

UW-TU Strategic Partner Funds 2026-27

Guidelines for Applicants

The University of Washington (UW) and Tohoku University (TU) are contributing matching funds to support education and research initiatives through a joint call for proposals for the development of collaborative activities.

1. Projects

- i) This call invites proposals for partnership development activity in areas of mutual interest and complementary strengths that will strengthen collaboration between UW and TU.
- ii) Proposals must include participants from both institutions.
- iii) Applications from all research areas are welcome.
- iv) Applications must demonstrate how the proposed activity will provide a platform for longer-term, larger-scale collaboration between UW and TU in the relevant field, for example, by providing a basis for ongoing joint research and education activity and/or applications to external bodies for research grant funding.
- v) Up to three joint projects will be selected for one-year funding to a maximum total value of \$20,000 per project. Proposals will be assessed by a committee composed of members from both institutions.

2. Eligibility

- Who can apply:
At UW, UW faculty members and research scientists from the Seattle, Tacoma, and Bothell campuses are eligible and encouraged to apply.
At TU, Professor or equivalent, Associate Professor or equivalent, Senior Assistant Professor or equivalent, Assistant Professor or equivalent, are eligible and encouraged to apply.
- Who cannot apply:
At both institutions, graduate students, including PhD students, and postdocs, are not eligible to apply as principal applicants.
- Student involvement:
At both institutions, graduate students may participate in the project's delivery, such as serving as research assistants or interns.
- Applicants from UW and TU must have an open-ended contract or a fixed-term contract that lasts until at least March 2027.
- At both institutions, applicants are not required to have a doctorate to apply, but do need to hold a role at one of the levels described above.
- At both institutions, PhD students are not eligible to apply, but their involvement in the delivery of the project – for example as research assistants or interns - is encouraged.

3. Collaboration Activities

Due to the high rate of inflation and the environmental impacts of international travel, it is encouraged to conduct meetings online as much as possible. Funding can support a broad range of activities as appropriate to the aims and objectives of the collaboration. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Joint seminar(s)/workshop(s) with UW & TU partners (remotely or in person) which might lead to joint publications, future research collaborations, grant applications, or other follow-up activity. Funding may be used for external services required to facilitate the event, e.g. professional moderation or technical support.
- Meetings, or preliminary scoping work and baseline research/data gathering, to underpin the preparation of a long-term collaborative partnership (e.g. preparation of a PhD summer school, double degree, future exchange agreement, etc).
- Stipends for research assistants and interns. UW and TU students' casual wage costs for working on the collaboration can be covered, as can travel, accommodation, and subsistence essential to the activity, in line with each university's expense policy, sustainability agenda, and coronavirus guidance. Please note that teaching buyouts are not eligible.

What cannot be funded by the UW-TU Strategic Partner Funds:

- Activity which does not involve UW & TU partners; work for which there is already a significant existing funding stream; activity that has already happened.
- Costings should be appropriate and relevant to the activity, for example, the provision of alcoholic beverages for partners is not considered a valuable use of funds, unless it can be described how hospitality is critical for the building of this relationship or necessary/culturally significant for an event, e.g., a public exhibition.
- Items that would typically be included in a research or teaching grant. This seed funding supports and develops UW & TU collaboration and lacks the scale and resources to support the core components of a research or teaching project.
- Teaching time buyout cannot be funded.

4. Value and Duration

Proposals may request funding up to \$20,000. Up to three projects will be funded in total. Funding will be jointly provided by UW and TU, with 50% going to the academic at each respective institution. **However, only one proposal should be submitted.** Funds will be available after February 15, 2026 at UW and April 1, 2026 at TU, and must be spent by March 31, 2027 at both institutions. Should UW faculty require their funds earlier this may be arranged upon request.

5. Timeline

Call for proposals	December 1, 2025
Deadline for submission of proposal	January 31, 2026
Communication of Results to applicants	During the week of February 15, 2026
Start date of Awards	At UW, during the week of February 15, 2026 At TU, April 1, 2026

6. Submission of Proposals

Proposals are to be prepared jointly using the application form, which can be found on the UW portal, GIF Terra Dotta platform. The UW faculty member serves as the Principal Investigator (PI) and submits the application through the GIF Terra Dotta platform. No separate application is required through the partner university.

7. Ethical approval

Please check each university's guidelines regarding research ethics. Applicants are responsible for reading these guidelines and ensuring projects adhere to each university's ethical approval policy and process.

UW's ethical guidelines can be found here:

- [Ethical Principles](#)

TU's ethical guidelines can be found here: Please check your department's ethical guidelines.

- [Research Ethics \(in Japanese only\)](#)

8. Adjudication

- i) **Selection Criteria:** Both internal review committees will assess each proposal according to the following criteria:
 - **Project design and rationale** (how clearly presented and justified is the design and basis for the collaboration)
 - **Project impact** (how clearly linked are the outcomes to the planned activities and performance indicators)
 - **Impact of collaboration** (is there a distinct advantage provided by this collaboration, that is not possible by the two institutions working individually)
 - **Capacity for future collaboration** (what is the extent to which future collaborations are possible as a result of the proposed exchange activities)
- ii) A joint committee will convene to select up to three final proposals.

9. Communication of Results

Final results will be announced by means of communication to the successful faculty members.

10. Reporting After Project Completion

All awardees must, as a condition of receiving an award under this call, complete a brief narrative report of achievements.

11. Queries & contacts

If you have any questions about the UW-TU Strategic Partner Funds, please contact Office of Global Affairs, uwgif@uw.edu at UW or Global Strategy Office at TU (kokusai-c@grp.tohoku.ac.jp), depending on your university affiliation.