



**Circle U.**  
European University Alliance

4 June 2025

# Info Session

Circle U. Seed-funding scheme  
2025 Call for applications



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# Introduction

# About Circle U.

- Circle U. is a **research-intensive and interdisciplinary European University Alliance** composed by nine universities, half a million students and 65k staff
- Our aim is to provide **outstanding education, research, and innovation** for sustainable, democratic and healthier societies
- How?
  - 4 Knowledge Hubs, 4 Platforms and the Open Campus
  - Seed-funding scheme, ED&I initiative and Mobility programmes
  - Joint courses
  - Summer schools



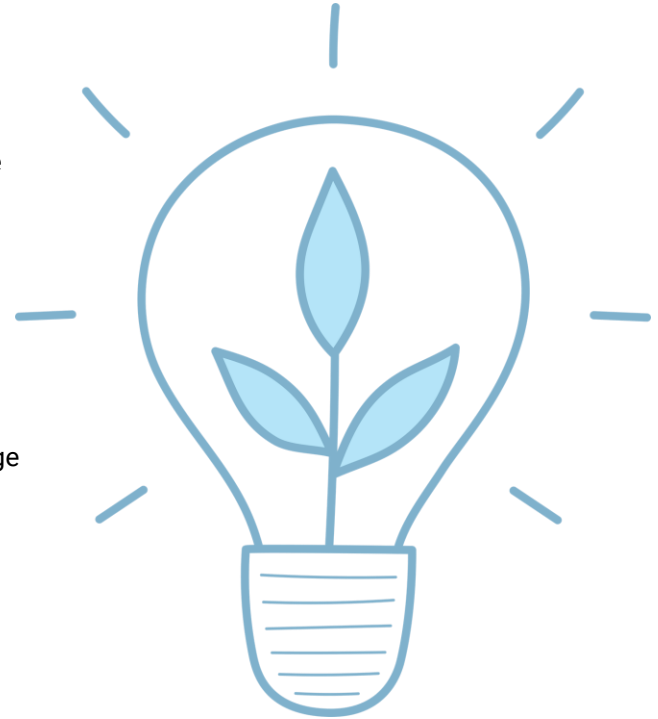
# The Seed-funding scheme

## ▪ Purpose:

- Foster **new collaborations across Circle U.** nine universities to embed the alliance within our universities' communities
- Support smaller-scale, bottom-up projects that strengthen the alliance and contribute to the initiation of **long-term collaborative activities**
- Encourage **educational, research, and student-led projects**

## ▪ Scope:

- Advance Circle U. **strategic research and teaching themes** linked to the Knowledge Hubs and joint Platforms – but not only – and consolidate our joint ecosystem
- Develop high-quality educational and research activities with a focus on **interdisciplinarity, multilingualism, interculturality and student-led innovation**
- Scale up **joint educational offers** delivered through the Open Campus
- Engage with Circle U. [associated partners](#) and other stakeholders
- Increase mobility and **international exposure** across our universities
- Foster sustainability, talent development, entrepreneurship, societal engagement and equity, diversity, and inclusion





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# Eligibility

# Eligibility criteria and selection

- **Eligible applicants:** academic and research staff, administrative/professional staff, and students from Circle U. member universities
- **Project requirements:**
  - Involve staff or students from at least **three Circle U. member universities**
  - The **Project Lead** must be employed/enrolled for the full project duration and hold a position enabling them to manage the grant independently and supervise funding and expenditures
- **Evaluation:**
  - Proposals are evaluated by a **selection committee** of 10-15 academics from Circle U. universities
  - **Criteria:** academic quality, educational/societal impact and long-term collaborations, interdisciplinarity, diversity and inclusion, engagement of students and associated partners
  - Additional evaluation by a **student committee** (CUSU) for student-led projects



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# Budget and funding

# Budget

- **Total budget** of the 2025 Call: € 100,000
- **Allocation:**
  - Academic and research projects: up to € 10,000 per project
  - Student-led projects: up to € 5,000 per project
- **Eligible costs:** temporary staff or consultants providing services (costs for services); preliminary research activities; awareness-raising material; travel expenses and/or costs of living only if they cannot be covered by Erasmus+ staff mobility
- **Non-eligible costs:** hiring of administrative, research or academic staff (costs for staff); remuneration of project partners; overheads; equipment costs; conference fees

# Funding management

- **Lump sum** transferred to the Project Lead's designated entity (university, faculty, etc.)
  - The Project Lead manages the grant independently, supervises funding and expenditures, and reports on them (a detailed cost-reporting is not required)
- The activities planned in the project shall be **primarily funded through the grant**
- If extra funding is needed, the Project Lead shall ensure that complementary funding is available at their home university when elaborating the budget
- We strongly recommend to consult your financial department as well as the Circle U. coordinator of your university
- Double funding is not allowed

# Examples of funded activities

- **Educational and research projects:**
  - Joint courses/programmes, challenge-based learning, winter/summer schools
  - Workshops, seminars, public lectures, language workshops
  - Preliminary research, surveys, database creation, awareness materials
  - Joint large-scale project proposals
- **Student-led projects:**
  - Student-driven learning activities, student democracy, dissemination of Circle U. activities
  - Cultural activities, support for change maker programmes
- More on Circle U. website, including list of past seed funded projects:  
<https://www.circle-u.eu/open-campus/seedfunding/>



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# Application process

# Application process

- **Online application:** <https://forms.office.com/e/7MPqmiwAT0>
  - Call documents, examples of funded activities, FAQ and other useful info can be found on Circle U. website: <https://www.circle-u.eu/seedfunding/>
- **Deadline for submission on 1 October 2025**
  - To **edit your application**, click on “Save my response to edit” once you submit your application. Then, log in to your Microsoft account, click on the filled form and on “Edit response”
  - If unable to use this method, please resubmit your application
- **Expectations:**
  - **Communicate and disseminate** project results, outputs and outcomes to multiple audiences (e.g. through final dissemination even and communication campaigns organised by the Circle U. Office)
  - Submit a **final report** on implemented activities and incurred expenses by 31 January 2027 based on templates that we will provide to the Project Lead

## If selected

- Once you receive the confirmation that your project is selected, you will be asked to sign a **grant agreement** with Circle U.
  - You will then receive 80% – for academic/research projects – or 90% – for student-led projects – of the overall grant at the start of the project (pre-payment)
  - The remaining part of the grant will be transferred to you upon completion of the project and submission of the final report by 31 January 2027
- Circle U. **communications team** will reach out for a short description and media visuals of your project for dissemination on our website and socials

# Timeline

- **Important dates:**

- Call closes: 1 October 2025, midnight
- Results announced: November 2025
- Project period: 1 January 2026 – 31 December 2026
- Final report submission: 31 January 2027



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# Thank you!

Questions or comments?

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