Procedure to leverage joint research activities 2024

Version updated 26.09.24

1. General information

Through top level education and research, EU GREEN, the European University for Sustainability, aims at addressing sustainability from the periphery and for the periphery. EU GREEN partners aim to place societal responsibility at the heart of their mission, as a guiding principle that defines the way we teach and the focus of our research.

EU GREEN has established a yearly joint procedure for proposals to stimulate research collaboration among our 9 universities. Researchers from EU GREEN partner universities can submit proposals for seed funding. This procedure, implemented by the Work Package Research (WP3), is intended **to leverage cooperation between researchers and create new or consolidate existing scientific relationships**. Its vision is to **build robust scientific communities among the EU GREEN universities.**

The present call is inclusive of all research disciplines and topics, but the topic of the proposals should be linked with the 6 EU GREEN cluster thematics and the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The proposals should clearly explain those links.

Synergies with activities developed in EU GREEN's joint educational program (WP2), or innovation and entrepreneurship for sustainability (WP4), or Science for society and the EU GREEN hub of external partners (WP5), or Healthy and sustainable Campus (WP8) are a plus.

This call will support three types of key action

1. Incentive for collaborative research projects	2. Researcher mobility program	3. EU GREEN scientific conferences

2. Expected proposals

2.1 Incentive for collaborative research projects

This action should support concrete exploratory collaborative activities by research teams with single or multiple disciplines that put forward the complementarity of competences and approaches to build other bigger projects. Those activities could facilitate travel and networking, information sharing,

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gaining access to data, preparing a larger publication on research outcomes, lead to the application to larger projects or to the creation of new sub-group etc.

The projects must:

- Include at least three EU GREEN partners,
- Be relevant to EU GREEN cluster topic(s),
- Be completed within two years or less,
- Not exceed a total budget €20,000 for the whole project,
- Respond to sustainability challenges at the European or global level,

Each proposal must have one designated Principal Investigator (PI) at one of the EU GREEN partner universities and one local project coordinator in charge at each of the participating member institutions.

Special attention during the selection process will be given to proposals:

- □ Involving the participation of early career researchers[1]
- □ Seeding in the future a larger project,
- □ Synergies with activities developed in EU GREEN's joint educational program (WP2) or innovation and entrepreneurship for sustainability (WP4) or Science for society and EU GREEN hub of external partners (WP5) or Healthy and sustainable Campus (WP8)

2.2 Researcher Mobility Program

The program finances outgoing mobility towards EU GREEN universities. It is expected from the research visits to either launch or reinforce research cooperation between EU GREEN institutions on an individual (researchers), intermediate (teams/medium scale projects) or institutional level (research centres/large scale projects, PHD schools etc.). Max €2,000 per person per mobility will be granted to cover travel costs and related expenses as accommodation and food during the mobility period.

The mobility must comply with internal regulations at each partner university. Mobilities will be funded only towards EU GREEN universities and for participation in project activities. Both the visiting fellow and the host researcher shall be actively implicated in the project's realisation during the visit. The support of the project by a host researcher and host research centre is mandatory.

2.3 EU GREEN scientific conferences

This action should support the organisation of scientific conferences aligned with EU GREEN sustainability main theme and/or the cluster's scope. These funds can be used to either cover operating costs or support the travel of lecturers and/or participants.

- It will be granted up to €10,000 Euros for their organisation.
- The conference should be organised in one of the 9 EU GREEN universities and should forecast a detailed communication plan.
- The budget may include the travel fees of the EU GREEN researchers to come to the conference.

[1] Early career researchers are understood as follows: master students, PhD students, those who finished their doctoral thesis less than 8 years ago.

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As a result, indexed conference proceedings will be asked.

3. Funding

At the application stage, each project will need to fill **a detailed budget.** The template of the budget form will be provided to the applicants. **The maximum budget allocated per project, based on the real costs declared in the detailed budget, will be split between involved partners**. Each university will finance the expenses of its own participating researchers. The project may include external partners, but they will be non-eligible for direct funding.

The co-funding of activities from other sources is possible and encouraged. But the project PI should pay attention to avoid European double funding (i.e. the same expenditure cannot be allocated twice to European funds). For example, the beneficiary cannot benefit from this program and from Horizon Europe or Erasmus+ funds for the same activities.

The eligible costs should be related to the structuring of research. **No research per se cost will be allowed (i.e research consumables, research materials or equipment or publications are not allowed).**

The contacts for the budgetary follow-up in each university will be provided to the laureates after the notification. Specific financial and economic rules can be included in each University. That's why **it is requested to share the budget distribution with each internal EU Green office from each university before submission.**

Type of activities	
Travel and subsistence expenses: airfare (economy class), train, car rental, lodging, meals, catering, visas, etc.	**eligible**
Costs of hosting : - **Seminars** - **conferences** - **workshops (e.g., venue rental, catering, lodging, etc.)**	**eligible**
Other goods, works and services requested to meet the projects objectives	**eligible**
Internships & student assistant costs	**eligible**
Publications (related to collaborative research) costs, including Open Access fees	not eligible
Internal invoicing for access to research infrastructures	not eligible
Subcontracting	not eligible
Scientific equipment	not eligible
Fellowships, scholarships for theses	not eligible
Website development	not eligible
Entertainment costs	not eligible
Office supply and furniture	not eligible
Indirect costs	not eligible

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4. Characteristics of the projects

The research collaborative projects (action 1) and the conferences (action 3) shall make clear efforts towards **gender balance**. They should aim to have an even, 50/50 participation rate of both men and women amongst teams and in leading roles. The number of men and women in the project must be provided in the application, and the position of the people in the project must be mentioned (either PI, local coordinator or participant).

The EU GREEN alliance is about sustainability. To raise awareness of the carbon impact of the activities, researchers should estimate the carbon footprint **of the mobilities implemented in their projects**, e.g., by using the online simulator "Labos 1point5". An assessment should be provided with the application form (but will not be evaluated).

5. Evaluation

The proposals must have the support of at least one EU GREEN cluster. Each cluster will formulate an opinion on how the projects submitted fit into the cluster's activities and scope, in order to show its relevance to the cluster's activities and to the work done together by the applicants and the cluster. The text shall be 1000 signs max spaces not included.[2] WP3 team will send the relevant applications to the clusters.
The following criteria will be utilised for project assessment (out of 80 for actions 1 and 3, and out of 40 for action 2):

For all actions: (/25)

	Criteria	Max.score
•	Relevance of the project for EU GREEN mission and vision and convincing argumentation of the EU GREEN added value of the intended collaboration	/10
•	Relation to cluster topics and number of clusters involved in the project	/10
•	Relation to other WPs	/5
	TOTAL	**/25**

For actions 1 and 3: (/55)

	Criteria	Max. score
•	Scientific excellence	/15

[2] The scope of Cluster 4 might be subject to modifications.

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• Participation of Early Career Researchers (max.10 points), graded as follows Participation of 3 ECR at least: 5/10 Participation of more than 3 ECR: from 5 to 7/10 Participation of more than 3 ECR + role as PI or local coordinator: from 7 to 10/10	/10
• Number of EU GREEN partners universities involved and degree of involvement of alliance partners	/10
• Leverage potential or sustainability of the collaboration (for action 2.3)	/10
• Gender balance and gender dimension. A 50/50 repartition will lead to a 10/10 mark. Inequality in both ways will decrease the mark proportionally. See below the grid	/10
TOTAL (/55 + common criteria)	**/80**

Gender repartition in relation to the total number of participants	**Grade**
50/50	10/10
60/40	7/10
70/30	5/10
80/20	3/10
90/10	1/10

Example:
30 members in the project, 17 women, 13 men = 7/10
22 participants in the project, 5 men, 17 women = 3/10

For action 2 (/15)

Criteria	**Max. score**
A detailed programme of the activities to be developed during the visit.	5 points
The expected outcomes of the mobility visit and next collaboration steps planned after the visit (i.e. visits regarding application to competitive funding)	6 points
Participation of early career researchers (PhD and Postdoc)	4 points
TOTAL	**15 points**

In case of a tie, priorities will be given to projects with
(a) early career researchers, and if there is still a tie then
(b) number of participating partners.

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6. Submission

Proposals must be submitted by email at eugreenwp3@univ-angers.fr before the call deadline.

The object of your email must be: [Main cluster] - [Project acronym]- Application.

Example: I'm submitting a project in the frame of cluster 4 and cluster 5, but with a main link to cluster 4. Its acronym is SUN. The object of the email is Cluster 4 – SUN – Application

It will not be possible to submit a project after the deadline on the **02nd of November 2024 at 10 pm CET.** Projects received after the deadline will not be taken into account.

Projects must be submitted in English.

The application must contain:

- ➔ The application form,
- ➔ The detailed budget,
- ➔ The carbon footprint assessment of the mobilities
- ➔ The CV of the PI or the CV of the visiting fellow (max 4 pages)

7. Evaluation Process

The cluster members will be responsible for providing an explanation of how the projects submitted fit into the cluster's activities and scope during week 44 or 45 (the date is up to the clusters). See here the existing projects and topics of each cluster.

The evaluation must be forwarded to eugreenwp3@univ-angers.fr **before the deadline. Participation in the clusters' meetings must not be a criterion of evaluation.** This evaluation will be provided to the Joint Research Committee, who oversees the final evaluation and selection of 9 projects.

8. Timeline

Presentation of the call	At the ATU Research week in June 2024
Application open	2nd of September 2024
1st online information session	3rd of September 2024 from 10 am to 11 am CET
2nd online information session	10th of October 2024 from 10 am to 11 am CET
Application close	**2th of November 2024, 10 PM CET**
Clusters will provide an opinion on how the projects submitted fit into the cluster's activities and scope to show the relevance and the work done together by the applicants and the cluster. WP3 team will send the relevant applications to the clusters.	Week 45/46 It's up to the clusters to get organised to set up the meeting and the redaction of the opinion.
Deadline to send to WP3 the cluster opinions	**November 15th 2024, 10 PM CET**
Joint Research commission – Seed funding selection	**05th of December 2024 from 2 pm to 4 pm CET**
Notification to applicants	Before the 30th of December 2024
Latest date for projects to start	1st of January 2025
Latest date for project to end	31st of December 2026

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Final report due	31st of January 2027

Below is the list of cluster leaders. **We strongly recommend each project PI to inform the cluster leader of its project and to integrate the regular cluster's meetings.**

CLUSTER	CONTACT
Cluster 1 Emerging paradigms for health and wellbeing	Mariana Muresan: mmuresan@uoradea.ro Tomina Saveanu: tomina.saveanu@gmail.com
Cluster 2 Agriculture, food and environmental sustainability	Elena Maestri: elena.maestri@unipr.it Federico Righi: federico.righi@unipr.it
Cluster 3 Engineering and technology for sustainable development	Ulrich Krause: ulrich.krause@ovgu.de
Cluster 4 Sustainable tourism for cultural and natural heritage	Junwei Yu: junwei.yu@univ-angers.fr
Cluster 5 Education sciences for sustainable development	Assunçao Folque: mafm@uevora.pt
Cluster 6 Challenges in ecosystem biodiversity and function, A macroregional evaluation	Victor Rolo: rolo@unex.es

9. Reporting

Technical report:

A final report must be submitted within 30 days after the end of the project. A template will be provided by the WP3 coordinator. The reports will be submitted by email at the following address: eugreenwp3@univ-angers.fr which will then disclose the reports to the JRC for a general assessment of the "Joint research activity" initiative.

Financial report:

A financial report must be submitted by project, following the financial template provided in the application form.

All results and dissemination materials must acknowledge the funding received by EU GREEN according to these guidelines (6.1 Official communication guidelines).

10. Results

Ownership or joint ownership of results, the transfer of results, the dissemination of results and the access rights are governed by the EU GREEN Grant Agreement and the EU GREEN Consortium Agreement.

11. Communication

The EU GREEN logo and "funded by the European Union" logo must appear in the communication materials of your project. If your project is selected, the WP3 coordinating team will provide you with specific information.

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12. Questions

If you have any question on this procedure, please send it to eugreenwp3@univ-angers.fr. A Q&A section is open on the EU GREEN WP3 website: access it here. The info sessions will be recorded (see calendar), and the video will be made available on the WP3 website.

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