

2026 NUS-UNSW Seed Grants

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Purpose

The NUS–UNSW Seed Grant aims to progress strategically aligned partnerships toward scale and sustained collaboration, building on existing institutional relationships.

The scheme is designed to:

- strengthen institution-level collaboration across priority areas
- support development of joint, externally funded research programs
- enable progression from early-stage collaboration to scalable initiatives
- support research translation and impact aligned to shared strategic priorities

Applications for the scheme must be focussed in one of the following priority areas:

- Precision Medicine
- Climate Resilience
- Urban Solutions and Sustainability

Expected Outcomes

- The scheme is intended to support early-stage activities that strengthen collaboration and position NUS–UNSW partnerships for future scale.
- Development of joint research activities (e.g. workshops, pilot studies or exchanges) that build momentum and connectivity between teams.
- Preparation of joint outputs where appropriate (e.g. draft publications, working papers, or preliminary results), recognising that publication outcomes may extend beyond the funding period.
- Identification of pathways to external funding, *including development of at least one well-defined joint funding opportunity*, with a clear plan and indicative timeline for submission.

Eligibility

Each application must include a Lead Investigator from NUS and UNSW respectively.

- At **NUS**, the fund is open to full-time academic staff only, with at least 75% employment at NUS and a contract period that outlast the project period.
- At **UNSW**, applicants must hold full-time continuing or fixed term academic appointments extending beyond the end of the grant.

Project teams including early-career researchers (including higher degree research students) and/or an industry/translation partner, are encouraged.

Funding and Duration

Projects duration: 12 months

A maximum of AUD\$15,000 from UNSW and SGD\$13,500 from NUS is available for each successful project.

Funding will be awarded on a matched basis, with each institution funding its own researchers. Funds can only be spent on activities that fit the purpose of this call. Applicants are asked to itemise and justify their budget in the application form.

Eligible Expenses

Please note cost eligibility differs between institutions.

	Eligible expenditure items	Ineligible expenditure items
UNSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel costs between UNSW and NUS researchers associated with the project • Reasonable living and hosting costs of visiting researchers from each institution • Direct research costs associated with the project including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop, or project meeting costs (including venue hire, catering, and AV) - Consumables and materials - Payment for research participants, advisors, consultants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries (for professional or academic staff), including Research Assistants • Scholarship top-ups for research students • Conference registration fees • Teaching relief/buy-out • Entertainment
NUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel and subsistence • Consumables • The cost of research assistants, research associates and technicians which are directly related to the project. • Workshops (face-to-face and virtual), symposia, research seminars/presentations and formation or development of a collaborative network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing staff time, including the Lead PI's salary

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 and expenditure must comply with the relevant policies and procedures of each respective university.

Selection Criteria

Proposals should demonstrate alignment with UNSW and NUS priority research and impact areas, and where relevant, outline potential pathways toward research translation, policy, industry or societal impact. It is recognised that such outcomes are typically longer-term and may extend beyond the timeframe of this funding.

Applications will be assessed against the below criteria by both UNSW and NUS and the combined top-ranked proposals will be funded.

Criteria	Weight
1. Strategic alignment and partnership potential	35%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alignment with UNSW and NUS priority research and impact areas• Strength and complementarity of the UNSW-NUS partnership• Potential to support broader, multi-disciplinary or institutional engagement• Contribution to longer-term partnership development	
2. Pathway to scale and external funding	30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identification of potential external funding opportunities• Clarity of next steps toward joint funding applications (including indicative timing where appropriate)• Potential for the activity to position the collaboration competitively for future funding• Contribution to building a sustainable collaboration beyond the project period• Where relevant, inclusion of researcher development (e.g. ECR/HDR involvement) that supports future collaboration and funding competitiveness	
3. Project design and feasibility	25%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarity and feasibility of proposed activities within the funding period• Appropriateness of approach to achieving stated objectives• Realistic timeline and deliverables• Alignment with any stated thematic priorities	
4. Budget and value for money	10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriateness and justification of the budget• Alignment of expenditure with proposed activities and intended outcomes• Efficient use of funds to support partnership development and progression	

How to apply

Applications must be completed online using the [Cognito application form](#) and be focussed on one of the following priority areas:

- Precision Medicine
- Climate Resilience
- Urban Solutions and Sustainability

This is a joint call. A single application should be submitted for each project that includes one Lead investigator from each of NUS and UNSW respectively. Only one application is permitted per project team.

Key Dates

Applications Open	Applications Close	Applicants Notified of Outcome
7 July, 2026 11:00am AEST 9:00am SST	11 August, 2026 11:59pm AEST 9:59pm SST	September 2026

Reporting Obligations

Successful applicants will be asked to submit a final project report within one month of the project end date i.e. by 30 November, 2027.

Each Lead Investigator will receive an institution-specific report template from their respective university (NUS or UNSW) for completion.

Contacts

UNSW	Global Research & Impact Program (GRIP) team Email: grip@unsw.edu.au
NUS	Brenda Lim, Manager Office of the Deputy President (Research & Technology) Email: dprbox52@nus.edu.sg