

**UNIC Engaged Research Seed Fund  
Call for Collaborative UNIC Engaged Research Project Proposal**

- “UNIC Seed Fund” offers small-scale support for engaged research project proposal development<sup>1</sup> across **all disciplines within the UNIC consortium and beyond**<sup>2</sup>. This can be a Horizon Europe, JPI Urban Europe, AMIF, Digital Europe, Interreg, or similar national or international project proposal based on or inspired by our UNIC Cities’ challenges and opportunities collected in the Local Engaged Research Roadmaps<sup>3</sup>.
- It is mandatory that the Seed Fund application from a UNIC consortium member includes at least 1 more UNIC university<sup>4</sup> and at least 1 societal partner<sup>5</sup>. Partnerships with other institutions outside the UNIC consortium are also encouraged. For consortium building, you can get assistance from the UNIC Team at Koç University, [unic@ku.edu.tr](mailto:unic@ku.edu.tr).
- Approved project proposal developments will be supported for **at most 9 months**.
- **Maximum Project Budget for Each Category: The maximum budget is 7.000 EURO.**<sup>6</sup>
- This support should be considered as follows:
  - complementary resource to coordinate a collaborative project proposal, which can be supported by an external grant afterward (Category 1, mandatory)
  - collaborative project’s coordinator’s travel costs to consortium meetings (Category 2, additional and optional)
  - for engaging non-traditional researchers, such as junior researchers, first-generation academics, scholars with a migrant background, etc., in the project proposal (Category 3, additional and optional)

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about engaged research, please refer to; <https://www.campusengage.ie/what-we-do/publications/>.

<sup>2</sup> The European University of Post-Industrial cities (UNIC) is an alliance of ten universities (Erasmus University Rotterdam, Koç University, Ruhr University Bochum, University College Cork, University of Deusto, University of Liège, University of Oulu, University of Zagreb, Malmö University, University of Lodz) impacting education, research, and community engagement to develop post-industrial cities.

<sup>3</sup> Link to Local Engaged Research Roadmaps.

<sup>4</sup> Erasmus University Rotterdam, Koç University, Ruhr University Bochum, University College Cork, University of Deusto, University of Liège, University of Oulu, University of Zagreb. Researchers from Malmö University and University of Lodz are encouraged to be part of consortiums but cannot be the lead PIs.

<sup>5</sup> UNIC City municipalities, other governmental bodies, NGO’s, businesses, etc.

<sup>6</sup> Malmö University and University of Lodz only provide funding for the travel and accommodation of their own researchers that are part of consortiums.

- *It is mandatory to apply for Seed Funding from Category 1. Additionally, funding can be applied from Category 2 and/or Category 3.*
- The seed fund program is open to **all faculty members** including research faculty.
- Researchers facing particular structural challenges for various reasons, such as being a first-generation academic, being a researcher after a career break, having a migration background, or coming from an underrepresented community, are encouraged to apply. There is special funding for inclusivity, allocated specially for the ‘non-traditional’ scholars. The UNIC consortium aims to enhance inclusivity and diversity. Applicants who think they are eligible for this special funding are advised to consult the UNIC Team at Koç University, [unic@ku.edu.tr](mailto:unic@ku.edu.tr). Eligibility for this special funding is context-dependent, and applicants will be evaluated locally.

#### Timeline:

- **Call opens: May 18, 2023**
- **Deadline for Submission of a Letter of Interest: June 7, 2023 (23:59 local time)**
- **UNIC Seed Fund Development Project Proposal Submission Deadline: July 28, 2023 (23:59 local time)**

#### How to Apply:

Documents to be submitted by June 7, 2023:

- Letter of Interest (template is provided in Appendix 1)

Documents to be submitted by July 28, 2023:

- Development Project Proposal Form is written in English (template is provided in Appendix 2)
- Budget Table (template is provided in Appendix 3)
- CVs of the PIs: 2 pages per person plus selected project/publication list (max. 15 most important titles)
- Application packages will be submitted as one PDF file to [unic@ku.edu.tr](mailto:unic@ku.edu.tr).
- Applications will be evaluated and accepted on a rolling basis.

#### Technical Rules & Reminders:

- In the project proposal application, it is mandatory to include at least two UNIC universities and one societal partner. Applications without UNIC university partners and societal partners will not be considered. The partnership is also encouraged to include one or more institutions outside the UNIC consortium.

- Only the lead PI will submit an application. Researchers from Malmö University and University of Lodz are encouraged to be part of consortiums but cannot be the Lead PIs. No applications are submitted by the partnering researchers.
- The PI commits to act as the consortium's coordinator and submit a collaborative engaged research project proposal (Horizon Europe, JPI Urban Europe, AMIF, Digital Europe, Interreg, or similar international or national project proposal) to an open call, as the final deliverable of UNIC for Engaged Research Seed Fund action.
- It is mandatory to apply for Seed Funding from Category 1. Additionally, funding can be applied from Category 2 and/or Category 3.

#### **Financial Rules & Reminders:**

- Seed funding can be used for the following cost categories (Eligible Costs):
  - **Category 1:** Project proposal Coordinators' (PI's) salary, hiring a grant writer or an assistant, arranging a consortium meeting, and language/editing services for a grant/funding application. (Category 1, mandatory)
  - **Category 2:** Organizational costs for a workshop/meeting concerning this same collaborative engaged research project development. Travel costs of the Lead PI to participate in a project proposal development meeting organized by the Lead PI in another location than the Lead PI's own university. The travel and accommodation costs of partnering researchers from the UNIC consortium can be covered by their own institutes. In other words, all UNIC consortium universities (including Malmö University and the University of Lodz) are expected to cover the travel and accommodation costs of their own researchers during the collaboration process according to their own local travel policies. (Category 2, additional and optional)
  - **Category 3:** Enhancing the engagement of non-traditional researchers in the project proposal, such as junior researchers, first-generation academics, scholars with a migrant background, etc. In addition, acting as a Lead PI, non-traditional researchers can also be included or addressed in the role of a research team member or the data provider. The personnel costs, travel and accommodation costs, participation in conferences, trainings, workshops, meetings, summer schools, or mentorship activities of non-traditional scholars in collaborative UNIC Engaged Research projects can be covered by this special funding for inclusivity. (Category 3, additional and optional)

- **Ineligible costs:** Research costs (salaries targeted at conducting research, equipment, consumables, staff hiring costs), publication costs, or costs associated with involving the stakeholders as study participants rather than contributors to Engaged Research projects.
- Please complete the provided Excel budget table for your cost breakdown.
- Please calculate the costs, including respective taxation costs.
- Please list each individual item under budget categories. Do not write a lump sum.
- Justification of each budget item is required.
- During the implementation of your funded action, all purchases will be processed through the Procurement Directory in accordance with your institute's regulations.
- Please estimate your travel expenses according to your institute's travel procedures.
- You are not allowed to use an unspent budget after the termination date of your project.

#### **Eligibility Check:**

- The administrative eligibility of proposals is checked following the submission deadline by the Evaluation & Monitoring Committee.
- Late and incomplete submissions, including submissions without a specified action plan to submit project proposal to a Horizon Europe, JPI Urban Europe, AMIF, Digital Europe, Interreg, or similar international or national call, will be rejected.
- The application needs to conform to the format outlined in the provided main proposal and budget forms.
- For reasons of transparency and fairness to all applicants, UNIC will provide answers to technical grant application questions but will not engage in discussions about research proposal content, etc. Technical questions should be addressed to [unic@ku.edu.tr](mailto:unic@ku.edu.tr).

#### **Implementation:**

- A contract for each awarded proposal may be co-signed by the grantee and the legal signatory at each UNIC partner university before the expected start date.
- An assigned research support officer at the Lead PI's own university will help with support where possible for the duration of your action.
- A Technical and Financial Progress Report (midterm check-point in the middle of the project duration) and Technical and Financial Final Report (end of the project duration) will be required, based on local agreements. These reports will include the public abstract, copy of the project proposal submission notification, details of project activities, copies of Letters of Support, and

the summary of the expenditures. The reports will be evaluated by the “Monitoring Committee”.

- Budget and duration extension requests will be evaluated separately upon the condition that an extension is necessary for the submission of the project proposal.
- PIs who terminate their project proposal development early without delivering outputs may need to require reasons.
- **Further Information:** Questions related to the collaborative engaged research project proposal development and finding a potential research partner at other UNIC universities or societal partners: **please get in touch with the UNIC Team at Koç University, [unic@ku.edu.tr](mailto:unic@ku.edu.tr).**

All personal data collected by partners through UNIC4ER initiatives will be treated in full compliance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).

By submitting this application, you agree on what mentioned above and give your informed consent to UNIC to process and store your data.

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