



UCD Sustainability

Sustainability Research Seed Funding *for research, innovation and impact*

Call details & how to apply

Overview

Universities have a critical role to play in advancing the sustainability agenda at local, national and global scales. Research is needed both to characterise sustainability challenges and underpin effective solutions. Given the environmental, socio-cultural, economic and governance dimensions of sustainability, all disciplines have important contributions to make and the best solutions will arise out of interdisciplinary partnerships and close cooperation with external stakeholders in industry, social enterprise, local authorities, government departments, state and semi-state agencies, NGOs, community groups, charities and others.

As such, the UCD Sustainability Unit is delighted to launch a call to stimulate and support interdisciplinary sustainability research, innovation and impact by UCD researchers and their colleagues, collaborators and stakeholders.

The Sustainability Research Seed Funding Scheme is supported by Performance Funding from the Higher Education Authority (HEA). It will fund projects and activities with tangible outputs and impacts focused on sustainability research linked to the 'Creating a Sustainable Global Society' theme of the UCD Strategy 2020-2024 'Rising to the Future'. It offers practical 'seed' support for projects that are ambitious and strategic, as well as those that lead to new knowledge, clusters and capabilities.

Multiple awards of up to €15,000 will be made through this scheme, for which a total of €120,000 has been allocated for this call.

Full details of the scheme, including eligibility, evaluation and the application process can be found below. We are happy to discuss proposed projects in advance of submission and advise on suitability. If you have any questions, please contact vpsustainability@ucd.ie.

What does the Scheme fund?

There is considerable flexibility in what this scheme will fund. It can fund preliminary research with the intention of building capacity for further research activity, as well as support the

continuation of existing projects and activities. It also has an emphasis on the application of research through innovation and engagement with policy and wider society.

Eligible activities include but are not limited to:

- Interdisciplinary research to address sustainability challenges
- Innovation, enterprise and commercialisation activities
- Knowledge transfer activities
- Social enterprise and social entrepreneurship
- Activities to support development or scaling of an emerging research area
- Visits to or of potential collaborators in other institutions
- Attendance at research networking, information or consortium building events
- Invited speakers and workshops
- Development of industry links
- Development of a large-scale funding application
- Collaboration with external/partner organisations
- Societal engagement and public engagement activities
- Outreach or educational events or initiatives

Application Eligibility

- Each proposal must include a lead applicant and at least one other co-applicant from UCD; there is no upper limit on the number of co-applicants.
- The lead applicant and at least one co-applicant must be either UCD faculty or postdoctoral staff with an employment contract that runs until at least the end date of the proposed project. Technical and administrative/professional staff and postgraduate and undergraduate students are also eligible to participate.
- Each proposal must include applicants from at least two different disciplines, preferably from different UCD Schools and ideally from different UCD Colleges.
- Each proposal should include an external co-applicant e.g. an applicant from an academic institution, government, policy makers, industry, non-governmental organisations, charities and community groups. Consortia that don't have an external co-applicant would be expected to engage with external partners during the project.
- Project work should be completed within 12 - 18 months.

Eligible costs

- Consumables
- Equipment (to a maximum of €5,000)
- Travel and subsistence for UCD researchers and/or visiting researchers
- Dissemination costs - including preparation and publication costs for position papers, scientific publications or policy briefs
- Costs for events, workshops and other engagement activities

- Short-term appointments to assist in research activity and administration

Evaluation process & criteria

All eligible proposals will be reviewed by an assessment committee comprising:

- Vice-President for Sustainability
- UCD Sustainability Manager
- A member of the UCD Sustainability Working Group on Research, Innovation and Impact
- Two appropriate members of UCD staff appointed by UMT SUS

The committee will evaluate the proposals on the basis of the following criteria:

1. The relevance of the application to the scope of the Seed Funding Scheme (Answer Yes or No for this criterion only. If No, no further scoring is required).
2. The application clearly demonstrates the topicality and importance of the proposed project/activity, including alignment to current national and global sustainability challenges and national and global initiatives such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals, EU Directives, strategies/policies and funding priorities (Weighting 20%).
3. The application clearly outlines the rationale, objectives, expected outputs, methodology and deliverables of the proposed project/activity/collaboration (Weighting 20%).
4. The application clearly demonstrates the anticipated impacts and future plans of the project/activity including: how the proposed project/activity will support strategic collaborations and partnerships with national and/or international stakeholders (e.g. academic institutions, government, policy makers, industry, non-governmental organisations, charities and community groups), build the application team's network, enhance UCD's profile and enhance research capacity/excellence in UCD (Weighting 20%).
5. The application encompasses a high level of interdisciplinarity, with a number of distinct disciplinary perspectives, and has potential for scaling to develop into an interdisciplinary research cluster to help address local, national and global sustainability challenges (Weighting 15%).
6. The consortium is well-founded, ideally with a mixture of career stages and a diversity of staffing roles and students, and is aligned with UCD's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Weighting 15%).
7. The application clearly demonstrates a feasible time frame, value for money and a clear budget justification for the proposed project/activity (Weighting 10%).

How to apply

- The application form (available [here](#)) must be completed and submitted by 17:00 on Wednesday 5 June 2024.
- The form asks for concise information on the team involved, background & rationale, objectives, deliverables, pathway impact, plus a short work plan and budget.
- Applicants will receive notification of the outcome of their application by the end of June 2024.
- Successful applicants will be required to submit a short report detailing the outputs and impact of the project within 1 month of project completion.