



## Hokkaido University and University of Massachusetts Amherst Call for joint research seed fund proposals Guidelines for applicants

Hokkaido University (HU) and University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass Amherst, UMA) seek to grow their collaboration by establishing the *HU – UMA Joint Research Seed Fund*. The aim of the program is to support the development of new collaborations through organised research visits, collaborative meetings, workshops, or seminars, with HU and UMA contributing seed funds. Up to ten Principal Investigators (PIs) will be funded in 2025, with five to be awarded at Hokkaido and the other five at UMass Amherst. It is expected that these initial projects will lead to long-term collaborations, institutional and research relationships, and when applicable, generate publications, exhibitions, and/or external funding for ongoing collaboration.

Project proposals are open for all research areas, however, proposals should articulate connection with one of the following themes:

- Advanced Materials
- Applied Life Sciences
- Renewable Agriculture
- Sustainability
- Humanities and Societies

Details of the partnerships between Hokkaido University and University of Massachusetts Amherst's can be found here: <https://www.global.hokudai.ac.jp/global/overseas-partnerships/strategic-international-partnerships/hu-umass-amherst-collab/>

### Scope of Program

This seed funding program supports HU and UMA collaborators to convene a research visit, collaborative meeting, a workshop or research seminar in Hokkaido or Amherst, or submission of joint research papers for existing collaborators. Proposals should be led by a HU and/or UMA faculty member to establish a new or develop an emerging collaboration. Applications from researchers with well-established collaborations will only be considered if they clearly articulate how the use of this fund will develop their collaboration into a new area of research or significantly grow the network of collaborating researchers.

There is no limit to the number of academic staff members who can participate in proposals, with the involvement of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) strongly encouraged. Interdisciplinary proposals, involving researchers from different disciplines and faculties, are also strongly encouraged.

External collaborators (including other researchers in the USA, Japan, internationally, or those working in non-academic contexts such as industry or government) cannot lead an application but can be involved in the proposed activities at their own expense.

Adherence to respective equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies are an important feature of this scheme to ensure that all participants can do their best work, thrive, and succeed. Applicant teams should consider how they can take meaningful steps in their future collaborations to foster an environment that values, supports and respects a diverse range of views, knowledge and experiences. Applicants should consider EDI as it applies to gender, indigenous peoples, disabilities, career stages and sectors.

### Funding Available

Up to **five PIs from each university** will be funded. Each of the successful PIs will be awarded up to **\$8,000 USD / JPY equivalent**. A successful selection in either university does not guarantee a corresponding award in the other university.

PIs should request funds based on the scope of their proposed activities, providing a justification for the costs. Each institution will pay funds directly to PIs. Funds can be combined with other funding resources unless the other funding sources have restrictions for combined use.

Projects should be planned to start from 1 April 2025, with grant spending completed by 31 March 2026 for HU, and 31 August 2026 for UMA PIs. Funds not spent by the end of the funding period will be transferred back to either HU or UMA so that unspent balances can be reallocated.

The summary below outlines the eligible and ineligible costs to be included in the budget, noting that fund administration at HU and UMA reserve the right to determine the eligibility of costs.

Eligible costs	Ineligible costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel costs for the PIs (faculty) and other HU or UMA researchers named in the proposal, including research associate/postdoctoral fellows. This includes flights, accommodation, and subsistence. Funds can include outward travel costs to visit HU/UMA and/or inward ones to invite HU/UMA researchers named in the proposal.</li> <li>• Other costs associated with organising workshops, seminars and meetings between the two universities</li> <li>• International journal submission fees for joint research papers</li> <li>• Software purchase required for research collaborations between the two universities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research costs, including consumables and existing staff time</li> <li>• Faculty salaries, including summer salaries and costs to buy out of teaching or other assigned responsibilities</li> <li>• Directly incurred staff, for example, Research/Teaching Assistants</li> <li>• Scholarships, tuition fees and honoraria for students</li> <li>• Conference attendance fees</li> </ul>

## Eligibility Criteria

Applications must be led by a HU and/or UMA faculty member and include a letter acknowledging a collaboration commitment by a counterpart at the other institution (UMA/HU) to participate in the proposal.

PIs must hold an appointment at Hokkaido University or University of Massachusetts Amherst that meet the following requirements at the time of application and for the duration of the award:

- Faculty; and
- Preferably full-time.

Faculty with joint appointments between HU or UMA and another institution should ensure that their appointing institution(s)/organization(s) are aware of their application and safeguard against any possible conflicts of interest, etc.

## Evaluation of Projects

The proposals will be reviewed according to the following criteria

- **Alignment with themes.** Does the proposal clearly articulate a connection to one of the five themes described above? What is the strength of that connection?
- **Collaborator complementarity:** What is the added value of the new or emerging collaboration? How does the proposed activity combine mutual areas of interest and strength?
- **Potential impact:** What desired outcomes do the planned activities set out to achieve? What are the anticipated benefits of the proposal or its desired outcomes to local or international communities?
- **Capacity for future collaboration/funding:** What is the potential for this proposal to foster ongoing collaboration, and through what mechanisms? How well does the proposed collaboration plan to access or pursue external funding?

## Reporting and Publications

Successful PIs will be required to submit a report within one month of the formal completion date of the project. This report needs to outline the activities undertaken, grant expenditure breakdown, opportunities that have been identified, and future planned actions for the research program.

Any publications (e.g. abstracts, articles) or dissemination of research (e.g. public presentations) arising from activities supported by this Grant should acknowledge financial assistance received from the HU-UMA Joint Research Seed Fund. Copies of the publications and/or information about the presentations should be included in the above report or notification provided to the Office for International Collaborations at HU and International Programs Office at University of Massachusetts Amherst. The title for acknowledgement is "HU-UMA Joint Research Seed Fund, provided by Hokkaido University and University of Massachusetts Amherst."

## Change of Investigator and Extensions

If circumstances change – for example, the PI or a team member leaves the project – awardees must provide notification to the Office for International Collaborations at HU and International Programs Office at UMA. All changes must be approved in writing.

## Call Timeline

Call opens	25 November 2024
Application deadline	6 January 2025 at 17:00 (for each university)
Announcement of selections	February 2025
Funding periods	1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 (HU) 1 April 2025 to 31 August 2026 (UMA)

## Application Process

Applications written on the designated application form should be submitted to PI's home institution (HU or UMA) via email by **6 January 2025 at 17:00 (Hokkaido and Amherst)**. Applications should be written in English and for an audience proficient, but not expert, in the field.

## Contacts

For enquiries on the HU-UMA Joint Research Seed Fund or potential counterpart researcher matching, please contact either of the following contact points:

### HU PIs

Taena Uemura, Senior Academic Specialist (International), Office for International Collaborations, Hokkaido University

Email: [taenau@oia.hokudai.ac.jp](mailto:taenau@oia.hokudai.ac.jp) / [grants@research.hokudai.ac.jp](mailto:grants@research.hokudai.ac.jp)

### UMA PIs

Eric Wirth, Manager of Global Partnerships, Vice Provost's Office International Programs Office, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Email: [ewirth@umass.edu](mailto:ewirth@umass.edu)

**Application Form**  
 HU-UMA Joint Research Seed Fund 2025-2026

**Applicant Information**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
<b>Department</b>	<b>College/School/Faculty/Research Center</b>	<b>Email</b>

**Proposal**

<b>Please identify your collaborator and secure their commitment in principle with a letter of acknowledgement.</b>			
<b>Host Faculty Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Campus</b>
<b>Outline the initial contact with a faculty partner at Hokkaido University/University of Massachusetts Amherst.</b>			
<b>Duration of Activity</b>			
	<b>Proposed Start Date</b>	<b>Proposed End Date</b>	
<b>Provide a short description of the proposed partnership. (750 words total for this question and the next one on outcomes).</b>			
<b>Expected outcomes.</b>			

### Abstract (75 words)

Provide a short abstract of proposal (no more than 75 words) that, if funded, could be used for publicity and notice.

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### Budget Proposal – Cost Estimates

Please attach a project budget in spreadsheet form, indicating any co-funding or in-kind support from your College/School/Unit or project partner(s). Detail all financial implications of the proposed activities (e.g.: software, travel expenses, accommodation, etc.).

### Supporting Documents (Optional)

You may attach additional information that helps to explain your research or clarify an aspect of your application. This can include, but is not limited to, images, diagrams, tables or graphs.

### Letter of Acknowledgement

Please include a letter acknowledging from your Hokkaido University/University of Massachusetts partner confirming their support of your proposal.

### Sign & Date

Signature	Date

## Report Form

HU-UMA Joint Research Seed Fund 2025-2026

<b>Dates</b>		
<b>Venue (if any)</b>		
<b>HU PI</b>	Name	
	Job Title	
	Affiliation	
	E-mail Address	
<b>UMA PI</b>	Name	
	Job Title	
	Affiliation	
	E-mail Address	
<b>Overview of the Funded Activities</b>		
<p>*Project goals, the extent of which the aims and objectives were achieved, etc.            **Any URLs, photos, figures, workshop flier, etc. for reference can be added here or separated documents.</p>		
<b>Outcomes from the Funded Activities</b>		
<p>*Planned publications, grant applications, co-teaching module planning, etc.</p>		
<b>Report on the Fund</b>		
Total		USD or JPY