# Global Research & Impact Program (GRIP)

# Initiator Grant Scheme Guidelines

## 1. Initiator Seed Grant Purpose / Objective

The UNSW Initiator Grant Scheme is a targeted seed funding initiative designed to catalyse strategic and high impact research collaboration between UNSW researchers and leading global institutions.

The Initiator scheme will support projects that:

- Seed new or significantly expanded long-term research collaborations with international partners, engage in mobility programs and / or innovation ecosystems;
- Strengthen interdisciplinary and international research capability;
- Align with UNSW's Impact Focus Areas and mission-driven research priorities;
- Support translational research and innovation outcomes relevant to societal, economic and policy challenges.

While applications partnering with any leading global institution are welcome, this round also calls out opportunities with identified partners:

- Mahidol University, Thailand: up to three grants will be available to researchers partnering with Mahidol University, Thailand.
- Nanyang Technological University, Singapore: grants will be available to researchers partnering with Nanyang Technological University.

## 2. Funding

- A maximum award of AUD$20,000 is available for each successful project.

All projects and budget expenditure must end by 31 December 2027.

For projects collaborating with researchers from Mahidol University, a budget will need to be submitted for both UNSW and Mahidol expenses. Each University will cover the costs of its own researchers, with a maximum budget of AUD$10,000 per university.

To note:

- Expenditure must align with the GRIP objectives and proposal budget.
- Any deviation from the approved budget post-award must be approved by the Research Strategy Office in writing prior to action.
- Appendix 1 includes a summary of eligible/ineligible expenses.

## 3. Application Process

Please complete an application form available on the GRIP website and submit this by the published deadline. Late or incomplete submissions will not be considered.

### 3.1 Eligibility Criteria

- Nominate a UNSW Lead for each submission. This individual must hold an academic, continuing, or fixed-term contract for 6-months following the project end-date.
- Nominate a Co-Lead from a partner organisation from an eligible country.
- All funded projects must comply with Australian Defence Export Control regulations, and Foreign Arrangement requirements. Applications that do not meet these requirements may be deemed ineligible.

### 3.2 Supplementary Documentation

- Evidence of support from your Head of School (or equivalent).
- Evidence of support from the international partner organisation for the activities described in the application.
- Evidence of any co-contributions (i.e. cash or in-kind) from the partner organisation, where applicable.

## 4. Assessment

GRIP Initiator grants are intended to foster long-term, high-impact research or research and education collaborations. Proposals will be assessed based on the following criteria:

| Criterion | Description | Weight |
|---|---|---|
| **1.Strategic Partner Fit & Collaboration Potential** | The proposal demonstrates a strong strategic rationale for the selected partner(s), aligned with UNSW priorities and international standing/reputation, and the potential for a sustainable, mutually beneficial collaboration beyond the funding period. | 25% |
| **2.Project Design, Feasibility & Collaboration Quality** | The proposal clearly articulates a well justified research need or opportunity, supported by an appropriate project design, realistic timeline, and feasible activities at Initiator scale. The collaboration demonstrates strong complementary or shared capabilities across partners, with clear mutual benefit and a credible collaboration model. | 25% |
| **3.Research Translation, Scalability & Sustainability** | The proposal articulates credible and appropriate pathways for research translation (e.g. policy, industry, practice, education, or innovation), and demonstrates potential to grow beyond seed funding through external funding, institutional embedment, or progression toward GRIP Accelerator level engagement. | 20% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **4.Social Progress & Impact Pathway Alignment** | The collaboration aligns with UNSW's *Progress for All* strategy and articulates a credible pathway toward impact aligned to one of the four Impact Focus Areas. | 15% |
| **5.EMCR Leadership & Capability Development** | Priority is given to proposals led by UNSW Early to Mid-Career Researchers (EMCRs), where participation strengthens international research leadership capability and future independence. | 15% |
| **TOTAL** | | **100%** |

## 5. Reporting

Grant recipients must provide a final report within one month of the project end date reporting on progress against the original proposal objectives and financial expenditure.

A final report link will be provided to successful projects.

## 6. Key Dates

| Applications Open | Applications Close | Outcomes Announced | Project Start Date | Project End Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Friday 16 October 2026 | Friday 13 November 2026 (11.59pm AEDT) | December 2026 | 1 January 2027 | 31 December 2027 |

## 7. Questions & Contact

For additional enquiries, contact grip@unsw.edu.au.

## APPENDIX 1: BUDGET GUIDANCE

Please review the below information in preparing your application for the GRIP Initiator Grant scheme.

| ELIGIBLE EXPENSES | |
|---|---|
| Mobility & Travel | - Domestic and international travel for UNSW project team (economy only)<br>- Accommodation<br>- Local transport (e.g. taxis, trains, car hire to facilitate project activities)<br>- Reasonable visa costs (if required)<br>*NOTE: Travel costs should align with UNSW Travel Expenses procedure* |
| Networking & Collaboration | - Costs associated with hosting workshops, seminars or symposia<br>- Costs associated with attending workshops, seminars or symposia<br>- Venue hire<br>- Catering (non-alcoholic) |
| Pilot Projects & Feasibility | - Costs associated with exploratory fieldwork or conducting feasibility studies<br>- Small scale pilot experiments or prototype development<br>- Costs of developing collaborative research/teaching proposals<br>- Project specific consumables (limited to 30% of budget)<br>- Printing and publishing costs (if relevant to project outcome) |

| INELIGIBLE EXPENSES |
|---|
| - Salaries or salary supplementation for academic or professional staff (this includes RAs) |
| - Student bursaries or support for participation in collaborative visits |
| - Stipends to individuals outside of UNSW or the funded institutions |
| - Indirect costs, bench fees, research datasets or institutional overheads |
| - General purpose equipment (e.g. laptops, phones, printers), software and office supplies |
| - Entertainment, gifts or alcohol |
| - Mobile / data allowances |