Seed Funding

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Administrative questions, application process

1.1 Who can apply for funding and coordinate the project?

Seed funding projects must be prepared and coordinated by an early-stage career researcher from one Una Europa university and must involve early-stage career researchers from at least two additional Una Europa universities.

1.2 How can I check if my planned project falls within the thematic scope of seed funding?

The thematic scope is to be interpreted broadly, inclusively and in an inter- and transdisciplinary way. We are open to different projects which are linked to the four main areas: digital mind, digital communities, digital governance and digital economy.

1.3 Is it possible to extend the duration of project?

The duration of a proposed activity can be up to 8 months. The proposed activities should be conducted between February 2022 and September 2022. Reports must be prepared by the end of September 2022. This date cannot be changed due to the Polish National Agency of Academic Exchange regulations.

1.4 Where can I find the application form?

The online application form can be accessed here and the call for applications and templates can be accessed on the Una Europa website here.

1.5 Can I still edit my proposal after submission?

Yes, you can still edit your proposal after submitting until 1 December 2021, 17:00 CET. Previous versions will be overwritten and only the last saved proposal will be considered during the evaluation.

1.6 Is a proposal accepted if the same proposal (or a minimum variation with respect to the original proposal) has previously/already been funded by a different institution?

No, a proposal is not eligible if the same proposal or a minimum variation has already been funded by a different institution or through different means of funding.

1.7 Are there any guidelines for the application in relation to, for example, structure, word-count, subheadings, etc.?

The application form is structured as follows:

- The project description is divided in the following sections:
    - Abstract (max. 250 words)
    - Quality: Description, plan and goals of the envisaged project (500 words)
    - Quality: Innovative and interdisciplinary approach (300 words)

- o Quality: Strengths of the team (300 words)
- o Contribution to the goals of Una Europa: Capacity to contribute to goals of deepening cooperation between the Una Europa universities in the longer term (500 words)
- o Impact: External stakeholders and external funding (300 words)
- o Impact: Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (300 words)
- o Impact: Application of Open Science principles (300 words)
- o Implementation: Budget in relation to the work plan (500 words)
- o References
- Timeframe for the proposed activity in pdf or as an image.
- Detailed budget calculation in Excel. A template is provided.
- Endorsement letters of the respective Dean or Faculty Head from each of the Una Europa universities participating in the proposal, declaring the support of the envisaged project. A template is provided.

Instructions for text entry: Copy text from your Word documents first into Notepad (or Notepad ++) and then into the longer text entry fields. Upon submission you will have access to your file in PDF to check all text is displayed correctly. This is the file which the evaluators will receive.

1.8 Can I include tables or other documents (letters of interests, milestones, deliverables) instead of images in the dedicated optional upload section?

Letters of interest may be included in the section of endorsement letters. There is another section where you may upload three images, tables or graphs of choice to support the project description. Additional text won't be considered by the evaluators if uploaded through this section.

1.9 Should I prepare any documents in hard copies?

No. All documents should be sent via the online application form.

2.   Explanation of specific terms, definitions etc.

2.1 What is the definition of early-stage career researcher?

An early-stage career researcher is defined by having obtained a PhD degree and having less than 8 years of research experience after obtaining the PhD.

2.2 What is the definition of 'Project Coordinator'?

The Project Coordinator (Principal Investigator in the case of academic projects) is the main coordinator of the project. This person submits the application form in the name of all project partners.

When funded, the project coordinator is also responsible

- for communication with Una Europa vzw,
- for the coordination of finances and activities among the project partners,
- for distributing the funds among the project partners according to the financial procedures for funded projects
- for reporting on results and finances

2.3 We would like to apply for Seed Funding, but we were wondering whether it is possible to have thrre academics coordinating the project or if only one is possible?

In administrative terms it is only possible to have one project coordinator. This is similar to how an EU funded project is set up, where there is only one coordinator. However, you are welcome to organize informally how you wish with other academics e.g. to identify a co-lead.

2.4 How will 'contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals' under the impact criterion be evaluated?

As an alliance, Una Europa remains committed to supporting the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs include 17 objectives and 169 targets - integrating economic, social and environmental targets. Bringing together and interacting with all disciplines of knowledge in the fields of Sciences, Social Sciences, Health Sciences, Engineering, Arts and Humanities is necessary to research and teach the connections and interdependencies of the 17 SDGs and to generate new interdisciplinary fields of knowledge. Applicants are expected to describe briefly their contribution to one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals in their broadest sense.

2.5 What do the open science principles comprise?

The Una Europa seed funding aligns with the Open Science policy adopted under the Horizon Europe programme, which have the following aims:

- Retaining the intellectual property rights needed to comply with open access obligations
- Requiring research data to be FAIR and open by default
- Sharing research outputs as early and widely as possible
- Engaging and involving citizens, civil society organizations and end-users in co-design and co-creation process and promoting responsible research and innovation.

Applicants are expected to briefly outline their commitments to Open Science policy.

3. Institutions and external partners involved

3.1 Is three partners from Una Europa the absolute minimum?

To be eligible for seed funding, projects must involve early-stage career researchers from at least three Una Europa universities. In the case of bilateral collaborations, Erasmus+ funding for staff mobility may offer a more appropriate source of funding.

3.2 Can a higher education institution that isn't a member of Una Europa be involved?

Third parties are able to participate in seed funding activities, but this will be at their own cost.

4. Budget related questions

4.1 What is the overall budget of the third call for seed funding?

The overall budget for the DIGITALIZED Call for Applications is EUR 153.000. Funding of up to EUR 11,000 can be provided for a project involving academic staff of three Una Europa universities and up to EUR 25,000 for eight Una Europa universities. The following maximum levels apply:

- 3 Una Europa universities: up to EUR 11,000
- 4 Una Europa universities: up to EUR 14,000
- 5 Una Europa universities: up to EUR 17,000
- 6 Una Europa universities: up to EUR 20,000
- 7 Una Europa universities: up to EUR 23,000
- 8 Una Europa universities: up to EUR 25,000

4.2 In what way are applicants expected to design their budget plans? How is the overall funding sum being calculated?

A budget template is foreseen. When your proposal includes physical mobility, e.g. joint fact-finding missions, meetings, workshops etc. at one of the Una Europa universities, funding according to lump sums is being applied.

Applicants are asked in the budget template to indicate the place of the envisaged activity, its duration, the number of participants and the number of travel units. The funding will be calculated for each participant according to the following scheme:

- Travel costs according to the chart below
- EUR 150 per person and day for accommodation, food and daily allowances
- EUR 20 per person and day for organizational support, paid to the coordinating institution. These are expenses related with hosting events such as catering, room bookings, workshop materials etc.

	Berlin	Bologna	Madrid	Paris	Kraków	Edinburgh	Helsinki	Leuven
Berlin	0	275 €	275 €	275 €	275 €	275 €	275 €	275 €
Bologna	275 €	0	275 €	275 €	275 €	275 €	275 €	275 €
Madrid	275 €	275 €	0	275 €	360 €	275 €	360 €	275 €
Paris	275 €	275 €	275 €	0	275 €	275 €	275 €	180 €
Kraków	275 €	275 €	360 €	275 €	0	275 €	275 €	275 €
Edinburgh	275 €	275 €	275 €	275 €	275 €	0	275 €	275 €
Helsinki	275 €	275 €	360 €	275 €	275 €	275 €	0	275 €
Leuven	275 €	275 €	275 €	180 €	275 €	275 €	275	0

When no physical mobility is foreseen, expenses, e.g. the usage and acquisition of software, hardware, equipment or other workshop related materials can be considered for funding (as listed in eligible costs). This can be filled out at the bottom of the template under 'other costs'. The selection committee will check all budget plans for their appropriateness and feasibility.

5.   Eligible costs

5.1 What are eligible costs for seed funding?

- Travel costs, accommodation, daily allowance and organizational support (These maximum costs are automatically calculated via the provided budget template.)
- Funding of temporary staff/subcontracting costs to support the project if these resources are not available within the consortium
- Purchase of software and hardware that is clearly demonstrated to benefit the project and partnership as a whole
- Open access publications when relevant and within the timeframe of the project

All costs must demonstrate how they are in line with the seed funding goals of initiating long-term cooperation across the Una Europa network and designing formats of cooperation which may attract third party funding in the long run.

5.2 What are ineligible costs for seed funding?

The following costs are considered ineligible for seed funding:

- Permanent staff costs
- Proofreading/translation costs
- Conference fees
- Activities duplicated by funding that is otherwise available.

The seed funding is not foreseen as a mechanism to solely fund the participation of academics in conferences. However - if the participation in such a conference is linked to other activities that promote the seed funding goals of initiating long-term cooperation across the Una Europa network – the cost is considered eligible.

5.3 Can the budget be used to purchase hardware/software, equipment or services?

Hardware / software, equipment and services may only be purchased if it can be demonstrated in the proposal that the project can only be realized through the necessary hardware / software, equipment and services and if these cannot be acquired by any other means of funding. The purchase of hardware / software, equipment and services needs to be functional to the proposed research activities. If hardware / software, equipment and services can be rented for realizing the project purpose and it is below the cost of purchasing it, it should be rented instead of being purchased.

5.4 How should the project report be prepared?

Successful applicants will be provided with a template for reporting which contains two parts; the activities report and the financial report. For the financial report you are required to submit the latest approved budget supplemented with the real costs. To justify the lump sums for travel, you are requested to provide the number of colleagues who actually traveled and a signed participation list of the event. This will need to be prepared by **30 September 2022.**

6.   Evaluation process

6.1 How are proposals evaluated?

Each partner university has nominated an expert to sit on the Selection Committee. They will review the projects according to the criteria mentioned in the call text: quality, contribution to the goals of Una Europa and the thematic scope of the call, impact and implementation. During an online meeting the Selection Committee comes to an agreement on the final ranking.

After this, the Una Europa Board of Directors member from Jagiellonian University, Prof. Stanislaw Kistryn and Una Europa Secretary-General, Ms. Emily Palmer will acknowledge the decision of the Selection Committee.

During the week of 24 January 2022 applicants will be informed with the results of the evaluation. Coordinators of funded projects are requested to confirm the acceptance of the funds and the launch of projects by 31 January 2022.

7.   Budget flow

7.1 How will the budget be distributed?

The budget flows are organized as shown below. The operational staff at the coordinating universities are requested to keep track of all monetary flows and report to Una Europa vzw upon request. Beneficiaries are required to submit an Excel sheet of the latest approved budget, completed with real costs. If a project runs exclusively on lump sums, no invoices have to be collected and sent to Una Europa vzw. In the case of the section 'other costs' in the budget template, the coordinating university is requested to keep invoices and include them in the financial report.

Project XY

UNA Europa vzw

UNA Europa vzw. sends approved project budget entirely to coordinating university

Coordinating university sends back evaluation (PI) and budget report (financial administrator) as well as unused funds after project completion

Coordinating university sends the share of the budget to be spent by participating universities; after project completion participating university sends unused shares back to coord. univ.

Participating university A

Coordinating University

Principal financial administrator, keeps track of money flows and reports to UNA Europa vzw

Participating university B

Distributes money according to own practices (upfront, cash etc.)

Evaluation report

Participating academics

PI

Participating academics

Participating academics