## Global Research & Impact Program (GRIP)

# UNSW x University of Stuttgart Strategic Partnership Accelerator

### Purpose

The GRIP University of Stuttgart Strategic Partnership Accelerator is a targeted seed funding initiative designed to strengthen strategic research collaboration between UNSW and the University of Stuttgart (UST).

The scheme aims to catalyse high-value, interdisciplinary research partnerships between UNSW, the University of Stuttgart and their broader innovation ecosystems, deepening institutional collaboration and positioning researchers to pursue larger-scale opportunities.

Applications for the scheme must be focussed in one or more of the following priority areas:

- Advanced Materials and Intelligent Manufacturing
- Future Cities, Mobility and Human Centred Technologies
- AI, Digital Twins and Computational Engineering
- Climate, Energy and Sustainable Infrastructure.

### Funding Available

Awards of up to AUD$20,000 are available for successful projects for a period of 12 months.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for a summary of eligible/ineligible expenses, and budget guidance.

### Key dates

| Applications Open | Applications Close | Outcomes Announced | Project Start Date | Project End Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Friday 16 October 2026 | Friday 13 November 2026 -11:59pm Central European Time (CET) / 9.59am Saturday 14 November (AEDT) | December 2026 | 1 January 2027 | 31 December 2027 |

### Expected Outcomes

The scheme is intended to support early-stage activities with tangible outcomes that strengthen the strategic partnership beyond the grant period. Example outcomes include:

- Results of feasibility studies or proof-of-concept activities
- Joint research programs co-designed by way of collaborative workshops
- Industry engagement activities with a view to translate research outcomes
- Larger collaborative funding proposals or longer-term institutional collaborations.

Successful projects should identify at least one realistic pathway towards future external funding.

## Application Process

Applications must be submitted using the online application form accessible via the GRIP website by the published deadline (Friday 13 November, CET time). Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Only one application should be completed per project. Applications can be initiated by either University lead investigator. Once an application has been initiated, it can be saved and the link can be shared with collaborators for completion.

### Eligibility

Each application must include a lead investigator from UNSW and the University of Stuttgart.

The UNSW lead must hold a continuing or fixed term academic appointment that extends beyond the end of grant period. Those with conjoint positions with UNSW may be considered while those holding adjunct positions are ineligible to participate as project leads.

### Supporting Information

When completing the online application form, you will be asked to provide:

- Support from the UNSW lead's Head of School (or equivalent) evidenced by letter/email.
- Support from the University of Stuttgart lead evidenced by completing the form declaration.
- Support from industry/other partners (where applicable) evidenced by letter/email.

## Assessment Criteria

Please refer to *Appendix 2* for a breakdown of how applications will be assessed.

## Reporting

Successful grant recipients will be asked to provide a final joint report outlining progress against the original proposal objectives, outcomes achieved, plans for future engagement and financial expenditure.

UNSW will provide a final report link to the UNSW lead for completion in collaboration with the University of Stuttgart partner within one month of the project end date.

## Questions

UNSW applicants: GRIP@unsw.edu.au.

UST applicants: Ora Bukoshi, ora.bukoshi@rektorat.uni-stuttgart.de.

## 1: BUDGET GUIDANCE

Please review the below information when preparing your application for the GRIP Stuttgart Strategic Partnership Accelerator scheme.

As part of your application, you will be asked to provide a budget for both UNSW and UST costs. Each university funds project costs in accordance with its respective regulations, for its own researchers and associated activities. Cost eligibility may therefore differ slightly between UST and UNSW.

UNSW costs should be within AUD$17,000 and UST costs €2,000 for 2027. UST researchers should refer to the UST guidelines for budget eligibility for this scheme. Both budgets will be submitted within the same joint application. Refer to the application form for guidance on budget formatting.

Any deviation from the approved budget post-award must be approved by the GRIP team at UNSW, and the University of Stuttgart for their respective costs and budget allocation in writing prior to action. Note that **allocated funds from one year cannot be rolled over to the subsequent year**. All expenditure must occur in 2027. Any unspent funds will be returned to the grant administrators at UNSW and UST respectively.

| **ELIGIBLE UNSW 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 the 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<br>- Small scale pilot experiments or prototype development<br>- Costs of developing collaborative research/teaching proposals<br>- Project specific consumables (limited to 30% of total project budget)<br>- Printing and publishing costs (if relevant to project outcome) |

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

APPENDIX 2: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

| Criterion | Description | Weight |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Strategic Value and Strength of the Partnership** | The extent to which the proposed project:<br>• Establishes or strengthens a meaningful research collaboration between institutions – universities, research institutes and industry<br>• Demonstrates complementary expertise, capabilities, facilities or networks across institutions<br>• Aligns with one or more of the scheme's identified priority areas while contributing to UNSW's Impact Focus Areas highlighted in the UNSW Strategy: *Progress for All*<br>*High-scoring proposals will demonstrate genuine institutional partnership, with active and substantive contributions from both institutions, rather than a single investigator collaboration.* | 25% |
| **2. Potential for Enduring Collaboration and External Funding** | The extent to which the proposed project:<br>• Provides a credible pathway to sustained collaboration between UNSW and UST beyond the grant period<br>• Identifies realistic and appropriate external funding opportunities and explains how the proposed activities will strengthen the competitiveness of a future joint funding application<br>*High-scoring proposals will identify concrete next steps toward future collaborative funding.* | 20% |
| **3. Project Quality, Design and Feasibility** | The extent to which the proposed project:<br>• Presents clear objectives, appropriate activities and defined outcomes<br>• Provides a realistic workplan achievable within the available funding and project period<br>*Higher-scoring applications will include activities that align with the objectives, a feasible delivery timeline and a justified budget.* | 20% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **4. Impact and Translation Potential** | The extent to which the proposed project:<br>• Delivers tangible and useful outputs<br>• Demonstrates engagement with innovation ecosystems, research infrastructure or applied research organisations e.g. ARENA2036, Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, Mark Wainwright Analytical Centre (MWAC), CSIRO.<br>• Addresses a societal, environmental, technological or industry need<br>Higher-scoring applications will demonstrate a coherent connection between the *proposed activities, expected outputs and longer-term objectives.* | 20% |
| **5. EMCR development and capability building** | The extent to which the proposed project:<br>• Provides meaningful opportunities for EMCR participation<br>• Contributes to a broader and more sustainable pipeline of collaboration between the institutions<br>*Higher-scoring applications will clearly describe the roles of participating EMCRs and the capabilities, experience and networks they are expected to develop.* | 15% |
| **TOTAL** | | 100% |