

**SEED FUNDING CALL FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS
UNIVERSITY OF FREIBURG
AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN DENMARK**

2026

1. Introduction

The University of Southern Denmark (SDU) and the University of Freiburg (UFR) invite researchers from both institutions to apply for funding under the SDU–UFR Research Seed Funding Programme. The programme is a central element of the strategic partnership between SDU and UFR. It builds on the universities' cooperation within the European University Alliance EPICUR and supports the development of bilateral research collaboration beyond the alliance context.

Through joint investment in early-stage research cooperation, the programme aims to enable innovative research ideas, establish sustainable partnerships and improve the competitiveness of future joint applications for external funding.

The call follows a bottom-up approach and is open to proposals across disciplines. Projects must demonstrate clear added value from collaboration between SDU and UFR and should have the potential to develop into larger research initiatives, long-term partnerships or joint applications to national or international funding programmes.

2. Call overview

Objective	Develop long-term research collaboration between SDU and UFR and stimulate future external funding applications
Funding	Up to €50,000 per project, (€25,000 administered per university)
Project duration	Up to 12 months
Eligible applicants	Applicants must be employed at SDU or UFR. Each proposal must identify one lead applicant from each institution
Partnership requirement	The project must be jointly developed and implemented by researchers from both universities.
Application length	Maximum five pages, including budget
Application deadline	30 November 2026.
Notification of results	18 December 2026.
Project start	From January 2027 and no later than 1 March 2027
Submission	Submit one joint application to sdu-ufr@sdu.dk
Reporting	A one-page final report is required after project completion.

3. Eligibility and Partnership Requirements

- Each application must as a min. include one lead applicant employed at SDU and one lead applicant employed at UFR.
- Additional researchers and relevant project participants employed at both institutions may be included in the project team.
- Researchers from higher education institutions outside of SDU and UFR cannot participate in this call.
- External non-academic partners may participate where relevant but are not eligible for funding under this programme.

Project requirements

- The proposal must demonstrate clear scientific or scholarly added value arising from the SDU–UFR collaboration.
- The lead applicants are jointly responsible for the application, implementation and reporting.
- The project must present a credible pathway towards continued collaboration, an external funding application or another clearly defined joint research outcome.
- The requested funding must be necessary and proportionate to the proposed activities.

4. Funding

Applicants may request up to €50,000 per project. There is a maximum of €25,000 per university. Each university will manage and account for its own share of the grant in accordance with its internal financial rules. It is not possible to transfer funds between the universities, and the budget should clearly show the costs to be incurred at each institution.

Eligible costs

Funding may be used for direct costs that are necessary for developing and implementing the joint research collaboration, including – but not limited to:

- Staff costs
- Travel and accommodation
- Workshops, meetings and networking activities
- Conference fees and publication costs
- Pilot studies, data collection, small-scale experiments or preliminary analyses
- Costs directly related to the development of a joint external funding proposal

5. Expected Outcomes

Funded projects are expected to contribute to the long-term development of research collaboration between SDU and UFR.

Projects are encouraged to pursue outcomes that strengthen the sustainability and impact of the collaboration. Such outcomes may include a joint external funding application and/or a joint scientific publication. Projects that achieve one or both of these outcomes will be considered particularly successful.

In addition, projects are encouraged to contribute, where relevant, to one or more of the following:

- Establishment of sustainable research collaborations between SDU and UFR researchers;
- Strengthened researcher networks, mobility, and knowledge exchange;
- Development of future joint research activities and initiatives;
- Expansion of interdisciplinary collaboration across faculties and research fields;
- Increased international visibility of the SDU-UFR Strategic Partnership;
- Development of long-term strategic partnerships with the potential to evolve into larger collaborative research initiatives.

6. Application process:

As part of the launch of the SDU-UFR Strategic Partnership, a pilot call will be opened in 2026 with a shortened application timeline and an application deadline.

Call opens	23.10.2026
Application deadline	30 November 2026
Notification of results	18 December 2026
Project start	January 2027, and no later than 1 March 2027
Project end	No later than 12 months after the agreed start date

Applicants must use the official application template. The completed application must not exceed five pages and should include:

- Project summary and objectives
- Scientific background and rationale
- Description of the SDU–UFR collaboration and participating researchers
- Work plan, activities and project timeline
- Expected outcomes and plans for continued collaboration
- Budget divided by institution and cost category

The two lead applicants must submit one joint application by email to **sdu-ufr@sdu.dk** no later than 30 November 2026. Applications are considered received only when the applicants have received a confirmation email.

7. Evaluation and selection process

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Scientific quality and excellence
- Added value of the collaboration
- Potential for external funding
- Novelty and innovation
- Feasibility
- Long-term impact and sustainability

8. Reporting

The lead applicants must submit a joint one-page final report to sdu-ufr@sdu.dk no later than one month after project completion. The report should briefly describe:

- Activities completed and principal results;
- Collaboration outcomes and added value;
- Plans for continued collaboration;
- Status of any joint publication or external funding application;
- Any other relevant follow-up or longer-term outcome.

9. Contact

Joint mailbox sdu-ufr@sdu.dk

SDU contact Ida Thøstesen, ilt@sdu.dk

UFR contact Charlotte Langowski, Charlotte.Langowski@zv.uni-freiburg.de