



**Berlin
University
Alliance**



University of Melbourne and Berlin University Alliance Call for Joint Research Workshop Proposals Guidelines for Applicants

Berlin University Alliance (BUA) and University of Melbourne (UoM) are pleased to announce a joint call for workshop proposals.

The aim of the call is to support the development of competitive proposals for external research funding through joint research workshops, with the University of Melbourne and the Berlin University Alliance (Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, and Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin) contributing matching funds. Up to four workshops will be funded under this call, with total funding of up to €10,000/AUD16,000 per project.

Each workshop must be jointly led by one eligible Principal Investigator from the University of Melbourne and one eligible Principal Investigator from a Berlin University Alliance member institution. It is expected that these initial projects will contribute to longer-term research collaborations and institutional relationships and will result in the preparation and submission of an external funding proposal. All workshops must take place before November 2026.

The call is open to all research areas and disciplines.

Scope of scheme

The program supports University of Melbourne and Berlin University Alliance collaborators to convene a joint research workshop in Melbourne or Berlin with the explicit aim of preparing and submitting an external funding proposal. Proposals must be jointly led by at least one eligible Principal Investigator (PI) from the University of Melbourne and at least one eligible Principal Investigator (PI) from a Berlin University Alliance member institution who seek to establish a new collaboration or further develop an emerging collaboration that will be supported by external funding.

Applications from researchers with well-established collaborations will only be considered where applicants clearly articulate how the proposed workshop will enable a substantive step change, such as developing a new research direction, consolidating a broader research group, or positioning the collaboration for a new external funding opportunity.

There is no limit to the number of academic staff members who may participate in a proposal. The involvement of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and graduate researchers (PhD candidates) is strongly encouraged. For the purposes of the fund, an ECR is within 10 years of the conferral date

of their PhD, excluding periods of career interruptions. Interdisciplinary proposals, involving researchers from different disciplines and faculties, are also strongly encouraged.

External collaborators, including academic researchers from other institutions or researchers working in non-academic contexts such as industry, government or the not-for-profit sector, may participate in proposed workshops but may not lead applications and are expected to cover their own costs.

Adherence to the respective equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies of the participating institutions is an important feature of this scheme. Applicant teams should consider how they will foster inclusive, respectful and supportive research environments and take meaningful steps in their future collaborations to value diverse perspectives, knowledge systems and experiences. Consideration of EDI should include, but not be limited to, gender, Indigenous peoples, disability, career stage and sector.

Funding available

Up to four workshops will be funded under this call.

Each successful project may receive up to €10,000/AUD16,000 in total funding, jointly contributed by the two institutions. Within this total:

- BUA based researchers may request up to €5,000 per project.
- UoM based researchers may request up to AUD8,000 per project.

Funding may be requested to support costs directly related to the delivery of the joint research workshop, including the travel of participating researchers. Principal Investigators should request funds in line with the scope of the proposed workshop activities and provide a clear justification for all requested costs.

Each institution will pay funds directly to its own researchers in accordance with its internal financial and administrative requirements.

All funded workshops and associated travel must be completed before November 2026.

For BUA institutions:

- All travel related receipts and expense statements must be submitted to the respective BUA institution's travel office by 05.10.2026 at the latest. Travel expenses will be calculated according to the German Federal Travel Expenses Act (Bundesreisekostengesetz).
- All other invoices for BUA-funded activities must be submitted to the respective BUA institution's finance department by 14.11.2026 at the latest.

Funds not expended within the funding period may not be carried forward and will be managed in accordance with the respective institutional policies of the University of Melbourne and the Berlin University Alliance.

Eligible costs

The summary below outlines the eligible and ineligible costs to be included in the budget, noting that BUA and UoM reserve the right to determine the eligibility of costs.

Eligible costs	Ineligible costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel costs for the PIs and other UoM or BUA member institutions' researchers named in the proposal, including graduate researchers. This includes flights, accommodation, and daily allowance. Other costs associated with organising workshops and meetings (e.g., printing costs, catering, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research costs, including consumables and existing staff time. Replacement research and/or teaching costs. Directly incurred staff, for example, Research Assistants. Scholarships, tuition fees and honoraria Conference attendance

Eligibility criteria

Each application must be led by at least one PI from a BUA institution and at least one PI from Melbourne.

Melbourne PIs

Melbourne PIs must hold an appointment at the University of Melbourne that meets the following requirements at the time of application and for the duration of the award:

- Academic Level A6 or higher; and
- 0.5 FTE or higher.

Honorary employees whose primary academic affiliation is the University of Melbourne are eligible to lead an application but are not eligible to be awarded funds. Therefore, either:

- Their primary employer must have entered into an agreement with the University to support the Australian funding of the collaborative activity (for example, they are an employee at an affiliated MRI which has agreed to provide funding to the PI); or
- They agree to participate at their own expense (for example, they hold an emeritus position).

Honorary employees with primary academic affiliation elsewhere are not eligible to apply.

Additional information:

- All applications must be endorsed by the PI's Head of Department/School/Institute through the authority to submit form
- Melbourne PIs must not have outstanding Progress Reports or Final Reports from any other University of Melbourne Researcher Development Scheme.

BUA PIs

Researchers eligible for BUA funding under this Call must be permanent or contracted employees of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin or Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin at an Academic Level ((Junior) Professors, Research Group

Leaders, research fellow or equivalent) at time of application and must maintain this status for the duration of the proposed activities. Participating doctoral and post-doctoral fellows must hold a position or a fellowship/scholarship during the activities.

Evaluation of projects

The proposals will be reviewed according to the following criteria:

- **Project design and rationale:** How clearly presented and justified is the basis for, and design of, the workshop? How does the proposed workshop assist with establishing new and emerging research collaborations between BUA and the University of Melbourne? If applicable, what are the anticipated benefits of involving Early Career Researchers and graduate researchers (PhD candidates)?
- **Collaborator complementarity:** What is the added value of the new or emerging collaboration? How does the proposed workshop 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 workshop or its desired outcomes to local or international communities?
- **Pathway to external funding submission:** How clear and feasible is the proposed pathway from the workshop to the preparation and submission of an external funding proposal? Are the identified funding opportunities appropriate to the collaboration and the scope of the proposed activities?

Reporting and Publications

Successful Principal Investigators will be required to submit a report within three months of the formal completion date of the project. The report must outline the workshop activities undertaken, provide a breakdown of grant expenditure, and confirm the submission an external funding proposal arising from the workshop, including details of the funding scheme(s) applied to. Where proposal outcomes are not yet known, applicants should indicate anticipated decision timelines. Principal Investigators may also be requested to complete a short survey administered by the partner institutions.

Any publications (i.e., abstracts or articles) or dissemination activities (i.e., public presentations) arising from workshops supported under this call must acknowledge the financial support received from the University of Melbourne and the Berlin University Alliance. Copies of publications and/or information about dissemination activities should be included in the final report or provided to the relevant research administration units at each institution. Researchers at the Berlin University Alliance must adhere to the specifics for the use of the funds provided in the guidelines upon the start of funding.

The required acknowledgement wording is:

“This work was supported by the University of Melbourne and the Berlin University Alliance through the Joint Research Workshops scheme. Berlin University Alliance is funded by the BMFT and the state of Berlin under the Excellence Strategy of the Federal Government and the Länder.”

Change of Investigator and Extensions

If circumstances change – for example, the PI or a team member leaves the project – awardees must submit a formal variation request to The Research development Scheme team (RDS) at

UoM and to the Coordinator Joint Partnerships at BUA, Kathinka Rosenkranz.

Extensions may be allowed solely for the UoM budget. All changes must be approved in writing.

Call Timeline

Call opens	19 February 2026
Application deadline	30 March 2026
Outcomes released	April 2026
Start date of awards	1 June 2026
Funding period end date	31 December 2026

Application process

One joint application per project should be submitted via [SmartyGrants](#) by 30 March 2026 at 15:00 AEDT. Applications should be written in English and for an audience proficient, but not expert, in the field.

A copy of the SmartyGrants form is provided as a reference for preparing the application.

Selection process

An evaluation committee from the Berlin University Alliance will review all proposals and provide recommendation to University of Melbourne for endorsement. The committee will rank proposals according to the criteria outlined above and make funding recommendations

Applicants will be notified of the selection committee's decision by end of April 2026.

Contacts

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