

Korea University - Tohoku University Research Co-Seed Fund 2027

Korea University (KU) and Tohoku University (TU) are contributing co-seed funds to support collaborative education and research initiatives through a joint call for proposals for the development of collaborative activities.

1. Projects

This call invites proposals for partnership development activity in areas of mutual interest and complementary strengths that will deepen collaboration between KU and TU. Proposals should be co-led by a Lead Applicant at each institution and can involve a wider team of participants from each institution, as appropriate to the activities proposed.

Proposals from all fields are welcome but those related to the following fields are particularly encouraged:

- a. Materials Science
- b. Data-Driven Medicine
- c. Disaster Science

Applications must demonstrate how the proposed activity will provide a platform for longer-term, larger-scale collaboration between KU 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.

Up to four (4) joint projects will be selected for funding to a maximum total value of approximately KRW16,000,000 per project (KRW8,000,000 by KU + JPY900,000 by TU). The evaluation committee of each university will review the proposals, and the final selection will be determined through mutual agreement between both institutions.

2. Eligibility for Participants within the scope of this call

2-1. For TU Applicants

- Applications are open to TU staff members with the following roles:
 - a. Professor or equivalent
 - b. Associate Professor or equivalent
 - c. Senior Assistant Professor/Lecturer or equivalent
 - d. Assistant Professor or equivalent
 - e. Post Doc/Researcher/Research Associate or equivalent
- Applicants from TU must have an open-ended contract or a fixed-term contract which lasts at least until the end of this project.
- Applicants are not required to have a doctorate to apply but do need to hold a role at one of the levels described above.

- PhD students are not eligible to apply but are eligible to take part in the project.
- TU Professional Service are not eligible to apply but can take part in the project where this supports the aims and objectives.

2-2. For KU Applicants

- Applications are open to full-time faculty members at the Seoul Campus, Sejong Campus and the College of Medicine.
- Selection Priority will be given to KU PIs who are participating in any of KU's global joint seed funding programs for the first time. This is to encourage broader faculty engagement in international collaborations.

3. Collaboration Activities

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 KU & 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. KU and TU student casual wage costs for working on the collaboration can be covered, as can travel, accommodation and subsistence essential to the activity, in line with KU and TU's expense policy, sustainability agenda and coronavirus guidance. Researchers at KU and TU are subject to the universities' research fund regulations. Please note that teaching buyouts are not eligible.
- Applicants are advised to consider the environmental impact of proposed activity and international travel and to conduct meetings online as far as possible.
- All expenses must comply with the guidelines of the respective universities to which reimbursement is to be sought.

4. What cannot be funded by the KU-TU Co-Seed Fund?

- Activity which does not involve KU & 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 which are already covered by an existing research or teaching grant.
- Teaching time buyout cannot be funded.
- At KU, Principal Investigator's personnel costs are excluded.

5. Value and Duration

Up to four (4) successful proposals will receive up to KRW16,000,000 per project (KRW8,000,000 by KU + JPY900,000 by TU). Funding will be jointly provided by KU and TU, with 50% going to the academic at each respective institution. However, one proposal per PI per call is permitted.

Funds provided by KU and TU will be available shortly after the award has been made and must be spent by December 31, 2027. Applicants should take this into account when planning their proposed activity.

6. Timeline

Call for Proposals	September 18, 2026
Deadline for Submission of Proposal	November 9, 2026
Communication of Results to Applicants	Late December 2026
Start date of Awards	From January 1, 2027
End date of Project	December 31, 2027
Final Report	January 31, 2028

7. Submission of Proposals

Proposals are to be prepared jointly and submitted separately. Each proposal must be submitted by the PI to his/her own home institution by the deadline. Applications will only be accepted via email in either PDF or Word format for KU and TU:

- **KU applicants:** International Research Collaboration Center, kuircc@korea.ac.kr
- **TU applicants:** Global Strategy Office, kokusai-c@grp.tohoku.ac.jp

- For KU applicants only:

KU's PI will be required to fill out and submit additional 'KU Research Grant Application Form,' provided by Korea University, to KU IRCC (kuircc@korea.ac.kr) before the deadline.

8. KU and TU Research Ethical approval and Research Security

Please check the guidelines regarding research ethics and research security ahead of submitting your proposal. You should also consider if your activity may be subject to Export Controls. Both universities' applicants are responsible for reading these guidelines and ensuring projects adhere to both universities' policy and process. As with all funding schemes, we strongly advise applicants to undertake proportionate and appropriate due diligence, relative to the stage and scope of the research collaboration.

KU's guidelines can be found here: Please check your department's ethics guidelines.

- [Research Ethics \(in Korean only\)](#)
- [Research Integrity Commission in Korea University \(in Korean only\)](#)

TU's research ethics and security export control guidelines can be found here: Please check your department's ethics guidelines.

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

9. Adjudication

KU and TU will jointly review applications to make a final decision on which applications will receive funding.

Selection Criteria: Both internal review committees will assess each proposal according to the following criteria:

a) Aims, Areas of Focus and Academic Rationale (300 words max) - 10 points

Please state clearly the justification for the design and basis for collaboration.

b) Project Activities and Intended Outputs (300 words max) - 10 points

Please bear in mind this will be reviewed by a panel including non-specialists in your field of expertise. Please summarize the activities envisaged as part of the project and what outputs you anticipate from the project. Outputs need to be directly linked with the project activities.

c) Outcomes (200 words max) - 10 points

What are the expected outcomes of the project? You may wish to reference short term, medium term and long term aims. Examples include joint papers, external funding applications, joint research with industry and proposal for policy recommendations.

d) Impact of Collaboration (200 words max) - 10 points

Is there a distinct advantage provided by this collaboration that is not possible by the two institutions working individually?

e) Sustaining the collaboration (200 words max) - 10 points

What is the extent to which future collaborations are possible as a result of the proposed activities.

10. Communication of Results

The final selection results will be announced by means of communication with the lead applicants.

11. Joint Research Agreement

Successful applicants will be required to fill in the project summary as part of the research agreement.

12. Reporting After Project Completion

All awardees must, as a condition of receiving an award under this call, complete a narrative report of achievements (of between 1 and 2 pages) and submit it to respective universities within one (1) month from the project end date.

- Mandatory Deliverables (at least one):
 - Submission of a joint, peer-reviewed research paper to an SCI(E) journal (ideally within the top 10% of the field) within one year from the project end date.
 - Submission of a proposal for an international joint research grant (e.g. JSPS, JST, Horizon Europe) within one year from the project start date.
- Acknowledgement Requirement: All publications and presentations resulting from this project must clearly acknowledge the support of this program by stating “Korea University-Tohoku University Research Co-Seed Funds.”
 - Required acknowledgement statement: “This publication/presentation is supported in part by the Research Co-Seed Funds between Korea University and Tohoku University.”

13. Queries & contacts

If you experience any problems making an online application or have any questions about the KU-TU Research Co-Seed Funds, please contact International Research Collaboration Center at KU: kuircc@korea.ac.kr or the Global Strategy Office at TU: kokusai-c@grp.tohoku.ac.jp, depending on your affiliation.