As part of your application to this scheme, you confirm that you have (or will) reviewed relevant guidance and complete/d a Trusted Research Tool submission including any required outcomes. Please see

the [Trusted Research web page](#) for information and access to the Tool.

### **Selection criteria and process**

Applications will be reviewed and scored by selection committees at UniPD and UStA. The selection committees will evaluate each application using the following criteria:

#### **1. Partnership and Strategic Relevance**

Applications will be assessed on:

- The complementarity and added value of the UniPD and UStA partners.
- The extent to which the project strengthens and consolidates the institutional partnership.
- Alignment with the strategic priorities of both universities and with departmental/school priorities.
- Engagement of broader academic communities within each institution.

#### **2. Academic Quality and Innovation**

Applications will be assessed on:

- The academic excellence and originality of the proposed research or teaching activities.
- The clarity and coherence of the project objectives.
- The potential to generate novel thinking, interdisciplinary approaches, or innovative pedagogical practices.
- The applicants' expertise relative to the proposed activities.

#### **3. Project Design and Team Composition**

Applications will be assessed on:

- The clarity and feasibility of the project plan, including timeline and deliverables.
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities within the team.
- Balanced and meaningful collaboration between UniPD and UStA partners.
- Consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion in the team composition.

#### **4. Anticipated Outcomes, Financial Sustainability and Scalability**

Applications will be assessed on:

- A clearly formulated plan outlining the project's expected outputs and near-term outcomes, including what will be produced or achieved during the funded period.
- The likelihood of generating tangible and measurable outputs (e.g. joint publications, grant proposals, structured teaching initiatives, new collaborative frameworks).
- The potential for long-term, sustainable and self-supporting collaboration beyond the seed funding period.
- Clear consideration of financial sustainability, including pathways to external funding, co-funding, or institutional embedding where appropriate.
- The scalability or transferability of the project/knowledge gained to other projects, courses, programmes or contexts at regional, national or international levels.
- The coherence between proposed activities and requested budget.

#### **5. Impact and Legacy**

Applications will be assessed on:

- The anticipated medium- and long-term academic and/or educational impact of the project.
- The potential for recognition beyond the immediate partnership.

- The likelihood of creating lasting value after the funding period concludes.
- Where relevant, contribution to broader sectoral, societal or institutional development.

The selection shall take into consideration the project subject area and type, to encourage the widest possible range of activities.

### **Duration and funding arrangements**

Project timelines should be clearly outlined in the application and may not exceed 12 months from the project start date. It is expected that projects will start no later than 1 September 2026. Projects must be concluded, and funding must be spent, within 12 months.

Each application will receive up to £5,000 (approx. €6,000) in total or £2,500 (approx. €3,000) from each institution. Up to 4 projects will be awarded in the 2026 call of the scheme. The Selection Committee reserves the right to allocate less funding than the amount requested.

Co-funding of projects by the faculty/department/school/institute/centre, or external bodies, is welcomed.

Allowable expenses include:

- costs linked to organisation of joint meetings, seminars or workshops
- cost of developing shared online resources, e.g., video editing
- consumables needed for the implementation of the project
- travel, accommodation and meal costs, where travel is essential to the success of the project
- costs related to publication/dissemination of results

Non-allowable expenses include:

- salaries or salary supplementation of any kind (except for COIL tutors/ learning technologists/ facilitators)
- indirect and overhead costs
- course fees, stipends or scholarships for students
- infrastructure and equipment purchases, such as computers, including laptops and basic computing facilities such as printers, word processing and other standard software
- conference registrations and costs related to conference participation (e.g. travel, accommodation, meals), unless specifically related to the dissemination of results
- costs already incurred prior to submission of the proposal

### **Award expectations**

Principal Investigators (a term inclusive of project leads from education focused roles) will be required to submit a brief update midway through the project, in the form of a mid-year progress report, in addition to providing a final report at its conclusion. A one-year post-completion update may also be requested if the outcomes of grant proposals or submitted publications are still unknown at the time of the final report submission. Principal Investigators are also expected to actively participate in events and opportunities related to

the Padua-St Andrews strategic partnership. Additionally, they should inform the International Relations Division at the University of Padua and the Global Office at the University of St Andrews about any visits to either institution.

### **Submission and deadlines**

One joint application, in the form of a unique pdf file, must be submitted by **Monday, 18 May 2026 (5pm CET, 4pm BST)** using the [online submission link](#). Applications sent via email will not be accepted. Please use the 2026 application form for sections 1-7 below:

- 1) Names, titles, departments/schools and emails of UniPD and UStA Principal Investigators and any other academic staff involved in the activities.
- 2) Type of collaborative activity (please refer to the list on page 1 of this Call)
- 3) List of UN Sustainable Development Goals that align with proposed project (optional)
- 4) Project title and layperson abstract of the proposed project (up to 200 words)
- 5) Narrative description of the proposed project for a multi-school, multidisciplinary audience using the following sub-headings (up to 1000 words):
  - a. Project objectives
  - b. Background and previous work as appropriate
  - c. Specific outputs expected (*for education projects, outputs might include new course materials, a COIL pilot, a shared assessment framework, or a teaching resource*)
  - d. Explanation of how you will evaluate the success of your project (*for education projects, evaluation may draw on pedagogic literature, reflective practice, student feedback, or evidence-informed teaching frameworks*)
  - e. Anticipated schedule for completion
- 6) Brief description of how the project will address the selection criteria using the following subheadings:
  - a. **Partnership and strategic relevance** (maximum 150 words)
  - b. **Academic quality and innovation** (maximum 150 words)
  - c. **Project design and team composition** (maximum 150 words)
  - d. **Anticipated outcomes, financial sustainability, and scalability** (maximum 150 words)
  - e. **Impact and legacy** (maximum 150 words)
- 7) Budget and budget justification, with one section for UniPD budget and one section for UStA budget, explaining in detail all anticipated expenditures
- 8) Short curriculum vitae (2 pages maximum) of Principal Investigators
- 9) Brief endorsement letters from respective heads of department (Padua) and school (St Andrews).

Applicants will be notified about the outcome of the selection process by July 2026. This call for proposals will be available on the [UniPD website](#) and on the [UStA website](#). For further information, please contact:

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