OX/BER Research Partnership: Second Call for Seed Funding Proposals

Following the success of the first round of seed funding grants, in which a number of joint projects received a total of 450,000 Euros, the OX/BER Research Partnership is holding a further round of seed funding applications. The aim – as with the first round – is to identify complementary strengths between Oxford and Berlin, to leverage existing, and to develop new, collaborative research which reflects the academic standing and research excellence that exist at each institution.

A key aim of this Call is to support new and innovative research projects to generate third-party funding (ie. pump-priming). The involvement of partners from both Oxford and Berlin is as prerequisite.

If successful, recipients of funding in Oxford and Berlin will be required to abide by the policies and practices of their respective institutions regarding ethical conduct of research, reporting and reimbursement of expenditures.

General Eligibility Criteria

The Call for Proposals is open to any salaried faculty member or equivalent at post-doctoral level from any of the five partner institutions. All disciplines[1] are eligible. Projects must be jointly submitted by at least one faculty member from one of the Berlin partners and one faculty member from one of Oxford's academic divisions and may include additional participation from the other Berlin partner institutions. Additional external partners (in the UK, Germany or internationally) are very welcome, but must be able to make a financial contribution to the project in which they are involved.

Where appropriate applicants are encouraged to seek to achieve gender and diversity dimension balance and to include early- and mid-career researchers within their proposals.

As the aim of the **OX/BER Research Partnership** is to stimulate innovative research and to foster new co-operation, continuation of already concluded or ongoing projects and established research partnerships will not be eligible for this Call, i.e. only new initiatives will be eligible.

Eligible Claims:

- Travel, accommodation and other associated costs for joint workshops as well as academic and graduate researcher exchanges;
- Material costs relating to the proposed collaborative research (as contributions towards laboratory or field-based costs for participating academics and/or graduate researchers);
- Costs associated with the preparation of joint grant proposals to respective national and international funding agencies, philanthropic sponsors or foundations.

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[1] Oxford applicants should normally be a current salaried employee of the collegiate university, holding an academic post (Professor or Associate Professor) or possess a research fellowship awarded competitively and intended to enable the holder to establish an independent research career

Funding Amounts, Number of Awards, Award Duration and Funding Allocation:

The total amount of funding available under the 2019 OX/BER Research Partnership Call is up to 300,000 Euros. Seed Grants (10,000 to 30,000 Euros) will be awarded to new and promising research projects and will be limited to maximum 30,000 Euros in total/per project. Where other contributions are being made by faculties/units/external partners this will be counted as additional to the OX/BER award and has to be displayed as such in the budget distribution.

Proposals must detail how awarded funding will be allocated for the duration of the collaboration, and how it will continue once the funding period is complete. Details as to how the research collaboration will generate third-party funding must also be outlined in the proposal. Seed grant funding will be available from 1st October 2019 and is scheduled to last until December 2020. The Oversight Committee will aim to fund a range of different sized projects.

Evaluation Process

All proposals will be peer-reviewed. The partnership's joint Oversight Committee will make the final funding decision.

The evaluation will take into account the quality, feasibility, and potential of the project, competence and expertise of the team of faculty members involved, cost-effectiveness of the budgetary plan, clear plans to obtain external funding in the future and prospects for sustainability beyond the original term of the Seed Grant. It will also focus on effective communication and cooperation between the faculty in each location, added value of the collaboration as well as the mobility of researchers between Berlin and Oxford.

Selection Criteria

- The extent to which the collaboration combines mutual areas of interest and strength and builds research capacity at Berlin and Oxford;
- The potential for this funding to foster ongoing collaboration that will lead to successful joint grant application(s) involving collaborators in Oxford and Berlin and high-quality journal publications and/or equivalent research outputs.
- The track record of the Berlin and Oxford Principal Investigators

Recipients Requirements

- **Project timeline:** All expenses should be incurred and activities completed at the latest by the end of 2020.
- **Progress reports:** Recipients must report briefly after six months from the start of the award on the activities outlined in the grant and in a final report until project completion. This includes reporting on any progress towards obtaining further external support for the project (also after the actual funding period).
- **Acknowledgement**: Recipients are expected to acknowledge the support of the **OX/BER Research Partnership** in any publications or presentations. These should be listed in the progress reports.
- **Payment of the grant:** The payment and post-award financial management will be administered through the Lead Applicants' institutions.

Submission Documents

The completed Seed Grant application form must include:

- The financial budget including amounts specified by category;
- Short CVs of PIs (max. 2 pages), a list of no more than five of the applicant's most important publications) and a list of prospective recipients on both sides;
- Evidence of submission approval by relevant Deans (Berlin) or Heads of Department (Oxford)[2];
- A narrative project description of no more than 3 pages, including:
  - An overview description of the field of study and general intellectual context of the project suitable for a non-specialist audience; please specifically address the aspects that make the project innovative and promising in a long-term perspective.
  - An outline of the proposed project and its specific objectives as well as its operation and functions.
  - A detailed description of the funding contributions from sponsoring units and a detailed plan for the project's long-term third-party-funding situation beyond the funding obtained through the Seed Grant. Please indicate additional financial support from sponsoring units or external grants.
  - A list of any additional resources (office or laboratory space, library access etc.) required for the project and the availability of these resources.

Key Dates

- Application window: 2nd May 2019 until 27th June 2019 at 11:59 am (Berlin local time)
- Outcome notification: Late September 2019
- Funding Activity: 1st October 2019 to 31st December 2020

Submission and Contact Information

A single, jointly prepared application must be submitted in English via the application portal (*see link on BUA website*) to the BUA, by 11:59am on 27th June 2019 (Berlin local time).

Any questions regarding the application process and format should please be addressed to:

Anna Cramme (anna.cramme@charite.de), Project Manager for the Oxford-Berlin Research Partnership (Berlin University Alliance)

or

Alasdair MacDonald (alasdair.macdonald@admin.ox.ac.uk), Oxford Coordinator for the Oxford-Berlin Research Partnership, University of Oxford

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[2] A short letter of support from the relevant Dean or Head of Department (or in the case of an Oxford Head of Department making an application, by the Head of division), indicating the institution's knowledge of the application and overall willingness to support the activity. Any content of support letters is not included in the evaluation of the projects.