Strategic Partnership: Call for Proposals

Within their new partnership, the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the consortium of Berlin universities comprising of Freie Universität Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin as the coordinating institution in Berlin are seeking to strengthen their relationship and collaboration. The Strategic Partnership between NUS and the Berlin universities intends to support new and innovative research projects in their efforts to generate external funding. Seed funding grants will be available for up to 30,000 €. A special focus will be given to projects in the areas of:

- Mathematics
- Materials Science
- Social Cohesion
- Life Sciences

Proposals from other fields will also be accepted. Applicants are expected to meet any national standards and requirements for funding, and to follow the general policies and guidelines of their respective institution. Only joint research initiatives that are new and involve partners from both Singapore and Berlin will be considered.

Eligibility

The Call for Proposals is open to faculty members from the partner institutions, in all disciplines. Full-time faculty members of both institutions have to be involved and function as principal investigators. The participation of postdoctoral researchers will be an asset.

Projects must be presented jointly by at least one faculty member from one of the Berlin partners and NUS. External partners are very welcome to participate, but are not eligible for funding from this program.

The Strategic Partnership’s aim is to stimulate innovative research and to foster new cooperation. Continuation of already concluded or ongoing projects and established research partnerships will not be eligible for Seed Grant funding. Seed grants of up to 30,000€ will be awarded to new promising research projects, selected by the partnership’s joint selection committee. The committee will aim at funding a range of differently sized projects. Each proposal should detail how the research collaboration will aim
at generating external funding. Seed grant funding will be available from August 1, 2019, and is allocated to last for up to 12 months.

**Funding purpose**
The purpose of this round of funding is to facilitate the definition and development of joint projects by enabling mobility in both directions. In particular, this can include:

- Workshops
- Mobility costs in both directions for senior faculty, in line with existing standards and regulations in all partner institutions
- Fellowships for doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows to conduct research at a partner institution
- Honorariums for assistance in preparing more substantive grant proposals

Funding cannot support staff cost or the cost of research assistants.
The funding period will begin on August 1, 2019 and will end on July 31, 2020.

**Evaluation Process**
All proposals will be evaluated by the collaboration’s joint selection committee. The joint selection committee consists of one senior leadership member (Vice-President or equivalent) from Singapore and senior leadership members (Vice-President or equivalent) from Berlin.

The evaluation will take into account

- the quality and innovativeness of the research project, competence and expertise of the team of faculty members involved,
- feasibility of the project plan,
- cost-effectiveness of the budget,
- indications as to how to obtain external funding in the future and prospects for sustainability beyond the original term of the seed grant,
- effective communication and cooperation between the faculty in each location and added value of the collaboration,
- the mobility of researchers between Berlin and Singapore.

**Requirements of Recipients**
- Project timeline: All expenses and activities should be incurred within the funding period (August 1, 2019 – July 31, 2020).
- Acknowledgement: Recipients are expected to acknowledge the support of the Strategic Partnership in any publications or presentations, which should be listed in the progress reports.
- Payment of the grant: The payment and post-award financial management will be administered through the respective institution of any lead applicant.

**Submission Documents**
- A narrative project description of no more than 3 pages, including:
  - An overview description of the field of study and general context of the project suitable for a non-specialist audience; please specifically address the aspects that make the project innovative and promising in a long-term perspective.
  - A lay-out of the proposed project and its specific objectives as well as its operation, timelines, and functions.
  - A description of the funding contributions from sponsoring units and detailed plan for the project’s long-term external funding prospects. Please indicate additional financial support from sponsoring units or external grants.
  - A discussion of any additional resources not to be covered by this program (office or laboratory space, library access etc.) feeding into the project and of their availability.
- The completed seed grant application form, including the financial budget, with amounts specified by budget category. *Budgets cannot support hiring of administrative staff or research assistants.*
- List of involved academics, in addition to lead applicants
- Letter of approval by the relevant deans
- Short CVs of the lead applicants (max. 2 pages, no bibliographies)

**Submission and Contact Information**
With any questions regarding the application process and format, please contact:

Neda Soltani ([neda.soltani@hu-berlin.de](mailto:neda.soltani@hu-berlin.de)) International Department, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, or
Chan Ching Ting ([dprcct@nus.edu.sg](mailto:dprcct@nus.edu.sg)), Office of the Deputy President (Research & Technology), National University of Singapore