

2026-2028 JOINT SEED CALL FOR PROPOSALS
Expanding research impact through inter-disciplinary collaboration

The Joint Seed program is an interdivisional research funding program designed to promote multi-disciplinary research and catalyze new innovative partnerships between a co-PI from the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering (FASE) and a co-PI from outside Engineering.

Important changes for 2026: Please note that there is now a single application stream for the program (formerly EMHSeed and XSeed), and that Partner Divisions for the current call are as follows:

- Translational Biology and Engineering Program (TBEP)
- Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS)
- University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM)
- University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)

Funding is available for a maximum of ten (10) new collaborative projects corresponding to the following breakdown:

Partner Division	No. of Projects (maximum)
Translational Biology and Engineering Program (TBEP)*	2
Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS)	3 [‡]
University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM)	2
University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)	1
Other Partner Divisions [‡]	2

*Applications may be considered for funding by the [Translational Biology and Engineering Program \(TBEP\)](#) if they align directly with TBEP's criteria and research goals. Applications related to cardiovascular digital health (including remote monitoring, point-of-care devices, and implantable sensors) and to systems biology approaches to cardiovascular health and disease will receive priority consideration.

[‡]One of these projects will be earmarked for FAS Humanities and Social Sciences co-PIs.

[‡]Includes all other U of T Divisions (see further instructions under "Budget and Support Letters")

Divisional Contacts

- Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering (FASE) and main program contact – Myriam Couturier (myriam.couturier@utoronto.ca)
- Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) – Carrie-Lynn Keiski (carrie.keiski@utoronto.ca)
- Translational Biology and Engineering Program (TBEP) – Elizabeth Chiu (admin.tbep@utoronto.ca)
- University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) – Rong Wu (rong.wu@utoronto.ca)
- University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) – Jason Darby (j.darby@utoronto.ca)

PI Eligibility

- 1- Joint Seed applicant teams comprise two PIs:
 - a. One applicant must have a primary tenure-track appointment with an Engineering unit;
 - b. The other applicant must have a primary tenure-track appointment in a Joint Seed Partner Division (FAS, UTM, UTSC) or another U of T Division – see "Budget and Support Letters" instructions below

for different matching requirements. For projects aligned with TBEP, one of the applicants should have an appointment status at a non-Engineering U of T Division.

- 2- Each co-PI should be eligible to hold, as PI, tri-council agency grants (NSERC, CIHR, or SSHRC). Both applicants must be eligible to supervise graduate students.
- 3- A PI can hold a maximum of one Joint Seed-funded project at any point in time.

Application Instructions

The Joint Seed selection committee is highly interdisciplinary. As such, proposals must be written for non-experts. Successful proposals must address the following criteria:

(1) **A new opportunity.**

Joint Seed funding supports **new collaborations**. Projects must catalyze new partnerships between PIs that have not previously worked together and have not been co-funded. As collaborations involving at least one early career researcher are usually rated more highly by panelists, priority may be given to research teams that include one co-PI in the first 10 years of their academic career.

(2) **A clear overarching goal.**

The project should have a clear end goal, such as a key finding, a compelling prototype, or a persuasive data set that paves the way for larger funded projects.

(3) **Excellence in research.**

The researchers should provide evidence of established or emerging leadership in their area(s).

(4) **Research proposal and plan.**

The application should describe a clear research project and plan, highlighting its novelty and excellence and how the project aims to address a compelling, important, and unsolved problem. The researchers must show how their interdisciplinary expertise will be effectively united on the project. As this funding is meant to catalyze new partnerships and initiatives, avoid using existing grant application materials in this proposal.

(5) **Inclusion of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and accessibility principles.**

The researchers should indicate how principles of EDI and accessibility will be meaningfully integrated into the project. This will be assessed most strongly if incorporated into research design. EDI principles can also be discussed in terms of team composition, training and recruitment practices, inclusive and equitable lab/environment culture and practices, and/or beneficiaries of the research. See [VPRI's website on EDI in Research & Innovation](#) for definitions and resources on the importance of EDI in research and innovation.

FASE is committed to supporting projects that are partnered with Indigenous communities. Please note that all community-oriented projects must clearly demonstrate how communities will be meaningfully engaged in the research, with applicants ensuring a sense of accountability and reflexive allyship in their work. If applicable to your research, please include a paragraph describing how you will integrate the relevant concepts, principles and protocols for conducting respectful research with Indigenous Peoples and communities into each stage of the research process. Applicants whose work involves Indigenous communities should demonstrate that they have started building the necessary relationships and partnerships by including relevant letters of support in their application. As one possible example of guidelines, see NSERC's [CCSIF guide for research involving Indigenous Peoples and communities](#).

(6) **A clear plan for collaboration.**

Successful applications should demonstrate how graduate students will work together, and how goals and milestones for the students will ensure meaningful partnership. The graduate students will be jointly advised by the co-PIs and will work together on an interdisciplinary project focusing on an important problem whose solution will unlock a large partnership or innovation opportunity. The proposal should also demonstrate how research planning, use of space, use of infrastructure, and supervision would all be shared and harmonized across the collaborating teams.

(7) **Compelling annual milestones.**

The project will offer compelling milestones that will form the foundation for continued collaborations and joint funding applications.

(8) A gateway to a major funded partnership.

Successful proposals should indicate how the anticipated results of the project will provide the basis of joint grant applications, to be submitted before the 2nd year anniversary of their Seed project start, to programs such as the CIHR Project Grant, Genome Canada, ORF-Research Excellence (ORF-RE), CIHR Team Grant, Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), SSHRC Partnership Grant, New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF), major international funding, etc. In addition, co-PIs should specify the dates of competitions they intend to apply to.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

FASE is strongly committed to diversity in research and especially welcomes applications from racialized persons/persons of colour, women, Indigenous/Aboriginal Peoples of North America, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ+ persons, and others who may contribute to research excellence.

Budget and Support Letters

The budget for each Joint Seed project is **\$80,000 CAD/year** for two (2) years. Project funding consists of matching contributions for each PI at the divisional and unit levels, with a structure that varies by Division. Please see specific requirements described below and summarized in the table.

- Applicants from FASE, FAS, and TBEP-aligned projects: A letter of support confirming a contribution of \$20,000 CAD/year for two years from the applicant’s home department, institute, or hospital, signed by the Chair/Director, is required. Divisional letters of support from FASE, FAS and TBEP are not required.
- UTM and UTSC applicants: A letter confirming a contribution to the project of \$40,000/year for two years from the Office of the Vice-Principal, Research and Innovation is required. A letter of support from the UTM PI’s department is not required.
- Applicants from other U of T Divisions (not outlined in the call): A letter confirming a contribution of \$40,000/year for two years to the project is required – these contributions can be provided by the applicant’s home unit, division, hospital, or a combination of sources.

Engineering Applicants	FAS, TBEP Applicants	UTM, UTSC Applicants
\$20K/year from FASE Department/Institute – letter required	\$20K/year from Partner Department/Institute – letter required	\$40K/year from Division – letter required
\$20K/year from FASE – no letter required	\$20K/year from Partner Faculty/Division – no letter required	
TOTAL = \$80,000/year x 2 years = \$160,000		

Notes:

1. The above-mentioned contributions are cash or stipend contributions. In the case of cash contributions, contributors must all explicitly agree to transfer the funds in support of the project into the PI account.
2. The above contributions will be conditional on success in the adjudication process.
3. Additional in-kind support, on top of and beyond these contributions, may also be expressed in the letters of support and will be taken into consideration in the adjudication process.

4. Ethics approval and other regulatory approvals, as required, should be in place ahead of the project start date.
5. If a PI's home unit is unable to provide the required departmental matching contribution of \$20,000/year, the PI may use funding from their Funds Center (CFC) for this purpose. The use of this matching source must be confirmed in writing by the PI at the application stage.

Use of Funds

This funding will prioritize the use of funds to support the stipend and research expenses of one graduate student earning a degree in an Engineering unit and one graduate student in the Partner Division. In exceptional cases, postdoctoral fellows can be supported. Projects will start in September 2026 (PIs may request an early project start of May 1, 2026, subject to approval of the Partner Divisions). In exceptional cases, a no-cost extension for an additional year may be considered.

Submission Process

Applications, including all supporting documents, are due by email to Myriam Couturier, Strategic Research Development Officer, FASE Research Office (myriam.couturier@utoronto.ca) **by 12:00pm on Monday, March 9, 2026**. Please include the term "Joint Seed" in the subject line. **An MRA is not required for this submission.**

Submissions should include the following: 1) [completed application form](#), 2) letters of support confirming contributions from each of the collaborating departments/institutes (and/or, if applicable, Partner Divisions), 3) Short CVs of co-PIs. **Please limit your CV to 3 pages.**

Adjudication Process

An adjudication committee composed of representatives from FASE and Partner Divisions will review proposals against program criteria. Decisions will be reported by the end of April 2026.

A list of past EMHSeed and XSeed projects is also available on the [FASE Research Hub](#), which is accessible with your UTORid and password.

Reporting

A final report must be submitted upon the completion of the project.